

The Pillars of Priestcraft and Orthodoxy Shaken.

We must admire the courage of the people who originally wrote and published the articles collected in these four volumes that was published in 1768. At that time it was still very dangerous to criticize the established religion, and these volumes are a collection of older articles that date back to the 1680s. So it is not surprising that many pretend to be defending the very beliefs they were attacking.

The only real miracle of the Christian religion is the fact that, in spite of every horrible torture and death that the fiendish religious mind could devise, progress has been made to the point where Christianity can now be criticized with relative immunity. People may still suffer by being ostracized by religious “friends,” and even, occasionally, loss of employment by a religious owner or pious supervisor, but generally, morality has advanced to the point where people can give their honest opinions without fear of serious reprisals.

And it is to those brave individuals who did speak and write the truth as they saw it, at a time when Christian reprisals were *indeed* serious, that we are forever indebted for the better world we now live in. But it has been a slow progress. This collection of thoughts that was published in 1768 would certainly have gotten the writers tortured and burned alive had they been published two hundred years earlier – and it was those brave thinkers who did get tortured and burned alive in earlier times that these later ones escaped that fate. Remember that the Rev. Robert Taylor was sent to prison in 1826 for his lectures showing that the Jesus myth was based on Astrology, and that the phases of the year correspond exactly with the religious holidays of the Christian religion.

So it is with great pride that Bank of Wisdom republishes this collection of brave writings by those who, in spite of great danger, could not withhold their spleen against the most horrible system ever to darken the pages of History.

THE
P I L L A R S
O F
P R I E S T C R A F T
A N D
O R T H O D O X Y
S H A K E N.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

V O L. I.

The SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N :

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The purpose of the Bank of Wisdom
is to again make the United States the
Free Marketplace of Ideas that the
American Founding Fathers
originally meant this Nation to be.

Emmett F. Fields
Bank of Wisdom.

T O

Samuel Rhodes, Esq;

O F

Highbgate in Middlesex.

S I R,

THE design of this Collection being to emancipate the minds of men, and to free them from those chains in which they have been long held to the great disgrace both of reason and christianity, I beg leave to dedicate the first volume to you: and I do it with great alacrity and pleasure, as I am thoroughly persuaded that every attempt to serve the glorious cause of liberty and truth, will be acceptable to a man of your generous and excellent spirit.

In countries enslaved, all truth is rigorously suppressed, all the avenues to religious knowledge and free enquiry are

carefully blocked up ; and it is penal, sometimes capital, to gainsay and oppose what power hath decreed and established. A few ages ago, our own country was in the same doleful condition ; when nothing could be published but what supported superstition and tyranny, when the Priests had the direction of the press, and restrained it to their own vile purposes ; to keep the people in ignorance and bondage. But, thanks to Heaven ! our lot is fallen in happier times : and the only way to preserve our liberty, is to assert it ; and to oppose all such principles and practices as are inconsistent with it, or which threaten and endanger the loss of it.

The worth of liberty is inestimable ; it comprehends all human felicity : and it is impossible for any man to love God or his country, who does not study to promote the principles of liberty, and to serve its cause. Where liberty is gone, all is gone that is precious and dear to men !

For

For this reason, it may be justly expected that all who are friends to mankind, will ever oppose priestcraft and spiritual tyranny, as these have been ever found the greatest foes to truth and the happiness of men. In the professors of christianity this is a most indispensable duty, both from a regard to men's temporal good, and from that concern which they ought to have for the honour and purity of their religion. It is certain that nothing has been a greater hindrance to the reception of this religion among men, nothing has more obstructed its progress in the world, than the absurd and selfish doctrines, the superstitious and foolish practices, which have been blended with it and fathered upon it. To free it from these, would be the means of recommending it to all men : and it is very probable, that when once it is separated from all heterogeneous and foreign mixtures, its divinity will be acknowledged, and all men will readily embrace it.

When christianity first appeared, it was a light to the world; it comforted and made glad the heart of man: but the corruptions, inventions, and additions of after-ages, rendered it a disgrace to human reason, a burden and curse to human kind. For many centuries it was buried under such a mass of superstition, that it could not be distinguished from the worst sort of Paganism itself. In *Christendom* all was darkness, horror, and chains. Here is an everlasting reason for opposing all Priests, and an unanswerable argument against all their claims of power and authority. For, from the power and pride of priests it was, that all these terrible evils arose. Not content with being pastors and ministers according to the primitive institution, they set up for Lords and Rulers: And when they were become masters of all things, and wielded both the spiritual and civil sword, it was death and damnation to resist them.

Does it not highly concern all christians, to know and consider these things? If
men

men had exercised their reason, or understood their just rights, their *christian liberty*; could they possibly have been thus blinded and enslaved? And is not this ample warning to all Protestant States, that have in some measure recovered their liberty, to guard against all priestly encroachments, to break every remaining yoke; and to encourage a spirit of free enquiry in their people, as what alone can preserve and perpetuate their liberty? If neither the bitter experience of past ages, nor the dreadful condition of Popish countries at this day, can open our eyes, and teach us wisdom; we must be the blindest, the most insensible, the most stupid and infatuated of all people.

Of late years religious knowledge hath greatly encreased in this nation, and the nature and design of christianity are now better understood than ever: but of what avail are all our improvements in knowledge, if we must still be slaves to the laws

and customs, the doctrines and practices of dark and barbarous ages? How can we blame *Papists* for following *Tradition*, tho' contrary to the light both of reason and revelation, when we ourselves are the most prostrate worshippers of custom, and reverence error for antiquity's sake? Better be in ignorance, than thus hold the Truth in **unrighteousness**, to flash in our faces and condemn us!

Whoever compares the scriptures with the articles and canons of our national church, will see how little we have of christian truth and liberty, and what remains there still are of *popish* corruption and tyranny. Can any man reconcile the right of private judgment, and the apostolical injunction to *prove all things*, with the twentieth article of the church; . by which the Priests claim a power over all human understanding, and by denying us a right to think for ourselves, treat us as brute beasts?

Let

Let them shew us, if they can, how the use of reason and their damning creeds agree; and the consistency of cursing in churches, or that it is less shocking for men to damn their neighbours in the worship of God, than in an ale-house or a gin-shop!

It can never be a just defence of these things, to tell us, that they are *established by law*. Human authority is not the standard of Truth; nor is it in the power of any men to make that which is wrong, to be right. ~~A law compelling us to eat what we do not relish, or cannot digest, would be less unnatural than a law commanding us to believe what we do not understand, or judge to be false.~~ If our laws are inconsistent with reason and truth and public good, have we not a right to abolish them? If not; what a ridiculous and contemptible, what a base and unworthy nation are we, to boast of knowledge and freedom?

Sir, I mention not these things for your instruction, but for your edification; to animate and fortify you in the noble opposition you have hitherto made to *established* falshood and folly. In matters of Religion, neither the great vulgar, nor the small, have any concern what they profess or act. Where honours, wealth, and preferments are annexed to any opinions, the great will ever profess and maintain them, how false and wicked soever they be; whilst truths that are attended with reproach and poverty, or any degree of persecution, will have few friends, few advocates and followers in this world. But if there be a God, the love of truth is a sure title to his favour: and hereafter They shall shine with distinguished honour, that here stood up for Truth and Liberty in a degenerate age; and by their example, influence, and all their abilities, studied to promote their interest amongst men. Who would desert

fert so glorious a cause, with such rewards in prospect? That you will never desert it, I have the greatest reason to believe; and Therefore I thus publicly declare myself to be, with great esteem and affection,

S I R,

Your highly obliged friend,

And most humble servant,

January
16, 1752.

Richard Baron.

THE
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No man was ever more zealous in the cause of *civil and religious Liberty* than Mr. Baron.

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Could he have restrained the natural impetuosity of his temper, no man would have had more friends or better deserved them.—With many virtues and a few faults—which only wanted the elevation of an higher station and a better fate to have assumed the form of virtues—Mr. Baron pass'd the greatest part of his life in penurious circumstances—which neither abated the generous ardour, or overcame the laudable

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able independency of his spirit. These are virtues, which, when exerted in a low sphere, seldom bring their reward to the possessor; yet these, with their blessed effects, are all this good man left behind him for the consolation and support of a widow and three children.

Virtus laudatur et alget.

Mr. Baron to the last moment of his life retain'd a truly grateful sense of his obligations to his friends.—Just before he expired, (his gratitude struggling with nature for expression) *Thank, thank,* said he, *my friends for all they have, and all that they are doing for me.*

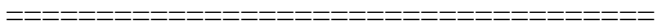
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A
DISCOURSE
ON

ISAIAH lxvi. 7, 8.

Preached upon the 10th of *June*, being the
Birth-day of the *Pretender*, many years
since.

First printed in the year 1715.

I S A I A H lxvi. 7, 8.

Before she travailed she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.

Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day, or shall a nation be born at once?

THE works of nature, which we every day contemplate, lie within the compass of our reason, and if we cannot see into their first causes, yet we can trace them in their powers and effects, so as to be able to give some ease and satisfaction to our natural desire after knowledge. Our observations on material objects being frequently repeated, and our senses giving certain evidence of their truth, lead us into a competent skill to judge of the rise, progress, and decay of many substances, or natural beings. Various are the instances of this kind, in which we may safely say, that we cannot be *deceived*, or that we must first forfeit both our senses, and our reason before we can suffer any delusion to pass upon us in these common occurrences. There are in-

deed some truths which are equally certain with these more obvious ones, and in these one man may be more capable of being imposed upon than another, from the unequal degrees of knowledge, or the indifferent exercises and attainments of their rational faculties; but still there are *common cases* in which every man above the class of an idiot is an equal judge, and wherein the clown and the philosopher are upon the same level.

If a man cannot tell what degrees of motion kindle a flame, yet he can certainly know as well as the best naturalist, that one flame will kindle *another*; if he cannot tell how the food supplies the body with additional parts for its preservation and increase, yet he can perceive it is nourished and increased by the food that is conveyed into the vessels. In these operations of nature, which are the objects of our daily experience, we may lay it down as a maxim, that it is impossible to be deceived. LAnd yet there is a *church*, and a mighty one too, which in direct contradiction to the evidence of sense, the natural results of reason, would, and does impose the grossest cheats imaginable upon its members, under the notion that their *senses* are deceived in the most obvious and plain experiments in life. With them it is no difficulty, for a *body* to be
in

in ten thousand places at one time, for the substance which you *see, feel, smell, and taste,* to be a different substance to what all these senses represent it to be; or, in the instance of my text, for a *woman to bring forth, before she travails, and be delivered of a man child, before her pain comes.*

And now if we should add with the prophet, *who has heard such a thing, who has seen such things?* Their answer is ready, the church out of its holy treasury of legends furnishes us with a thousand instances equally improbable, equally contradictory to the received notions, and certain experience of all mankind. There are not only those who have *heard* of these natural impossibilities, but those who have *seen* them, and will witness to their truth; they have *ocular demonstrators* against common sense, and *hearsay* evidences innumerable for the proof of facts which never have *been.* The *earth shall be made to bring forth in one day, and a nation shall be made at once;* that is, the ordinary methods of a beginning from some certain principle, and a gradual encrease by regular and natural means shall be superseded, and that which requires time, pains, and industry for its growth, be formed and perfected at one instant, or in so short a space as to be equally the object of wonder, as if

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it had been produced and finished at once. Such a case as this, in which *Isaiab* appeals to the testimony of the world, if ever they had *heard* of, or *seen such a thing*, is a slight and common matter with the *church of Rome*, whose forge of miracles is always at work, and so many constant artificers employed in that pious drudgery, that though it has produced wonder after wonder for these many a century, it still labours on, and with very little pains, and a competent stock of assurance, still brings forth more and more, so that they are now become like the multitude mentioned in the *Revelations*, *which no man could number*. But that ye, brethren, may be warned from falling into the errors and superstitions of *those who lay in wait to deceive you*, and that you may fly from the snare, which is set for the weak and ignorant; I shall take occasion from the words I have named to you, to shew you in particular,

First, The monstrous absurdity of that *church* in its perpetual forgery of new *miracles*, and how much it derogates from the honour and truth of *christianity*.

And in the second place, I will plainly tell you the end and design of their pretensions to *miracles*.

And

And in the last place, make a particular application of the words of my *text*, to the occasion of the present time.

First then; It is absurd in the *church* of *Rome* for to pretend to the exercise of a miraculous power in that silly and ridiculous manner it does, and brings a very great discredit upon *miracles* themselves, and so reflects a dishonour upon *Christ* and his followers, who never had recourse to that method of conviction, but upon proper and extraordinary occasions. The miracles which were worked by our blessed *saviour*, were in testimony of his *mission*, that he came from *God* for those purposes which he informed his hearers he did, and therefore he very often for the truth of his mission and doctrines appeals to his miracles; as when he says, if they would not believe him, they should believe his works. In the same manner the *apostles* have recourse to the mighty works which they wrought for the confirmation of the *doctrine* which they received from their master, and propagated in his name. And certain it is, that whoever offers any thing to the belief of another, pretending that he comes from *God*, must have some evident proof of his divine mission: since no man is obliged to believe him meerly upon his own

B 4

testimony.

testimony. For this would make way for a perpetual series of delusion, if every pretender to divine inspiration was to be believed without proof. Now the proof is the extraordinary assistance God affords to the person who really comes in his name, and this assistance appears either in the spirit of prophecy, or the power of miracles; both which, but especially the latter, were visible in the apostles, and were an evident confirmation of the *doctrines* which they taught.

Now there can be no occasion for new miracles, unless there be new doctrines; and here indeed the church of *Rome* seem to have made the first necessary, by their plentiful introduction of the latter. But have they really any of these which may be depended upon? Have they supported their additional articles of faith with confirmatory works beyond the power of natural agents? Here they glory, here they triumph. Their flock of miracles is inexhaustible, for there is not a *relique* of theirs which has not wrought mighty wonders, not a *country saint* (for they make a difference) but that the *curate* of the place shall tell you more miracles of his performing, than you can read in all the *acts* of the *apostles*. As if christianity wanted more evidences now a days, and that in a christian country,

country, than when it was to struggle in its infancy against the cunning of the *Greek*, the *obstinacy* of the *Jew*, and all the perverseness of a seduced, unenlightened world. But it is not only their *living saints* that do mighty things; there resides a power even in their ashes, in the minutest trifles that the *good men* wore, to perform the same; nay a *hair* of many of them has worked as powerfully at a hundred miles distance after their decease, as if they themselves had been present, and upon the spot. As the *bones* of *Scanderbeg* were to influence his followers to conquer their worldly enemies, so those of their *saints* by an equal virtue are piously bequeathed to subdue *satan*, and the powers of darkness. Here indeed I am upon a sad subject of lies and fictions, but such a one as deserves to be displayed in its proper colours. How shamefully ridiculous are even their own accounts of their miracles? Was it a worthy piece of the angelical ministration, for *angels* to go trotting over sea and land with a load of timber and stones of the *Virgin Mary's house*, till at length they set it down at *Loretto*, that it might be honoured with greater devotion? This story seems the more silly, because if it had stood in the same place where it was built, their *religion* gives them a warrant to have visited it at any distance, and the merit of the *pilgrimage* would have well

recompenced the tediousness of the *journey*. Is it not a goodly story to tell of a saint that walked a vast way after his head was cut off, with it in his arms, resting in some places to draw breath? And yet any one would pass for an *infidel* that should doubt of this at *St. Dennis's church*. The miracles of the christian faith, were grave and solemn actions; but what scenical ridiculous stories, not to say blasphemous ones, make up the miracles of their saints! Again, the miracles of *Christ* and his *apostles* were acted in a public manner, in the view of all, and even before the face of their adversaries; but most of these wonders were transacted in corners, none being witnesses but persons concerned to own and vindicate the cheat: From hence it comes to pass, that they abound with so many fables of *Christ's* appearing in the *host*, sometimes as a child, and sometimes as crucified, when but very few of the whole company present were honoured with that amazing sight. Now when once it has been received as a truth that something miraculous may be performed among a great multitude, and yet may be only discernible by a select number, it soon becomes impiety to question any the most monstrous fiction that can be invented; and thus a foundation is laid for the *juggling priesthood* to trump up as many miracles as they please, since they
 may

may be easily furnished from their own society with proper evidences.

Further, the miracles of the christian faith were written in the times in which they were acted, to the end that enquiries might have been made into their truth, or their falshood; and the powers who then governed, being adversaries to the christian faith if there had been any forgery, it had not only been safe but meritorious for its enemies to have discovered them, and published them to the world. But most of the miracles of *Rome*, have slept with their pretended performers many years, if not ages, and are never heard of till they are secure from the after-game of discovery, and then they are blazoned out with mighty pomp and devotion. And here, when the inventor's head is at work, he may as well trick up his *saint*, with a hundred miracles as one; nay he has the whole creation before him, and nothing to obstruct his choice, and so may pitch upon what wonders he thinks most likely to prove new and fashionable. But we may fairly ask the question how it comes to pass, that in heretical countries (as they are pleased to call them) where there is a greater necessity for those miracles, and where they might be proved, if true, by a more incontestable evidence, since

the examiners of them were not to be suspected; ~~are~~ *none of those mighty works do shew themselves forth?* Are they confined to *Italy*, and *Spain*, and must we never be blessed with one for the conversion of multitudes in *Britain*? This gives good grounds to believe their whole account to be a forgery, a bold imposition of a cunning imperious *priesthood*, working upon the ignorance, the credulity, or the fears of the laity. And indeed the contrivers of these stories have not managed their design with such dexterity, as one might have expected from them; for they have bestowed as many wonders sometimes upon *one person*, as might have *sainted* half an order. And now, if any one is not satisfied with *saints*, and their performances, let him consider farther what conformity the present *Rome* bears to the *ancient*, and what a low debased mimicry they have reduced the *Christian* religion to of Heathenish superstition. It will bear, I fear, too just a parallel; let those who make it, tremble at the effects and consequences.

Yet there is still something more dangerous behind in these *miracle-mongers* of the *Romish church*. For the people being taught to believe these forgeries, and the real *miracles* of the gospel with an equal certainty, since

Since they have the testimony of the church for both, and at the same time seeing such evident characters of fraud and forgery in these supposed miracles, as convince them of their falshood; are thereby in danger of suspecting all the miracles of the gospel to be of the same stamp, and only the artifices of a set of cunning men, whose design was to delude the rest of mankind. This opens a way to direct Atheism, since finding the one false, they conclude the other to be so too; and by consequence, cast away all religion at once, as a piece of political delusion, contrived only for the interest of the deceivers. Justly therefore may we say, that this practice of the church of Rome, brings a discredit upon miracles themselves, and is so far from promoting the real interest of christianity, that it dishonours it to the greatest degree; it being certain, that so much as the best cause is promoted by the worst means, so much in the eye of the generality of judges it detracts from the goodness of that cause. Yet we who are placed in a happier light, as we by this see the false spirit that reigns in that church, so we distinguish the true one in a most particular manner, which cannot deceive, and which has given it us, as an indication of the son of perdition, that his coming should be after the power of satan, with all power

and

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signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, 2 Thess. ii. 9, 10.

And now, since we have seen the absurdity of this pretended multiplication of miracles, and the dangerous consequences that it has upon the christian faith, let me open to you the real end and design that the *church of Rome* has in all these contrivances; which was my second proposal.

If we then go behind the scenes of this ridiculous pageantry, we shall see the springs and movements that set this engine of superstition at play, and discover the great secret of this mystery of iniquity. The *church* you may be sure does not play its tricks for nothing; there must be something to be got by *spiritual legerdemain*, or the actors would never be at the pains of shewing so often. The design then of this continual scene of miracles, is no other than interest, which is of two kinds; *first*, the great gain that it brings to the *church*; and *secondly*, the tyranny that it maintains over the minds of the people.

First then; though the *Romish* church has many ways of enriching itself, yet the *saints*, and their feats, bring no small addition to the hoily treasury. *Gregory's* dialogues first began the trade, which soon proved so thriving.

ing a one, that the masters of the mystery were resolved not to part with it on any terms. The case of *Demetrius*, who made the silver shrines for *Diana*, is much the same with the priests of *Rome*; for *Diana* was proved a goddess by no better argument, than the sons of that communion are proved *saints*: the heathen, indeed, was more plain and open in his dealing, when he fairly told his brethren, *Sirs, you know that by this craft we have our wealth,* and then they found a convincing reason to cry out, *Great is the Diana of the Ephesians!* Our fore-fathers have heard the same in *England* upon the like occasion: *Great is St. Becket of Canterbury!* has been as popular and as gainful a clamour to the zealots of *Rome*. The multitude of offerings from every degree of people, (for none that can give can be excused from giving) vastly encreases the sanctified treasuries of every particular *church*, and at the same time, adds to the general stock; for the pope being himself a greater *saint* than any of the dead ones, must have a share in all the contributions to them. And here we may take notice what lengths men will run, when they once take up a new vain superstition; for since their trade commenced, *saints* have been appointed, not only to every *country*, but to every *house*, for every *trade*, and every *disease*. So that however poor and miserable the inhabi-

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tants of any place are, they must have a constant tax to pay to the *saint* of the neighbourhood, or that of their profession, or if they have an inclination to live well with the *priests* their masters, to both. Thus is this kind of godliness in the literal sense, *great gain*.

Now there is not one of all this train that stuff the *pontifical calendar*, but has been a mighty *wonder-worker*, and has a sufficient number of testimonies to maintain his credit with the people. It is true, some of them grow old and unfashionable, but not from any decay of real power to do the same great things they had done before; but because the directors of the holy machinery have got some new impostor to amuse the vulgar; and it is well known, that new *saints*, and new reliques bear a great price at their markets. Beside that, *sainthood* itself costs very dear, and whatever may be gained afterwards by the bargain, the *saints* family, and the religious house where he is to keep his residence, and perform his miracles, pay sufficiently to the *apostolick chamber* for his admittance into that dignified order. So that the power of working miracles is first sold at a lump by his holiness, and then retailed out by the purchasers to their customers. Such are the artifices of the *vicar* of *St. Peter*; these the de-
lusions

lusions of an avaricious insatiable pack of *priests*, to maintain the outward splendor and magnificence of their *church*, that the inward defects of purity of faith and doctrines, may be the less pryed into and observed. Which leads me to the second end of their multiplication of miracles, which is,

To preserve an arbitrary tyranny over the minds of the people. The *church* of *Rome* well knows that no tyranny is more absolute than *superstition*, that when it has once taken root in the soul, it grows and flourishes into a thousand absurdities, and is hardly removeable without taking away that *religion* itself upon which it is grafted. This then is to be cherished and kept warm in the bosom of their deluded members by a continual shew of false appearances, that strike an awe upon their senses, and fire their imaginations with ideas of terror and admiration. Hence proceed all their solemn pomp of festivals, their processions, and their publick exhibitions of their *saints*. The poor wretches have not time left them to examine into one gaudy wonder (if they were inclined to it) before another strikes upon them with equal splendor; and thus the show continues with their lives. No sooner has the *coagulated blood* of one *saint* begun to flow, but the *image* of the *virgin* keeps up the amazement

ment of the vulgar, by a short *speech* to some holy man; and the *virgin* has not long been dumb, but *tears*, or *blood*, run down from the face or side of some martyr or other; or, if none of them be at leisure, from our *lord himself*. There is such a succession, and such an artful variety in it, of these pretended miracles, that a laity not prone to question, nor at all encouraged to do it, may well be kept in slavery to their masters.

What is there so difficult, that a man would not be persuaded to attempt, what so irrational that he would not believe, if he might but have the *voice of heaven* to encourage him; and this the *priest* can let him have every day of his life? Does he want an approbation of his design, and would have a miracle to ensure his success, the first *statue* he sees shall bow, or the *curate* himself shall assure him from a *vision*, that all will be right. Behold one of these poor creatures prostrate before a shrine, and perhaps washing the feet of it with his tears, and with great affection kissing the hems of its garment: and then, if through the tricks of the priest, the image seem to nod or smile on him (which is not unfrequent) with what joy does he go away, as if some angel had saluted him from heaven? What will not men do when they believe that their *minister can*
charm.

charm water, salt, wax candle for the driving away of devils? That he can borrow oil, touch beads and pebbles, which shall have a virtue against sickness of all kinds, thunder and lightning, and the temptations of the devil. One would think, that there should be little need of having recourse to dead *saints*, when the living can perform such great things; but every art has its particular gain, and is worth so much, and there lies the secret of multiplying miracles. It is amazing that any thing, a degree above natural stupidity, should continue in a servile obsequiousness to these imposing tyrannies; but the unhappiness is, that *bigotry* is become an article of their *faith*, and to scruple or question, is to incur the pains of purgatory, if not of damnation. Thus the power of the *priesthood* is settled, beyond the possibility of being shook off by any human means, especially since the secular arm is employed in its support; and thus a small degree of superstition, with a vast fear of suffering, confirms their subjection, till it become habitual sometimes, even to believe against their senses. No wonder then, if by these means of ostentatious miracles, they can inspire their members with a false fear, a false love, and a false courage, and work all their passions, so as to make them subservient to the carrying on the *great mystery of iniquity*. And now I think

think that I have plainly declared to you, the two great ends that the *church of Rome* proposes to herself in her *sham-miracles*, which are worldly gain, and spiritual tyranny. May we who see through their artifices, shun their devices, and holding sincerely to the true unsophisticated word of God, never stand in need of these vile and abominable practices to support our holy religion!

I come now to make a particular application of the words of my text suitable to the present time; an application, in which every hearer that wishes well to the *protestant* faith, and its continuance in these realms, is deeply concerned.

The prophet says, *before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth bring forth in one day, or shall a nation be born at once?* Now this impossibility, beyond the powers of nature and its ordinary operation, is come to pass (if you believe the *papists*) in these our days. A *woman* too well, and I fear, too fatally known to these *kingdoms*, has brought forth a *man child* without the least tokens, or previous symptoms of travail; the power of *Romish* miracles has done this mighty thing

thing in *one day*, and *made*, as they vainly imagine, *a nation at once*. And that it must be done in this short space of time, and that this is agreeable to the ostentatious promises of *papal* wonders, let us observe the conduct and progress of this whole affair, in which we shall discover enough to make us abhor their miracles, and the product of them.

When as yet there was neither hope on one side, nor suspicion on the other of the *queen's* being with child; when as yet the thought did not seem entertained by herself, nor was dreamed of by any near her person; yet the good men at *Rome*, out of their zeal to give us an heir, could not help discovering their design, by an *unlucky prophecy*, which we have had since occasion to regard. For among many compliments of the *Jesuits* to the Earl of *Castlemain* at *Rome*, before this affair was talked of, there appeared in publick this propheticall device. An emblem was represented of a lilly distilling drops upon the ground, which flower, according to the old opinion of the naturalist, by the shedding of the water from its leaves, propagates its species, and the motto was *Lachrymor in problem*. But to make it the plainer, this distich was written beneath,

*Pro natis. Jacobe, gemis! flos candide regum?
Hos natura fili si neget astra dabunt.*

*Doſt thou grieve for children, James, thou beſt
of kings? if nature denies them, heaven ſhall give
them to thee.*

A ſufficient testimony both of their deſigns and their modeſty; and they were indeed reſolved to make good their promiſes of a *miraculous conception*. The *Jefuits*, that bleſſed ſociety, in their publick diſcourſes ſoon after, did not ſcruple to aver, as if from inſpiration, that the *queen* muſt be with *child*, and with equal confidence, that it muſt be a *male child*. When matters were a little riper for their beloved project, on which the hearts of the whole *catholick* cauſe were ſet, and for which every good *proteſtant* and *Engliſhman*, was pierced with a thouſand fears; then they began to appear ſtill more bold and poſitive, declaring that God was concerned as much in the caſe of the future birth for his own glory, as he was for the fulfilling of his promiſe in quickening the *dead womb of Sarah*.

And now, that this *child of wonder* might not be blaſted in the womb, or be deſtroyed by any other unforeſeen accident, the *conſecrated*
trinkets

trinkets are sent from *Rome* to ensure a safe delivery, and preserve the life of the infant. And indeed it was very fitting that every step of this affair should be attended with a due solemnity, since the contrivers were to have a *babe*, who was to exalt the *triple crown* so high, and make so large returns as the *sacrifice* of a kingdom for the blessings of the *holy father*.

But this scene, whether you will call it a *miracle*, or a *plot*, (and sure it has as good a title to the latter as to the former) was carried on like the rest of their *wonders*, with the *privity* of a few only, and those concerned not to discover the imposition. The doctrine of *equivocation*, which that *church* teaches, was an excellent cordial to make any *oath*, or deposition go down without a strain of conscience, and was not unluckily propagated not many years before their members had so just an occasion for its use. And shall then a woman before she travails, bring forth? Who has heard such a thing? The *church* of *Rome*. Shall she before her pain comes, be delivered of a man child? Who has seen such things? The *church* of *Rome*. Shall the earth bring forth in one day, or a nation be made at once? Who believes this impossibility? The *church* of *Rome*.

Yet let us observe a little farther into the conduct of the action of this day. There are, as we have said in the beginning of this discourse, some things, which from the evidence of our senses, and our daily experience, we cannot be deceived in, and of this nature is the present case. For so little care was taken in the disguising an affair of this importance, that the *queen* was undetermined till just before the time where she should lie in, and of a sudden, without any previous symptoms of her labour, it must be at *St. James's*. It was not perceived that she was ill on the *Saturday* night, and the next day between nine and ten she was brought to bed, and in the language of the prophet a nation was made at once. Where were the heads of the *Jesuits* not to give a more solemn preparation, a more regular and decent management to an action on which all their hopes depended? So many, in short, seem to have been let into the secret, that the *time* was generally known among the *papists* to an hour or thereabout, and it is well known that some of them inadvertently told it before the pretended delivery.

But what gives still more shrewd suspicions that this is a true *Romish miracle*, is the time chosen to work it in; when all those whom it

most

most concerned to be present, were by stratagem ordered to be absent. The story is too well known, and still so fresh in our memories, that it needs not a repetition. I complained in the foregoing part of my discourse, that out of the great number of *wonders* that *church* bestows upon almost all countries, it had not vouchsafed to give *Britain* one; but I now own that *Rome* has made us amends for her past unkindnesses by *one* that exceeds all she has performed in the territories under her own yoke. We thank her, and shall from hence learn to measure the goodness of her inclinations to a land of *hereticks*, since she chose *that* for the scene of the most wonderful exploit she ever attempted.

And now, my brethren, if you can be persuaded in contradiction to your senses, and believe in opposition to common reason, and that in facts which all men are equal judges of, then listen to the voice of *Rome*, swallow down her *miracles* with implicit faith, and take up her yoke with implicit obedience. Let the gross impositions of *pretended saints*, and *pretended princes*, be the burthen of your necks, and the load of your consciences. If you can be reconciled to impossibilities, and think every thing *must* be true, that the *priest* tells you is so, then sit down tame contented creatures under a double blindness both of *reason* and *religion*. If you

have so unjust a notion of the *purity*, the truth, and the divine establishment of the *christian* religion, to think it stands in need of the assistance of new miraculous gifts and powers, for to evidence its certainty, then lay hold of those altars that promise these mighty works, adhere to *nodding images* and *smiling wax-work*; then fix your faith upon that monstrous absurdity, the *infallibility* of *meer man*.

But I am persuaded better things of you, brethren, from the *pure* and *sincere milk* of the *word* of God which you have received, from the untainted principles of reason, and that open integrity of heart which is the characteristic of this nation, and which disdains the mean artifices and disguises of a *Jesuitical* conscience. You have seen too plainly the spirit of that persecuting church, ever to be allured by its specious promises, or convinced by its fallacious arguments: as you have been taught not to bear a *spiritual* tyranny, so have you felt enough never to submit to a *temporal* one, knowing well that whichsoever begins first, the other naturally follows.

You know what you must expect if *infallibility* of any sort takes place in these *islands*, and that a *king who is above laws*, and a *priest who is above errors*, are equally dangerous to
this

this constitution. Who can then doubt, but that out of a due sense of the duty you owe to God, to your country, and yourselves, nay to your memories, and your posterity, you will with a noble and generous disdain resent the impositions which wicked and cunning men would settle and entail upon your *church* and nation? You must expect that the old *Romish* artillery will be planted against you; - but thank God, there is courage left among us to resist them, and reason enough to confute them. Let them confine their *miracles* to the countries where the sword and the *church* (always friends in the cause of superstition) can enforce their belief; but we know not, I say again, either their *pretended saints*, or their *pretended princes*.

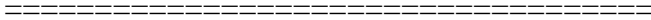
In short, as our ancestors have delivered to us such valuable blessings as a pure *reformed church*, a temperate *monarchy*, and *English liberties*, let us take care to deliver them safe to our posterity. And lastly, in defiance of all the fopperies of *Rome*, hold fast to that *faith* which was once delivered to the real *saints*, and which, if we take care to preserve, and practise according to the precepts of its divine author, will bring us to everlasting glory, and make *saints* of us all.

Which God in his, &c.

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Bank of Wisdom

Bank of wisdom
P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201
U.S.A.

A
D I A L O G U E

Between the

Rev. Mr. JENKIN EVANS

Assistant Minister to the Curate of *White-chapel*,

A N D

Mr. PETER DOBSON,

A Man of SENSE and some LEARNING, and
a CITIZEN of LONDON;

C O N C E R N I N G

B I S H O P S,

P A R T I C U L A R L Y

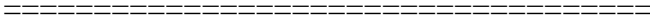
The Bishops of the Principality of *W A L E S*.

First printed in the year 1744.

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If every American does his or her best for America and for Humanity we shall become, and remain, the Grandest of Nations – admired by all and feared by none, our strength being our Wisdom and kindness.

Knowledge knows no race, sex, boundary or nationality; what mankind knows has been gathered from every field plowed by the thoughts of man. There is no reason to envy a learned person or a scholarly institution, learning is available to all who seek it in earnest, and it is to be had cheaply enough for all.

To study and plow deeper the rut one is in does not lead to an elevation of intelligence, quite the contrary! To read widely, savor the thoughts, and blind beliefs, of others will make it impossible to return again to that narrowness that did dominate the view of the uninformed.

To prove a thing wrong that had been believed will elevate the mind more than a new fact learned.

Emmett F. Fields
Bank of Wisdom

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P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201
U.S.A.

A

D I A L O G U E

C O N C E R N I N G

B I S H O P S.

D. **T**HE reverend Mr. *Evans* here!
This is a favour indeed; I hope
you have not been come long?

E. About half an hour; I have been amu-
sing myself in your little library; upon my
word you have a pretty collection of books
and well chosen.

D. You know, doctor, I have in a great
measure left off business; my friends gave me
a tolerable education; I was brought up at *St. Paul's*
school, and I was pretty near the top; I have
taken care to preserve at least the learning I had,
and can still understand a Latin author reasonably
well; my father designed me for a clergyman, but
having a dispute with the minister of the parish
about his dues, he put me into trade; Mr. *Evans*,
you are a happy man, you were brought up at
the university.

E. I thank God, Mr. *Dobson*, I have suck-
ed the breast of *alma mater*; I was sent to *Je-*
sus college before I was twenty; in two years I
was made *senior s^{ph}*, and had not seen four and
twenty when I was *batchelor* of arts.

D. I see you have my *folio* common prayer-
book before you: I bought it when I was church-
warden of the parish.

E. I think I always find it open upon the
table; I am glad you put so great a value upon
that excellent book; I am fallen accidentally
upon the *office* concerning the *ordaining* and *con-*
secrating of bishops.

D. I am glad of it with all my heart; I
have longed a great while to know something
about that business, but you will never have
patience with all my impertinent questions.
[*Now must I humour th's choleric Welch divine,*
or I shall get nothing out of him: he is a strange
mixture, God knows. Aside.]

E. I shall be ready to answer any thing that
lies in my power, but it is a serious matter, and
requires great gravity and consideration.

D. To be sure it does; then Mr. *Evans*,
since you are so good, pray tell me in the first
place what's properly meant by a *bishop*?

E. A bishop according to the *Greek* deri-
vation is an *overseer*.

D. Why is he called a *bishop*?

E.

E. He has that name from the *Saxon* word *biscop*, which we derive from the *Greek* *episcopos*, *speculator*, *explorator*, a *spy*, a *looker out*, a *sentinel* or *watchman*; in short, he is, as I may say, a *supervisor* of the business and affairs of the church: this before us you see is the form of *ordaining* or *consecrating* of bishops, that is of *English* bishops, of *christian* bishops.

D. God forbid there should be any bishops that are not *christian* bishops; sure there are no *heathen* bishops.

E. There were *heathen* bishops and good bishops too; the old *Grecians* had their *episcopoi*, and so had the *Romans*; I remember that the divine *Cicero*, in one of his epistles, tells us, that he was a *bishop*.

D. What was the business of those bishops?

E. To enquire into the manners of the people under their jurisdiction, and take notice of their conduct and behaviour.

D. But are there no *heathen* bishops now?

E. No not one upon the face of the earth.

Rara avis in terris nigraque similima cygno.

You'll excuse the *Latin* Mr. *Dobson*?

D. O dear doctor, I love it of all things. This sacred office, I find, begins with an excellent prayer. I wish those that are concerned would frequently reflect upon it with the

34. *The Pillars of* PRIESTCRAFT

attention it deserves——*Give grace, we beseech thee, to all bishops and pastors of thy church, that they may diligently preach thy word and duly administer the godly discipline thereof.* The venerable compilers of this form, I suppose, had no notion that a bishop, as soon as he was consecrated, was discharged from the duty of a priest, or was immediately to burn his commonplace book, as if it was beneath his dignity to *preach diligently*, that is *constantly* in his diocese; whereas a bishop has without doubt the principal care of every soul within his district, and is more especially bound not only to see the offices of the church, the duties of praying, preaching and administering the sacraments are faithfully and regularly executed by the parochial clergy, but to *preach diligently* himself in one or other of his churches, as he finds most conducive to the edification of his people, and the spiritual improvement of the flocks committed to his charge. This must be the meaning of the words, if they have any meaning at all, and how they acquit themselves in this important case, I should be glad to be informed.

E. That may be easily done; for when they are resident in their sees, they are a mighty relief to the parochial clergy; they travel from church to church in all weathers, through frost and snow, over hills and high mountains
they

they preach here, read prayers there, catechize, expound, confirm. They are never idle, for they well know, that *woe be unto them if they preach not the gospel.* Do you think they wrap their talents in a napkin, and let them grow rusty? Can you imagine they do nothing but walk to the cathedral on a *Sunday* in state with the *vergers*, with their *silver-maces*, before them?

D. Why, Sir, some of them do not reside in their dioceses at all; others are there for a month or two, to take the benefit of the summer air, and taste the venison of the country, and then, perhaps, they may *preach* once or so, and a mighty favour it is; but the chief account of their *preaching* we have from the news papers; you hear now and then of a charity sermon, or a sermon before the *lords*. and exceedingly seldom, they will vouchsafe to ascend the pulpit of the parish wherein they live, and set all the congregation upon the stare. Some of them do not preach five times in a year, in their own diocese, and many of them not once. I would recommend to them the reading of old bishop *Latimer's* sermons, and particularly this remark, which I took down in my pocket-book. 'While they controul in great towns and about court, who is it that controuls the devil at home? Whether they reside or not, the devil is not wanting on his part, he is never unoccupied;

' he is ever in his parish, he keeps residence
 ' at all times, he ever applies his business,
 ' he is never idle, his office is to hinder reli-
 ' gion. ——— Oh that *prelates* would be as
 ' diligent to sow the corn of good doctrine,
 ' as *satan* is to sow cockle and darnel. ———
 ' The devil is no *unpreaching* prelate, he is
 ' no *lordly loiterer* from his cure, he still ap-
 ' plies his business; if you will not learn of
 ' God, or good men, learn diligence in your
 ' business even of the devil, *ad erubescendum*
 ' *vestram dico*, I speak it to your shame.' This
 indefensible practice of *non-residence*, must one
 time or other be of pernicious consequence
 to episcopacy: the church of *Rome*, with all
 her absurdities, all her obligations to favour
 ignorance and blindness, could never swallow
 that monstrous contradiction of *non-residence*.
 The council of *Trent* (as I have read) decrees
 expressly, that every bishop who was six months
 absent from his bishopric, of what title, or
 preeminence soever he shall be, he should for-
 feit a fourth part of the revenues of it, and
 if six months more, another fourth, and the
 contumacy increasing, the metropolitan was to
 inform the pope against him, that he might
 inflict some severe punishment, or remove him
 from his bishopric, and place a better in his
 room. What a miserable case it is that a
 poor clergyman, whose family wants bread at
 home,

hime, if he has any business with his bishop, must be obliged to run after him from one end of the kingdom to the other, and be forced to beg his way home again ?

E. There's no such thing. The bishop I assure you defrays every farthing of the expence out of his own pocket, and gives his poor brother something to buy a good book with when he comes home.

D. So much the better ; but we are rambled from the subject ; spare me a word more, when episcopacy was run down in the civil wars, a great objection against the bishops was that they never *preached*. They were called the most opprobrious names upon that account, *idle shepherds, blind watchmen, dumb*

—— I do not care to repeat the distinctions and characters bestowed upon them in those times : I remember Mr. *Fiennes*, in his speech upon that occasion, says, that ‘ the bishops
 ‘ neither can nor will preach ; they cannot,
 ‘ because they are so entangled with the af-
 ‘ fairs of this world ; they will not, because
 ‘ their dignities and honours make them so
 ‘ stately, that they think it not *episcopal* to
 ‘ *preach often*. They are so fat, and live so
 ‘ much at their ease, that they are overrun
 ‘ with idleness, and cannot bring their minds
 ‘ to it. I wish as well to the *episcopal* order as
 any man in *England*, nor do I think it reason-
 able

able to argue against the use of an office from the abuse of it, but I am sorry to say—

E. To say any thing to the purpose you mean; why that *Fiennes* was a rebel, a republican, a fanatic; he was condemned to be hanged for the cowardly surrender of *Bristol* to prince *Rupert*. Have you no better authority than this; read on, read on.

D. What is meant by *duly administering the godly discipline of God's word*, as mentioned in this prayer?

E. That expression relates chiefly to the censures of the church, those dreadful and terrible weapons that God has committed into the hands of bishops to punish and cut off notorious offenders, that cannot otherwise be reclaimed, to shut them out of the pale of God's fold, and to deliver them over to *satan*, until by their penitence and submission they are qualified to be re-admitted, and to be restored to the common privileges of the *christian* church.

D. Is that *godly discipline* administered at this time according to the original design of its institution!

E. I hope so; the offender I suppose, is cited before the *bishop*, who sits in consistory with his *presbyters* about him, and takes immediate cognizance of the cause himself; there the sinner is examined, reprov'd, admonish'd, threatened,

threatened, and upon his continued obstinacy cast out of the church. The matter is not turned over to *chancellors, commissioners, officials,* and a parcel of hungry unhallowed *lay-officers* (who can pretend to no relation to the commission of *Christ* and his *apostles*) to persecute and squeeze the poor wretch, to torment him with cruel, tedious, and expensive processes, and when they have racked him to death, and ruined him in his fortune, then at last to excommunicate him, and for any little failure in the form of their enslaving proceedings, to throw him out of all spiritual and civil commerce and society, to banish him as a vagabond like *Cain*, and make him infamous to all about him; and as if this were not enough, to call for help from the temporal sword, to clap him up in a goal, and let him rot in a dungeon. — This would be setting up an *inquisition* with a vengeance; from which, and all other *popish* crafts and cruelties, good lord deliver us! Do you think this was the manner of *binding* and *loosing* intended by the commission delivered by *Christ* to his *apostles*, and by them to the *bishops*, their successors in the church? Can you imagine, that the sentence of such judges is *ratified* in heaven? That God will ever sign such dead warrants as these? Can this be the design of that petition offered up by the *archbishop* in the office of *consecration,*

grant we beseech thee to this thy servant such grace that he may use the authority given him, not to destruction, but to salvation, not to hurt, but to help?

D. If the bishop *himself* was to sit in judgment, and to execute the censures according to the design of his lord and master, the *sentence*, no doubt would be dreadful and of fatal effect, but when so many excommunications are thundered out and published in a *ludicrous* unedifying manner, for the most trifling occasions, which the bishop knows nothing of; when he never *hears* nor *sees* the offender, nor takes the least care of the happiness of his soul, but leaves that entirely to his officers to be saved or damned, as the subtle unrighteous forms of their *unscriptural* proceedings (first invented for the support of *papal* power, and spun out into a sort of trade, by *canon lawyers*, the spawn of *popery*) shall think fit to pronounce; to consign a poor creature to eternal flames for some pitiful matter, to enjoin him penance, perhaps, and then for a *little money*, to loose him and let him go; if this be the *due administering of godly discipline* according to this excellent *prayer*, let the consciences of those declare to whom it belongs. What a horrid profaneness and mockery of God, it is to give it solemnly in charge to a *bishop elect*, when he is consecrated to *exercise godly discipline, to be so merciful*

ciful that he is not too remiss, and to minister discipline that he forget not mercy; when at the same time, he never knows any thing of the offender, nor of the cause ——— I could say much more, but it has been often said to no purpose ——— This has been a continual subject of complaint from the *reformation* to this day; it remains still unredressed, and is a grievance of so high a nature; it is such a perversion, such a burlesque of the most solemn and tremendous act of church authority, that it hangs like a *millstone* upon the neck of episcopacy, which I am afraid will one time or other sink it to the bottom never to arise more.

E. God forbid; I hope things will mend, do not be so hot. Come, we will go on: *he that desireth the office of a bishop desireth a good work*; he desires the office of a bishop on purpose to enable him to promote the interest of piety, virtue and charity, and to do *more* good works than he was capable of doing before.

D. Do bishops desire the office only for those excellent ends? Have they no worldly prospects in view to advance themselves or their families? Have they no ambition to sit in parliaments, or to appear in the courts of princes? Do they do *more* good works in proportion to the increase of their revenue, and the advantages of their station?

E. Yes, marry do they; and were it not for those worthy ends they would be dragged by no violence from their studies in the obscurity of a college, or the privacy of a country parish; and as for their families, if they have any food or raiment convenient for them, they leave the rest to providence. Indeed, they have preferments in their gifts sufficient to support their sons in a handsome manner, but *detur dignissimo* is the word. If a bishop's son be the most learned clergyman in the diocese, as it generally happens under the influence of paternal example, *simile frondescit virga metallo*, as the poet, sings; and if the father upon a strict examination finds him so, then indeed he will advance him perhaps to an archdeaconry, or to a good living; but what of that? He sends him out bare, and without furniture, without giving him so much as a *little sense*, or his common-place book, or one old sermon, or the least hint or division, or general head, but leaves the poor young man, who is not used to hard labour, to work and sweat, and make it all out of his own brains; in short, it is a cruel thing to be a bishop's son.

D. It is so at this rate, but one would think they might make some allowance, and incline a little in favour of their own flesh and blood.

E. No doubt they have been often told so, but they will not bear the thoughts of it; they will

will have no respect of persons ; if my lady, the mother, was to beg upon her bended knees, it would signify nothing ; I do assure you, when a bishop examines his son for orders, he works him about the pig-market ; he asks him the hardest questions, and puts him to the crab-bidest place in all the book. And then for their daughters —

D. I knew a bishop that married his daughters to clergymen, and provided handsomely for them.

E. But how is that ? if a clergyman falls in love with a bishop's daughter (and, indeed they are the most beautiful and accomplished young ladies in the kingdom) he knows he is to expect nothing from the father but by his merits ; the bishop tells him so beforehand. ' If you have a mind to my daughter, God ' bless you both together ; but look for no preferment from me upon that account ; my ' favours are the rewards of hard study, of ' sound principles, and regular behaviour ; you ' must shine *sicut inter stellas luna minores*, to ' be distinguished by me.' So that if you see the son or relation of a bishop raised to the highest preferments in the church, you may depend upon it he is the most learned, and the best preacher in all the diocese. You'll find it a difficult matter to prove the contrary.

D. Does a bishop give his daughters no fortune in money ?

E. A very trifle besides his blessing; and how can it be? What with charity at home, and charity abroad, with endowing of *hospitals*, and founding of *exhibitions*, and buying books in all the *eastern* languages to convert the *Jews* and *Arabians*, what can be saved? I think the *natural* piety and virtue of a bishop's daughter is portion sufficient, and a competent stock for a young clergyman to begin with.

D. But I have heard that a female relation, or a waiting-woman in a bishop's family, is sometimes married to a clergyman, who has a living given him upon that account.

E. There is no such thing; I defy the rankest presbyterian to produce one instance of it since the reformation.

D. I hope then, they observe the same rigid impartiality in preferring any clergyman upon the strongest recommendation from others ?

E. They do I assure you; for between you and I, if the greatest king, or prince, or duke, or earl in all the world, recommends a clergyman to a bishop, he first examines him strictly in *Latin*, *Greek* and *Hebrew*, and if he catches him tripping he is rejected; there is no regard to the greatest power, or the highest title, he is sent away *re infectâ*, with a *flæa* in his ear, and
makes

makes as silly a figure, as if he had been recommended by you or me.

D. Good lack !

E. I tell you it is merit only must do the business; and to encourage merit there is a most laudable custom now universally followed by all the governors of the church, which is, to keep a constant correspondence with the heads of all the colleges in both universities; and when they find a poor lad of promising parts, and a good sober behaviour; one of the bishops, whose turn it is, immediately adopts him for his own, makes him a handsome allowance to live comfortably, sends for him at proper times to his own palace to have him under his eye; there he directs him in the method of his studies, settles him in good principles, and particularly in a love and veneration for the doctrine and discipline of the established church; and when he is qualified for orders, he advances him gradually to the highest dignities, and gives him the preference to all sons and relations in the world.

D. But do not bishops generally appoint one of their relations to be their secretaries or so ?

E. Very rarely; their way is to look out for some worthy clergyman in their diocese, who is reduced to misfortunes, or some young student just in orders; such a one they take
into

into their family, and allow him the small perquisites of that employment, and small enough they are, God knows: but if no such person can be found, which scarce ever happens, then they will make use of a nephew of shining parts, or some distant relation; and where is the mighty harm in this?

D. None in the least.

E. Then, as for pride and ambition——

D. Have bishops no pride or ambition?

E. No more than a sucking child; and though it is well known that the bishops in *England* are descended from the best and most ancient families in the kingdom, you never hear them talk of their pedigrees; they are rather the more humble on that account. One is the son of a duke, another the son of a —— I tell you they are not like mushrooms sprung up in a night, or raised in a minute like puff-paste; they have no occasion, like upstarts in other professions, to buy coats of arms at the *Herald's* office: they and their ladies have them by descent; *ab avis & proavis, & avi numerantur avorum.*

D. Do they not affect to make a figure at court?

E. Affect, a fiddle; they had rather live in a cell than undergo the fatigue of attendance at any court in Christendom; but there they go to discharge a good conscience; they are

a sort of protestant confessors ready to solve all difficult cases, to support the weak, to comfort the afflicted, to relieve the distressed, to cheer up the poor-spirited, to ease such as are troubled with evil thoughts, to deliver such as are under strong temptation. They have always before their eyes, that excellent canon of the council of *Sardis*. The fathers of that synod observing, that bishops used to go to court upon by-ends, and private designs of their own, ordained that no bishop should go to court, unless immediately summoned by the emperor's letters, or that their assistance was required to right the widow, or orphans, and to rescue them from the unjust grasps of potent and merciless oppressors. I will tell you a secret: if the greatest king, or peer in the world, was known to live in any habitual sin, they would not suffer the sin upon him one moment, they would reprove him to his face, though they were all sure to perish in a dungeon.

D. Well done, doctor; but do not bishops delight to sit in the parliament house?

E. They delight to serve their country, if you will: there they sit *facere vota pro republica*, to make prayers, or vows, or votes for the commonwealth; for so the phrase may be translated; thus we read in *Horace*, *voti compos*, a man has a good vote; *ex voto vivitur*,
when

when a man lives according to his *vote*; *non voto vivitur uno*, when he keeps a good house by giving a double vote. They sit in parliament, *ne quid detrimenti capiat ecclesia*, that the church suffers no wrong. And it is most comfortable to observe, how they are all inspired with a wonderful spirit of concord and *unanimity*; for they all *pray*, or *vow*, or *vote*, the same way; yet every one severally follows the dictates of his conscience, and *votes* as the merits of the cause require. They act by a sort of divine instinct, without any manner of communication with one another. They are like the *seventy interpreters*, that translated the old testament into *Greek*, they were locked up separately in different cells, yet they say, there was not a syllable difference in their several translations; so these *interpreters* of holy writ, without speaking a word to one another, agree always in their *prayers* or *votes*; they rise up as one man, they are of one heart, and of one soul. Delight to sit in parliaments? so far from it, any more than their duty obliges them, that they never concern themselves about the *election* of parliament-men in the country where they live; they never offer to closet, to send circular letters to influence, or menace their clergy, their tenants, or their tradesmen, but leave them all to their liberty to vote as their consciences direct,

with-

without favour or affection. They do not hurry their servants abroad at all hours, night and day, and make them scour about the country on the coach-horses through thick and thin; or keep their cellars open to make a party, but every man that belongs to them remains free and unbiassed, according to act of parliament, and the established liberty of the subject, and fundamental rights of the constitution.

D. That is glorious! but have bishops no pride?

E. Did you ever observe them to strut or swagger, or puff out their scarves? Do they spread open or display their silken shining *circles* over their cassocks? No, they wrap themselves close in their holy vestments, they walk softly with their eyes downward upon the ground, inwardly lamenting and bemoaning the flagrant wickedness of a sinful nation. You may be sure those thin lean bodies, and pale sad countenances are the effects of long fasting, strong crying and tears, of hard study, and continual mortification.

D. I do not know what you mean by pale faces, but I have seen a bishop with a red face before now.

E. And have you not seen ladies with red faces, by drinking of too much water?

D. But dear doctor, are not bishops exceedingly pleased to ride in coaches?

E. What would you have those ride in, who have almost crippled themselves by a studious sedentary life, and their limbs are benumbed, so that they are scarce able to walk? But then they always pull up the *blinds*, for the huzza's and acclamations of the people would be troublesome to them, if they were seen as they pass along; *popularity* gives them offence. O Mr. *Dobson*, give me leave, indulge me, or my heart will burst: there is something so peculiarly noble in a *bishop's lady* as she sits in her coach, whether you observe the beauty and dignity of her person, the majesty of her appearance, the genteelness of her dress, nothing of the *dowdy* about her; with what gracefulness she sits, as if she was born for greatness: O they are the ornaments of their sex, the patterns of politeness, elegance, and decorum, the *deliciæ humani generis*, raised on purpose by providence, to be the nursing mothers of the — Did you never observe a *bishop's lady* in her coach at a *mercier's* door upon *Ludgate-hill*, how humbly she looks with her little daughters, pretty moppets! about her, teaching them to *knot*, and say their *catechisms*? You might swear she was an *episcopal* gentlewoman, without seeing the golden *mitre* on the outside.

D. It is wonderful, I confess; but, doctor, let us go on; a bishop must be the husband of one wife; no doubt of it, he ought not to have two at one time.

E. Pray, Mr. Dobson, leave the expounding of scripture to me, I think it is more my province. This injunction does not relate to a plurality of wives, but it is as much, as if one should say — what would you give to know?

D. Not much; but pray, doctor, was there ever any such a thing as a bishop's committing fornication?

E. No.

D. Nor adultery?

E. No, never.

D. But did a bishop never look upon a woman to lust after her, and so commit adultery with her in his heart?

E. Yes, *popish* bishops in abundance: they all commit adultery with the whore of *Babylon*, and with other loose hussies, or they are much belyed. But I never heard nor read of a *protestant* bishop's being a whoremonger, nor adulterer, name one if you dare.

D. Nor archbishop?

E. No.

D. Good lack! but do they never look upon a pretty woman with delight? Do they never drink tea among the ladies?

E. They look upon a fine woman as you do upon a beautiful horse, to admire the works of the creation, but without any manner of concupiscence I assure you.

D. And then, they wear such huge broad-brimmed hats, on purpose to keep their eyes from wandering upon strange objects.

E. Well observed, they do so; and as for drinking tea among the ladies, they do it to have the better opportunity to draw them off from the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh. They are ever meditating upon these *verses*, which, (as you may see in the *office*) they sing when they are consecrated.

*Our weakness strengthen and confirm,
(For, Lord, thou know'st us frail)
That neither devil, world, nor flesh
Against us may prevail.*

They do not spend their time upon trifling subjects, pinching of snuff, admiring the *ribbons*, or gallanting their fans, but in explaining the *catechism*, or expounding some difficult *text*. O, it is a heaven upon earth, to sit at a tea-table with a bishop, or, indeed, with a *bishop's lady*.

D. Do not some bishops keep *ladies* in their houses, whom they call *cousins*, or *nieces*?

E.

E. No, never; and in this they are truly primitive; for in the first ages of the church, particular care was taken, that no bishop, under penalty of being deposed, should entertain any woman in his family, either relation, or stranger, that so all pretence, either of temptation or scandal, might be cut off.

D. But, dear doctor, may not a bishop have wandering thoughts?

E. Mr. Dobson, ask pertinent questions: It is no jesting matter, *ludere cum sacris*: you will ask me by and by, if bishops do not go to plays.

D. Now you speak of that, I will not say, that bishops go to plays, but I am sure some of them read plays, and very smutty ones too. Pray, did not a bishop publish some *Latin* plays, *Terence's comedies*? I am sure there is bawdy in some of them; I have read them: *there is a plump juicy girl, would make your teeth water*: and then there is a plot to debauch a woman, by a man that pretends to have no *stones*. I thought a bishop might find himself better business, than to recommend and explain such stuff as that. I saw lately an A————'s name among a list of subscribers to a collection of old plays, in which are expressions so obscene, so filthy, lewd and impious.—Ah, doctor, there are

other *fluts* in the world, beside the whore of *Babylon*.

E. I have a good mind to cite you into the spiritual court for defamation: I see you observe no bounds: I will have no more to say to you: I renounce all communication with you: here am I taking all the pains to edify and improve your understanding, and you affront me to my teeth: I will never darken your doors again.

D. Pardon me, reverend Sir, this one time; do not, I beseech you, let me lose your learned acquaintance. I beg you would bring good *Mrs. Evans* to eat a bit of *roast pig* with me to-morrow.

E. Have you broached the barrel of *ale* you told me of? I am somewhat hasty, I own; but, upon your submission, I pass it by.

D. Do bishops love their *wives* as *Christ* loved his church?

E. Yes, they do, and would lay down their lives to save them.

D. Do bishops (as the office directs) *rule* their wives well?

E. Yes; mighty well.

D. Is not a bishop's diocese, said to be his *spiritual wife*? How then comes he, for the sake of a richer dower, to leave his *first love*,
and

and to give her a bill of *divorce*, and to marry himself to another bishoprick?

E. The old *presbyterian* cant! a-bishop, you must know, is not married to any particular diocese, but to the church in general. I find you are nibbling about the *translation* of bishops; that practice, I do assure you, is justified by the use of the first and purest ages, from the apostles days down to the times we live in; it is *jure divino*, and may be proved by undeniable authority. Do not you read expressly that *Enoch* was translated?

D. You have convinced me; and yet, notwithstanding this plain proof, I have read somewhere of a bishop of *Rochester* in former days, one *Fisher*, who, when he was offered a richer bishopric, was used to say, his church was his *wife*, and he would never part with her because she was *poor*.

E. He was a *popish* bishop; do not mind him; foxes and firebrands! *papist* and *presbyterians*! all against the poor church of *England*! God help her!

D. I remember now; it was in *Collier's* church history, where I read that saying of the bishop's; and the same writer, in another place, speaks something of the *translation* of bishops, I will turn to the index; here it is; let me see; look here, doctor, he says, that "it is decreed by the apostles canons, that it

“ is not lawful for a bishop to leave his own
 “ diocese, and remove to another, without a
 “ justifiable motive; that is, unless he has a
 “ fair prospect of doing *more service* to the
 “ church upon such a *translation*. But even
 “ in this case, he is not to remove without
 “ strong solicitation, and by the order of a
 “ great number of bishops. The council of
 “ *Nice* says, if any bishop quits his own see,
 “ and settles in another, his translation shall
 “ be *void*, and he shall be returned to the dio-
 “ cese to which he was at first consecrated.
 “ And the council of *Sardica* complained, that
 “ covetousness and ambition had brought an
 “ ill custom upon the church; that it was
 “ too common a practice for bishops to re-
 “ move from a less see to a greater, and that
 “ an instance the other way was seldom or
 “ never to be met with; from whence it
 “ was plain, they were governed by considera-
 “ tions of interest.” Now, spare me a que-
 “ sion or two. Are bishops *translated* merely
 “ because they can do the church *more service*
 “ in a *rich* bishopric than a *poor* one? Do they
 “ deny to be *translated*, till they are pressed by
 “ the strongest solicitation? Do all the rest of the
 “ bishops go to him in a body, and beg of him
 “ to be *translated*? Do they ever desire to be
 “ *translated* from a *rich* bishopric to a *poor* one,
 be

because they may be able to do more service to the church?

E. All forgery! *popery!* forgery! that *Collier* was a rank *Jacobite!* a *Nonjuror!* give me my hat and gloves. That book ought to be burnt by the hangman. I will not stay a moment, lest the earth should open and swallow us up, and the house tumble about our ears.

D. Patience, reverend Sir, I only refer you to what I have read; you know I have often told you I was pretty near the upper end of *Paul's* school, and, though I may not talk so learnedly as you gentlemen of the university, I have read a great deal of *English* history. But I am of your opinion all the while; I think as well of bishops as you do, and would go as far to serve them.

E. Sayest thou so! give me thy hand; then I will fill the other pipe. I tell you, once for all, that no bishop would endure the thoughts of being *translated*, unless he was sure it was for the good of the church; and what think you is the reason, that the same holy man will be a *bishop* of one church, *dean* of another, *prebendary* of another, hold a living or two in *commendam*, and take the trouble of other cures upon him, but only to qualify himself to do the more good in his generation? and if they thought that other clergymen would pro-

mote the business of charity and religion in those benefices, with an equal or superior industry and care, they would instantly renounce them all; but, alas! Mr. *Debson*, the harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few, very few! could they find persons proper to receive them, they would soon resign their pluralities; but when, upon strict enquiry, no such are to be found, they keep them in their own hands for those worthy and pious purposes. Nay, they are so eager and resolute to advance those excellent ends, that you will, sometimes, see a holy man refuse, as it were, a *bishopric*, unless he be, likewise, allowed to be a *dean*, a *prebendary* and a *rector*, for fear the duties of those places should not be so properly executed, and their revenues not conscientiously managed for the good of souls. I am well assured, they do not save a penny of the profits into their own pockets, but lay it out in the most useful and extensive charities, to support poor *vicars*; to supply the wants of the inferior clergy; to found libraries in market-towns, *in usum cleri*; to build parsonage-houses, that are now running into decay all over *England*; to repair the episcopal palaces, especially in *Wales*; to relieve the fatherless, and make the widow's heart to sing.

D. You were saying, doctor, that the bishops, sometimes, hold a living or two in
commendam,

commendam; what is the meaning of that word?

E. Sir, I do not take upon me to be a regular *doctor*, but only am called so by the courtesy of *England*. Why, you must know, that in some of the small bishoprics, that do not exceed above five or six hundred, or a thousand pounds a year, (and what is that for the representative of an *apostle*?) there is sometimes a good living annexed, and, sometimes, the king (God bless him and his royal house for ever!) is so gracious as to permit the holy man to hold a living, or a dignity, which he had before, along with his bishopric, to assist him to support the character of his function, to enable him to keep a better table, and to enlarge his charitable heart; and these good designs, I dare say, are executed to a tittle; a very trifle is laid up to make provision for his family; the poor are his pensioners, they are his children.

D. But, how is it, that the same holy man should be the *head* of a church in one diocese, and be a *parish priest*, and subject to another bishop, in another bishopric; how such unbecoming condescensions, such shifting of scenes, such mean sinking in their characters, from being *bishops* to become *parochial priests* in other dioceses, how such a practice, such an irregular kind of *plurality* agrees with the ca-

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nons and discipline of the church, I could never yet be able to comprehend.

E. What signifies it whether you can comprehend it or not? Will you deny the king's supremacy? Pray, was not *Amos* a prophet of the lord, and, at the same time, one of the herdmen of *Tekoa*?

D. Very true, doctor; I am satisfied. Now, if you please, we will go on a little farther. *A bishop must be vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality.*

E. That is, he must be temperate, and not indulge the rapacious cravings of his stomach; he must keep a good look-out, and be upon the watch; and above all, and for the sake of all, support a generous and well-spread table, to entertain strangers, to receive his clergy, and welcome his neighbours; not that he is to make his house an inn, or a tavern, open at all hours, and free to all comers.

D. I take you right. But how can they be said to keep up to this precept of the apostle, when not one in six of them lives in his own proper diocese?

E. What of that? though they do not reside constantly in their country palaces, because they are obliged to take care of the church, and the king, and the nation in parliament, yet they provide that as plentiful a house be kept in their absence as if they were them-

selves upon the spot. They do not when they come away fasten up the doors, and let the *grass* grow in the courtyard, but they leave a regular table behind them. There is a *chaplain* to represent his lordship, a *steward* and proper servants, and the *bell* rings, and the *cloth* is laid, and sumptuously covered, where the clergy, the neighbouring gentry, and the yeomanry are handsomely received, and their horses put into the stable and well rubbed down, and the poor of the adjacent villages are comfortably fed, and sent away with full bellies, and sometimes with a piece of money in their pocket besides; there the *traveller*, and the *stranger* are welcome, at all times, to a slice of bread, and a cup of ale; the people of the country do not feel the want of monasteries and religious houses, which used to bestow their alms, and their hospitality so liberally among them, as long as their room is so well supplied by the bountiful distributions of the bishop of the diocese. — They remember faithfully the question put to them, when they are *consecrated*.

Will you shew yourself gentle, and be merciful, for Christ's sake, to poor and needy, and to all strangers destitute of help?

Answer,

Answer.

I will so shew myself, by God's help.

And, then, when the business of the nation calls them to *London*, they do not, like some members of parliament, hide themselves in obscure corners, that their people do not know where to find them. They do not take private lodgings, or hire little, pitiful houses of two rooms on a floor, in dark lanes or alleys, but (if they have no palaces in town that belong to their see) they chuse the most open and public streets, and the most spacious houses, where they live nobly and magnificently, like peers of the realm; here their *clergy*, when they come to town, are welcome; here they are entertained at bed and board; here they have the benefit of my lord's *library*, to employ themselves at leisure hours; the poor young *candidates* for orders remain here, and are supplied with every thing, till they are ordained: and the *poor* are daily relieved by the porter, in the great court. You may easily know where a bishop lives, by the crowd of poor people in the street before the door, so that passengers can scarce go along; it is really a grievance to the neighbours, they have hardly room to go about
 their

their lawful business, especially in *christmas* time, when the steward is delivering out the *beef* and *coals*, and sitting the elder sort with their *grey gowns*. To prove how unbounded is the extent of *prelatical* charity, how soft and tender *episcopal* bowels are toward the miseries of the poor, do but look into the list of benefactors for the relief of the sufferers by the fire at *Credition*. — O, Sir! when a bishop goes to sleep with his fathers; when he is taken from us by the stroke of death; when he is hid from our eyes, and is no more, what a thunderclap is felt throughout the nation! what running to the churches and the altars! what beating of breasts, wringing of hands, and disheveling of hair, as in times of national calamity and distress! *he is gone! he is gone! my father! my father!* the chariot of *Israel*, and the horsemen thereof! then; then we find the loss; *virtutem incolu- mem odimus, sublatam ex oculis quærimus invidi*. Were he not like the *golden bough*, in the *evan- gelical* poet;

Primo avulso, non deficit alter aureus;

We should be utterly inconsolable——The death of the great *St. Basil* strikes full upon my memory. When that worthy prelate lay a dying, the whole city came about him, not
able

able to bear the thoughts of his departure; they prayed as if they would lay hands upon his very soul, and by force detain it in his body; they were distracted with the thoughts of so great a loss. His funeral was solemnized with all possible testimonies of love and honourable attendance, and with the abundant tears, not only of *Christians*, but of *Jews* and *Heathens*. The confluence was so great, that many were pressed to death in the crowd, and sent to bear him company to his long home. — An exact *type* of the pious times we live in! saying, that not quite so many are trod to death now as were formerly.

D. But, Sir, I have often heard the *clergy* complain, that when they have dined with the *bishop*, and are coming away, they are forced to run the *gantlope* through a lane of impudent footmen and servants, who look upon them as the devil over *Lincoln*, if every one does not give them a shilling a-piece, when some of them have not one more in their pockets. This is a great hardship upon the poor clergy, who pay dear for their dinners. Where is the *hospitality* of this practice?

E. I do not believe a word of it; I never gave a bishop's servant a farthing in all my life; not the value of a *pipe* of *tobacco*.

D. Pray, Mr. *Evans*, who does *London-house* in *Aldersgate-street* belong to?

E. Why, to the *bishop* of *London*.

D. There are no such doings in that place as you talk of. No *bishop* has resided there for many years, nor any body to represent him. That ancient building is all ruinous, and strangely perverted; it is let into scurvy lodgings and apartments; turned into warehouses, shops and wine-vaults, and made use of by a sort of tenants that do small reputation to the fabric or the landlord. I believe the *bishop* would call the minister of a parish to a strict account, that should let out his parsonage-house to such odd uses, and suffer it to run to ruin in such a dismal manner. That venerable pile, where so many kings and princes have been entertained, and sat in council, so many learned and renowned prelates, *Ridley, Bancroft, Sandys, King*, and many other great reformers, and the glory of their times, lived with so much honour and *hospitality*, is now become a nest of ———

Would a christian believe, that one end of the archbishop's palace in *York* is converted to a *dancing-school*, and the other end into a *play-house*? The episcopal house at *Worcester*, and in many other sees, is all in ruins. ——— I do not suppose, but large sums have been received, from time to time, for *dilapidations*; they look sharp enough after that. Pray, Sir, if such monies are not honestly laid out, where lies the

the

the remedy, or who must call the *bishop* to account? I have looked into the *codex*, and cannot find a word upon this subject.

E. Let me tell you, your insinuation is vile and atheistical. The inferior clergy, if you will, look sharp, as you call it, after *dilapidations*, and, perhaps, are too rigid and hard-hearted upon that account; but the right reverend *prelates* proceed, in that respect, with all tenderness and humanity; they consider the circumstances of the family left behind, and are more likely to assist them out of the revenues of the ensuing year, than to harrass them with *dilapidations*. Come, call a new cause; read on.

D. A bishop must be *apt to teach*.

E. They must be qualified, by their study of the scriptures, and their great skill in explaining them, to instruct and feed the flock committed to their charge. And how can they be otherwise, when the whole business of their lives has been to turn over and meditate upon those sacred pages? when they have the bible *ad unguem*, and have spent the choicest of their time, their breath and strength in *catechising*, in *expounding* and *preaching*? They unravel all difficult places, all the similes, types, parables, examples, allegories; they reconcile seeming contradictions, and can repeat you all the parallel texts from the

the beginning to the end. They are no *obscure* persons that the world never heard of till they were called to the *chair*; they are no *novices*, or (as the old translation has it) no *young scholars*, lest they swell and fall into the judgement of the evil speaker; they are no *fresh men*, no raw, unfledged, pen-feathered divines, but ripe and in full plumage, the most staunch and celebrated doctors of the first class, the admired orators and preachers of the age. They have taken their degrees, regularly, in our universities, where their names will be immortal; they performed their exercises with applause, and the schools rung with the acclamations of the audience; they preached *Latin* sermons, read *lectures*, were solid and acute in *disputations*, famous for defending the primitive and pure doctrines of Christianity, against *Atheists, Deists, Socinians, Papists, Fanatics, Enthusiasts, Methodists, Turks, Jews* and *Heathens*; their doctrinal and controversial writings are admired, and almost adored all *Europe* over; their sound is gone out into all lands, and their names, and their *fames* too, unto the ends of the world. How can they be but *apt to teach*, when they have read over all the expositors, the commentators in all languages, all the doctors of the *eastern* and *western* churches? There is not a man of them,

them, but may safely say of himself, what the *Oxford* muse so sweetly warbles :

*Noior at nulli vox est sua quam mihi quicquid
Graius, Arabs, Italus, Chaldæus, Hebræus
et Assur,
Æthiopeſve ſonant ſacrum aut Memphitica
Coptos,
Is ſum qui latices ex ipſo fonte petitos
Malim, quam longo circum deducere rivo.
Hinc, ut me laudem, legi Targumque, Ma-
foramque,
Onkelon et Kimchi, quæ te vel nomina ter-
rent,
Commentatereſ Rabbinoſ, Kabbala quicquid
Implicuit nodis, cæcoque ænigmate textit.*

I was exerciſing my *poetic* fancy, ſometime ago, in tranſlating theſe lines into *Engliſh*, verſe; you know I have a pretty *knack*, at poetry, though I do not make it my profeſſion; but,

Dignum laude virum muſa vetat mori.

My muſe forbids the worthy man to die.

I am glad I can repeat them; for, I am ſure you will be pleaſed.

*There's no man's voice is to himself more known
 Than is to me the holy religion
 Of Grecian, Arabian and Italian,
 Chaldæan, Hebræan and Assyrian,
 What the Æthiopians teach, and what the
 Copti,
 I am the man; with bucket and a rope I
 Chuse to draw water from the fountain-head,
 Than from the wand'ring streams the rivers
 shed;
 And tho' I praise myself I have read the
 Targum,
 The Masora, Onkelos and Kimchi's Fargon,
 Whose very names would fright thee, and the
 devil into the bargain,
 The Rabbins comments, and the Kabbala,
 That foldeth up its meaning, I do say,
 In twisted knots and dark ænigmata.*

What think you of that, my boy! but if you chuse to have it rather in scripture phrase, it will run thus: *Parthians and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers of Mesopotamia, and in Judæa and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, strangers of Rome, Jews and Profelytes, Cretes and Arabians,* we do all hear them speak in our own tongue the—— The world would

not be surprized to see a new translation of the bible from the present bench of bishops; there is not one of them but is capable to execute the whole, had he but time and ——— They can repeat you every syllable of *More Nevoch, Medrasheoth, Prike Avoth, Kether Malcuth*. ——— And yet to look them in the face, you would not think it, such is the seeming *simplicity* of their venerable aspects; but *fronti nulla fides* ——— O *librorum belluones!* O gormandisers of books! they have swallowed and digested all the *fathers*, the *codes*, *provincials*, *decretals*, *pandects*, *councils*, *canons*; are masters of all the *schoolmen*, not to fill their heads, and stuff their writings with *quiddities* and *quoddities*, and far-fetched unintelligible distinctions, but to be able to reason closely, to argue solidly, to rebuke, to confute, to reply, to rejoin, to syllogize, to criticize, to apologize, to advertize, to sermonize, to decypherize, to ———

D. Heyday! the doctor is in a rapture.

E. They pass to the *episcopal* chair through all the *lower* ecclesiastical offices; they do not, as a learned writer observes, commence *divines* and *bishops* the same moment; nor are they like the *dragon's* teeth that *Cadmus* sowed at *Thebes*, which immediately sprung up giants out of the earth armed *cap-pee*, perfect men and perfect warriors in one day

day ——— Look into the *acta eruditorum*, there you will see their names mentioned with honour, and their worthy labours recommended to posterity. ——— O Mr. *Dobson*, could you but peep into a *bishop's* library, and see the holy man sitting in his *purple cap* and *slippers*, with his table covered with books in all the learned languages, and like *Julius Cæsar*, dictating to two or three *amanuenses* at the same time, and directing a correspondence among the *literati* over the known world ——— Their *Latin* is neat, chaste, elegant, and terse, and so is their *Welsh* ——— They are *classical* to the back-bone. The *British* bishops are better known abroad than they are at home: but a prophet has no honour in his *own* country ——— *Illustrissimi Angliæ præfules, doctissimi literarum fautores Britanniae episcopi, or indefatigabilissimi*, as they are called by the learned *Siberians*. These and such are the compellations used to our *prelates* when they are addressed by *foreigners*. ——— And then, as to that solemn injunction of the *archbishop* to the *bishop* elect;

Are you ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine, and both privately and openly to call upon, and encourage others to do the same?

In this case, I say, they are the *Mallei Hæreticorum, Papistarum, Paganorum*, the *Mauls*, the *Beetles* and *Wedges* of *Heretics, Papists*, and *Infidels*; if a blasphemous or wicked book creeps out, one or other of them soon cuts it to pieces, to the utter shame and confusion of the gainsayer. They have an antidote ready to expel the poison; they pray against it, preach against it, write against it, and encourage and solicit their clergy to do the same. Such reverend champions they favour and distinguish, and prefer them before all the relations in the world. They buy and disperse their books, they assist them in their studies, and warm them in their bosoms. They do not as the great *dons*, in other professions, neglect, depreciate and brow beat writers of their own order out of a spirit of party, or from a principle of envy, as if they obscured their own characters, or ——— in short, *Heresy* and *Infidelity* never had fewer friends and followers than in these *blessed times*, and all owing to the unwearied industry and vigilance of these shepherds, these watchmen of *Israel*. I will tell you what, I was at church in the city about three *Sundays* ago, where two great *prelates* were in the same pew, and at the repeating of the *Athanasian* creed, they both reverently stood up, and made their responses aloud with their eyes

eyes towards heaven, to the great comfort of myself and all the congregation: neither of them took *snuff*, or lolled fauntringly over the pew, or talked to any body near him all the while.

D. You have taken a deal of pains to prove that the *bishops* are a *learned* body, which seems to be out of dispute; for you see here in the *office* before us, that the bishop *elect* shall be presented by two bishops to the *archbishop* of the province, in this form.

Most reverend father in God, we present unto you this godly and well learned man to be ordained and consecrated bishop.

But I have a small scruple upon me in this matter; how do these two bishops know that the bishop *elect* is *well learned*?

E. Do you think they give this testimony of him by hearsay, or by common fame, for favour or affection? Can you suppose they would present him in that solemn manner, in the presence of God, and in the face of all the congregation, unless they could do it with a safe conscience, and from their own express knowledge? No, no; they *examine* him strictly and severely in the *polyglot*, I suppose, *thesaurus rerum ecclesiasticarum, liber valorum*, and other godly books; and find-

ing him as learned as they expect, they justly bestow that character upon him, they would be unjust if they did not; I believe the whole world would not prevail upon them to go against their firm belief and conviction in that matter, even their enemies themselves being judges.

D. Who doubts it? But admit that the bishops are picked men, well disciplined, and culled out of the body of the priesthood on account of their profound *erudition*, yet if they be ever so *learned*, or so *apt to teach*, you will allow, I suppose, that it is impossible they should *teach* or feed their flock, unless they be able to *teach* the people in a language they *understand*:

E. I allow that, and what then?

D. Why then, I should be glad to know how a bishop of a diocese in *Wales*, is capable of doing his duty with a good conscience, when he does not understand one syllable of the *Welsh tongue*, and the people do not understand a word of *English*?

E. The answer is plain, I deny your supposition; you are to consider when an *eminent divine* finds himself *improving* in spiritual knowledge, and *spreading*, and *stretching*, and *thickening*, and *reaching* further, and *widening*, and *enlarging* his capacities, and *budding* and *blossoming*, and growing *ripe*, and

as it were *maturus episcopatu*, he then presently applies himself to the study of the *Welsh* language against the time comes; this he finds a most easy and delightful entertainment; for the *Welsh* is a soft, harmonious, and mellifluous tongue, all *music* and *melo-*
dy, not thickened with *consonants*, nor throttling you with *gutturals*; it does not make your tongue strike double against the roof of your mouth, or knock out your *foreteeth*, or shake your *grinders* like many of your *Northern* dialects. And then it has abundance of *Hebrew* words intermixed, and so the holy man being perfectly master of the *Oriental* before, finds it an easy matter to attain the *Cambro-Britannic*. I verily believe, that *Adam* spoke something of the *Welsh* tongue in paradise, when he was talking to the *brutes*; and it is my firm opinion, that every bishop of a *Welsh* diocese, is qualified to instruct his flock, to preach and pray in the language of the country; I am sure the last good lord of *St. Davids* was, for he was a mighty *decyphrer* of tongues. The prelates of *Wales*, must, and do *preach* and pray, in season, and out of season, or else, what do they do there? A bishopric is as much, or rather more a *cure* of souls, than a parsonage or vicarage, and it would be strange they should cloath themselves with the wool, and take no care of feeding the

flock; but to *preach*, or *pray* to the people in an *unknown* tongue, would be *popery*, downright *popery*!

D. It would so; but not to urge this further at present, I cannot be altogether of your opinion, that the bishops in *Wales* understand the language of the country, for I have a little book in my *library*, (as you are pleased to call it) that gives a quite different account of this matter, and likewise of the *hospitality* that is preserved (as you say) in the palaces of *bishops* of that country, either when they do, or do not reside in their dioceses, You know the bishopric of *St. Davids*?

E. I had the honour to be born in that diocese; it is a fee of a very large extent, and takes in the counties of *Pembroke*, *Caermarthen*, *Cardigan*, *Brecon*, and all *Radnor*, except six parishes, a considerable part of *Glamorganshire*, and many parishes in the counties of *Hereford* and *Manmouth*; O it is a curious fine bishopric!

D. The book I spoke of is called, *A view of the state of religion in the diocese of St. Davids*; it was written by a *doctor of divinity* in that principality, and his observations are founded upon his own knowledge; here is such a scene of misery and distress, of barbarism and barbarity, such scandalous abuse of discipline and church power! but it is no wonder,

wonder, for a *Welsh* bishopric is commonly no more than a *stopgap*, an *earnest* of higher promotion; you seldom find a bishop die in possession of a see in that country, they hope not to continue there long, they have no time. if they had an inclination, to make themselves acquainted with their *clergy*, or their people; some never go there at all, and others but once, or so, to take possession, to settle their rents, and receive their presents, they go in *snug*, and so they go out, they keep their own counsel, their houses are tumbling down, and so there is no pretence for residence, one succeeds another, and takes things as he finds them, *alter et idem!* the country lies in a remote corner of the island, not much frequented or inquired after; the gentry and people of fashion make no complaint, they enjoy their *impropriations*, and generally live in *London*, and spend their money there, or in other places at a distance, and do not regard how the livings are served, how the people are taught, and how the *clergy* are starved; but I will reach the book, here it is, I remarked some particular passages, that made my heart bleed—and first, doctor, for your *hospitality* in the bishop's palace at *St. Davids*.

E. I never was at *St. Davids*, but I have been received with great *hospitality*, and drunk very good ale, at the palace of *Abergwyly*.

D. To begin then; ‘ *St. Davids*, once a
 ‘ celebrated seat of learning, and an *alma*
 ‘ *mater* of the muses, once the happy abode
 ‘ as of our *archbishops* and *bishops*, so of our
 ‘ *archdeacons*, *canons* and *prebendaries*, who
 ‘ were encouraged, and thought themselves
 ‘ obliged to maintain the honour of religion,
 ‘ to attend the service of their church, to re-
 ‘ pair their fabric, and their houses *creditably*,
 ‘ to spend the rest of their revenues in *hos-*
 ‘ *pitality* and *charity*, in kindly welcoming
 ‘ and entertaining pious visitors and strangers,
 ‘ and relieving the poor as liberally. These
 ‘ were the good laudable practices of the an-
 ‘ cient times: but alas! what an amazing
 ‘ change has now befallen us; the college of
 ‘ our students is long since dissolved, a great
 ‘ part of our sacred and most ancient *cathedral*
 ‘ *is in rubbage*, and of the *bishop’s pa-*
 ‘ *lace*, there is nothing to be seen but *stately*
 ‘ *ruins*, and almost all the habitations of our
 ‘ dignitaries demolished, so that they have in a
 ‘ manner left us, and consequently *hospitality*
 ‘ and *charity*, are gone away too, and the
 ‘ marks of forsaken poverty and desolation
 ‘ seem to overspread the whole neighbour-
 ‘ hood; there remains scarce any thing beside
 ‘ poor lodgings, for the chapter to keep their
 ‘ *audit*, for a week or a fortnight at *St. James’s*
 ‘ *tide*, and then we are to hope for the plea-
 ‘ sure

‘sure of seeing them no more till the next season comes again.’ That is as much as to say, that they come once a year to receive their money, and the church, and the palace, and the cathedral, and the service, *hospitality* and *charity* may go ——— The poor continue naked, miserable, and unrelieved, the revenue is carried away to *London*, and other places, none of it is scattered upon the ground from whence it came, it is consumed in other dioceses among foreigners, commonly in a *slovenly ungentle riotous* way of living, or an *awkward affectation* of greatness; for few of those sort of *clergy* die worth a shilling, but leave their families in the utmost misery and distress; as they are generally vain, ignorant, and haughty, so they are expensive, prodigal, and wasteful. They swagger among the little curates, and the gaping clowns in the country, under the title of Mr. *Dean*, Mr. *Archdeacon*; with this distinction they strut in a *title page* if they chance to write a *silly pamphlet* or print a *stolen sermon*, but as for the functions of their office, to visit their jurisdictions, and regulate the disorders of it; *Gallio* cares for none of these things. And the case I am afraid is much the same in all the other bishoprics of the principality.

E. Go on, have you any more? I shall come over you by and by.

D. Truly I have much more than I could wish. The same pious regard observed in supporting hospitality in the palace of the *bishop*, appears notoriously in keeping up the *houses* of the *parochial clergy*, and providing them habitations comfortable and proper for their residence and abode; the case, in short, is this. ‘Did you but see what very sorry and mean cottages (if any) that are left for *parsonage* and *vicarage* houses? In most parishes there are no provisions of any kind for that use, no glebe, no ground to build upon; but where there are any, they are commonly so mean and inconvenient, as that the clergy, poor as they are, cannot think them habitable for themselves, and therefore are obliged to part with them to any one that will please to rent them; but very often they fall to the *sexton’s* lot, who to get a sorry maintenance is allowed the privilege of selling *ale* by the church-yard side.’

E. How can this be, when to my knowledge there be so many *rocks* and *stones* in that country ready at hand? When the *archdeacons* of the diocese, and the *rural deans*, who are officers under them, are solemnly appointed to visit the houses of the clergy, and to order the repairing of them, that they may be kept in order, and not be suffered to run to ruin. The *bishops* have authority to
compel

compel the *impropriator* to find a suitable habitation for his curate, as well as to provide him a comfortable maintenance; the *archdeacon* is *alter oculus episcopi*, as the *dean* is the other; he is one of the *eyes* of the bishop, and his jurisdiction extends chiefly to these affairs; if the house of the minister be out of repair, the churchwardens are obliged to present it at the visitation, and the *archdeacon* is bound to take cognizance of it, and to provide against it.

D. What signifies where the power is lodged, if it be never executed? The archdeacons do not *reside*, though they are obliged to residence by law; and the bishops take no care to compel them to it. *Watson* in his *Compleat Incumbent* (which I bought when I was *churchwarden*) says expressly, if an *archdeacon* be wilfully absent from his dignity for the space of a *month* together, or for the space of *two months*, to be accounted at several times in the space of one year, and for such a time resides in any other place, he shall for every such default, forfeit *ten pounds*. What havock would the execution of this law make among the *Welsh* archdeacons, and among many of the *English* ones too? What advantages would accrue to religion, what scandalous imputations would be silenced by the constant enforcing of it? It is

their duty to visit two years in three, yet if they chance to come into the diocese at all, they do not hold their *visitations* in any regular manner, so that neither clergy nor people know when, or where, or how to apply. An *archdeacon* may be one of the *eyes* of the bishop, yet that officer must have a very strong sight to see from *Highbate*, into *Cardiganshire*. And then to help the matter, the bishop, who seldom *resides at all*, sometimes holds an *archdeaconry* or two, along with his bishopric, and so deprives the church of that useful officer, when there are many valuable clergymen in the diocese (notwithstanding the poverty and distress of most of them) who are well qualified to fill the place, and discharge the duties of it. The bishop of *Bangor* (I think) is archdeacon of *Bangor* and archdeacon of *Anglesey*; the bishop of *St. Asaph* is archdeacon likewise of *St. Asaph*; what a monstrous thing is this? What a strange accumulation of preferments, in their own natures utterly inconsistent and untenable, and of the most fatal tendency to the discipline and good order of the diocese, the clergy and people? If they appoint archdeacons, they do not oblige them to *reside*, or hold their *visitations*, as the law requires; and if they are archdeacons themselves, it is impossible they should do their duty in that

office,

office, when, as they are bishops, they do not live in their diocese, and consequently cannot be absent as bishops, and present as archdeacons at the same time; and yet *Watson* declares it for law, that though a bishop perhaps be not tied to residence, by the statute of the 21st of *H. VIII.* yet he is thereto obliged by *ecclesiastical law*, and may be compelled to keep residence by *ecclesiastical censures*. And if a bishop hold in *commendam* an *archdeaconry*, *deanery*, or like inferior dignity, parsonage or vicarage, with his bishopric, he is punishable by the same statute, if according to the same, he be not resident upon such dignity, parsonage or vicarage, and that though he be constantly resident upon his bishopric, he shall not be excused thereby. But the difficulty is, how to put these laws properly in execution. The bishops dispense with the residence of their archdeacons, and it would be strange they should insist upon it, when they make so light a matter of dispensing with their own; but (as the poet sweetly warbles) *defendit numerus junctæque umbone phalanges.*

E. Is the man mad? What a terrible thing would it be to see a bishop *excommunicated* by his metropolitan for *non-residence*?

D. I cannot help that. And now I am upon this subject, I must take notice, that the bishops, conscious of their own neglect of re-

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fidence, are obliged as it were to dispense with the *residence* of those parochial clergy, whose livings are *sufficient* to afford them a handsome and comfortable maintenance; for though many churches are stript of their revenues in a deplorable manner, yet some of them (I have heard) do still enjoy their *full endowments*, and afford provision for the incumbents whereby they may live reputably upon the spot, and do good service to religion, and support their character with credit and honour. But these sort of clergy leave their flocks to wretched miserable *hirelings*, and run out of the country into a *warmer sun*, and hunt after preferments generally in *London*; there they creep into *curacies*, and little *lectares*, (and their modesty will sometimes raise them into a paitry popular *chaplainship*) where their broken and unintelligible *English*, and their squeaking *Welsh* dialect give great offence to all serious and devout christians, and administer mirth and mockery to *giggling girls* and *young fellows*, who make their *reading* and *preaching*, and even their common conversation, a matter of sport and ridicule.

E. What is that you say, Sir? Do not I speak as proper *English* as any of you all, though I would not forget my *Welsh*, for all your linsey woolsey mungrel gibberish?

D.

D. You, Sir, have had the advantage of a good education; your language is polished by keeping the best of company, you dine once a year with the doctor of the parish, your accent is softened by your frequent speaking in public. I have heard you preach at *St. Antholin's* in a morning, with the general applause of that elegant and distinguishing assembly. — You shall now see what regard is had by these *spiritual governors* to the decency and conveniency of divine worship, by taking a short survey of the miserable and ruinous condition of the *parochial churches* in that country. ‘Some churches are totally neglected, and very rarely, if at all, have any service performed in them, and which, if they are not converted to *barns and stables*, do only serve for the solitary habitations of *owls*, and *jackdaws*. In some places we have churches without *chancels*, in others we have but some piece of a church, that is, one end, or a *side isle*, and the desolate appearance of most of those that are yet standing, speak how difficult they subsist, and how miserably they are neglected. In some not only the bells are taken away, but the *towers* are demolished, and in many others, there are scarce any seats, except here and there a few ill contrived and broken *stools* and *benches*; their little *windows* are with-
out

' out *glass* and darkened with boards, mats,
 ' or lattices; their roofs decaying, tottering,
 ' and leaky; their walls green, mouldy, and
 ' nauseous, and very often without wash
 ' or plaster; and their *floors* ridged up with
 ' *noisome graves*, without any pavement, and
 ' only covered with a few *rushes*. Did you
 ' see so many *parochial* churches and cha-
 ' pels of the bishops palaces, and of almost
 ' all the parsonage houses in the diocese; it
 ' might well tempt you to think, that we
 ' had lain in the road of the *Turks* and *Sa-*
 ' *racens*, in some of their wild excursions,
 ' or that we had but very lately passed the
 ' diligence and reformation of an *Oliverian*
 ' *army*.' Such are the blessed effects of the
 due administration of *godly discipline* in that
 country! such ———

E. What is the man talking of? I do not
 say our churches in *Wales*, are as fine as
 yours in *London*; and adorned with *pictures*
 and *paintings*, and God knows what; it is
 not the *walls*, or the *bells*, or the *pews*, that
 make a church. Do not you read, that *Moses*
 made the altar of burnt-offering of *earth* and
 rough *unbewn stones*? Our churches are built
 of the very same; there is a great deal of *plain-*
ness and *simplicity* in them, nothing to draw
 the eyes of the congregation into *superstition*
 and *idolatry*.

D. You are right; you shall next see what *simple* sort of clergy are appointed in these *simple churches*, as you call them. You came somewhat young out of the country, and therefore it may be a curiosity to hear the description of a *Welsh curate*. ' In some places the *christian* service is totally disused, ' there are other some, that may be said to ' be but half served; there being several ' churches where we are but rarely, if at ' all, to meet with *preaching, catechising, or* ' administering the *holy communion*. In others, ' the service of the prayers is but *partly* read, ' and that, perhaps, but once a *month*, or ' once in a *quarter* of a year; nor is it indeed ' reasonable to expect, that they should be ' better served, while the stipends allowed for ' the service of them, are so small, that a ' poor curate must sometimes submit to serve ' *three or four* churches for *ten or twelve* ' pounds a year, and that, perhaps, when they ' are almost as many miles distant from each ' other. And when it is thus with them, ' with what order, or regularity are they ca- ' pable of doing that service? And having ' so little time, and so many places to attend ' upon, how precipitately, and if as out of ' breath, are they obliged to read the prayers, ' or to shorten and abridge them? And what ' time have they, or their congregation to ' compose

'compose themselves for their devotion, while
 'thus forced to a kind of perpetual motion,
 'and like hasty itinerants, to hurry from
 'place to place? There is no time fixed to
 'go to church, so it be on *Sunday*; so that
 'the poor man must begin at any time with
 'as many as are at hand, sooner or later, as
 'he can perform his *round*. He then ab-
 'ruptly huddles over as many prayers as may
 'be in half an hour's time, and then returns
 'again to his road fasting, till he has dis-
 'patched his circuit, and that weariness or
 'darkness obliges him to rest, or perhaps,
 'for want of a little necessary refreshment at
 'home, to go where he ought not, where
 'it is odds, but he will meet with many
 'of his congregation; who, when their short
 'service is over, are too apt to think them-
 'selves at liberty to spend the remaining part
 'of the day at an *alehouse*, or at some pastime
 'or diversion, as they are disposed. What
 'hospitality to neighbours, or to strangers, or
 'charity to the poor, can they afford to give,
 'who are themselves so very indigent as to
 'be most in the need of *charity*? How conform-
 'able to the canons in their *dress* and *ba-*
 '*bits*, such as are required, and becoming of
 'their orders, *viz.* in their *gowns* and *caffocs*
 'are they capable of appearing when their
 'mean salaries will scarce afford them *shoes*

‘and stockings?’ It seems, they *literally* obey the evangelical precept: they provide neither gold nor silver, nor scrip for their journey, neither two coats, neither shoes; alas! they have scarce cloaths to cover their nakedness; whence comes the common proverb, *As ragged as a Welsh curate*. Would not any man of sense, and common piety stand amazed, how such wretches could ever get into orders? How a *bishop* could devote such ignorant poor creatures to minister in holy things? What a sort of *examination* must pass upon them before they are ordained? A *bishop* is commanded to lay hands *suddenly* on no man, without a strict inquiry into his life and abilities; but surely he could not upon the least *deliberation* lay hands upon such itinerant *vagabond* hirelings as these. But so it is, and with a good conscience no doubt ——— And now, as this worthy writer observes, ‘What christian knowledge, what sense of piety, what value for religion are we reasonably to hope for in a country thus abandoned, when persons are ordained that are contemptible in themselves, when any little *a-b-c darian school-master*, a gentleman’s *butler*, a *mountebank*, or what not, shall be so cheaply admitted to commence *clerks*, on the prevailing merit only, perhaps, of some potent *impropriator’s* recommendation, who
‘ may

' may be solicitous for a cheap chaplain or to pack off an useless servant.'

What is the meaning of that solemn charge given by the bishop to the archdeacon, when he presents a person to be ordained, either deacon or priests?

The bishop.

Take heed that the person whom you present unto us be apt and meet for his learning, and godly conversation, to exercise his ministry duly to the honour of God, and the edification of his church.

The archdeacon shall answer.

I have enquired of him and also examined him and think him so to be.

What is the intention of the answer given by the bishop elect to the archbishop, when he is consecrated?

Will you be faithful in ordaining, sending, or laying hands upon others?

Answer.

I will do so by the help of God.

How does he *do so* when he *ordains* such fellows who are scandalously illiterate, and are incapable in any sense to do *honour* to God, or to *edify* his church?

When I reflect upon these things, I am utterly confounded, they can never be reconciled. I shall say no more, than that all these miseries, all these prophanations and scandals, it is in the power of the *bishop* and his officers, in a great measure to remedy and suppress; there are laws to support them in the execution of their duty, the consequences must therefore lie at their own doors.

E. Between you and I, Mr. *Dobson*, I am afraid this is too true; but I beg of you for the love of God, and out of respect to the *club*, that you would not say so much abroad; O tell it not in *Gath*!

D. I am come now to that absurd and indefensible practice of holy men (as you call them) who accept of bishoprics in *Wales*, when they are utterly, and in any sense incapable of doing their duty, because they do not *understand the language* of the people they are to instruct; how can they (as the office of consecration enjoins) *feed* the flock over which the *Holy Ghost* had made them overseers, and for which *Christ* died, how can the sheep know the shepherd's *voice*, when they do not know the meaning of one *syllable* he says?

With

With what reverence and complacency must they receive his *benediction*, when he *blesse* them in an *unknown tongue*? To see a bishop lay his *hand* upon a person's head, and mutter a few words over him *not to be understood*, looks more like a *charm* than a *bleſſing*. In the office of *consecration*, God Almighty is addressed to endue the bishop *elect* with his *Holy Spirit*, that he *preaching* the word may not only be earnest to *reprove*, *beseech*, and *rebuke* with all patience and *doctrine*, but also may be to such as believe, a *wholesome example* in word and *conversation*, &c. But what a scene is this, when he is appointed over the souls of people, to whom he cannot speak a word *to be understood*, and is utterly incapable to *reprove*, *beseech*, or *rebuke*, or to hold any manner of *conversation* with them? What is the meaning of this *solemn* question and answer, much too solemn to be used only for *form*?

The archbishop.

Will you instruct the people committed to your charge (which shews a bishopric is a cure of souls) and call upon God for the true understanding of the scriptures, so as ye may be able by them to preach and exhort with wholesome doctrine, and to withstand and convince the gainsayers?

Answer.

Answer.

I will do so by the help of God.

How can he *teach* and *preach*, and *exhort* with wholesome doctrine, and instruct the people, *withstand* and *convince* the gain-sayers in his diocese, when the people perhaps, never once saw the face of him, or if they had, he may as well talk to them in *Arabic*, and be as well understood? For God's sake, have not bishops *souls* to be saved? Is religion a thing *real*, or is it *priestcraft* and *juggling*, and a *trade* to live by? Is this *office* no more than playing of a *farce*, or acting of a *droll*? Is God the sure *avenger* of breaches of promise and trust, made and published in his own most sacred *name*? What can the people think, or what respect can they entertain of their pastors, when ——— But this *honest writer* represents the case in a much better light; though he speaks with great wariness and caution (for the subject it seems is exceeding *tender*) yet he says enough to expose and explode so unjustifiable a custom, so opposite to common sense, and which can admit of no gloss or shadow of reason to commend it.

E. I wish you had done with your *book*; for my time is almost come, I expect the *clerk* every moment.

D. ' The disposing of *Welsh* preferments
 ' to such as are wholly ignorant of the lan-
 ' guage, has contributed not a little to the
 ' decay and desolation of our religion. The
 ' benefits of the *church* should be accepted
 ' for no other end, but of being *useful* and
 ' doing the service of the *church*, whose
 ' bread they eat; it being just and equitable
 ' that they should be qualified for the *duty*
 ' where they receive the *profit*; and it can-
 ' not be supposed that they are so, till they
 ' make themselves *intelligible* to the flocks
 ' they are to guide and oversee. For as St.
 ' Paul observes, when the voice of him that
 ' speaketh is not understood, then both he that
 ' speaks, and he that is spoken to, are mutu-
 ' ally barbarians to each other; and a greater
 ' yet infinitely than St. Paul hath told us,
 ' that it ought to go into the character of
 ' a good shepherd, that the sheep should know
 ' his voice; which plainly enough signifies,
 ' that no one can be said to be an useful
 ' and good pastor whose speech or voice is
 ' unintelligible to his people. The reason of
 ' the thing is so clear and unanswerable, as
 ' that it is in truth amazing, that *ambition*
 ' itself, with all its subtle inventions, should
 ' think

' think to find out arguments to justify the
 ' contrary; for of what use can any one be
 ' (let his *learning* in other respects be ever
 ' so great) to *instruct*, and *teach* those whom
 ' he cannot *speak* to? And therefore what
 ' benefit are the people to expect as to
 ' knowledge, or information from the mini-
 ' stry of such, who can neither *preach* nor
 ' *pray*, so as to be *understood* by them? Will
 ' after-ages believe, that there should arise
 ' among the learned, and the knowing those
 ' who should not doubt of their sufficiency
 ' for, or of their faithfulness in, the discharge
 ' of this most *solemn trust*, without either
 ' *understanding* the language, or ever *seeing*
 ' *the faces* of those they are spiritually to
 ' *feed* and *oversee*? While things continue
 ' thus, with what kind of decency can we
 ' declaim against the *popish* practice of *teach-*
 ' *ing* men, it is neither necessary they should
 ' *read* the scriptures, nor *understand* the prayers,
 ' when what amounts to so much the same
 ' thing, and is so like it, is practised and
 ' allowed among ourselves, by assigning *pa-*
 ' *stors* that are *unintelligible* to their congreg-
 ' *ation*?'

E. On my word, your author speaks good
 sense, his observations are just; and whatever
 has been the practice of late in filling the
Welsh bishoprics with pastors that are *strangers*

to the language, yet that the case was otherwise formerly, appears by an act passed in the reign of *Charles II.* which enjoins, that the bishops of *Hereford, St. Davids, Asaph, Bangor, and Landaff,* and their *successors,* shall take such order among themselves, for the soul's health of the flock committed to their charge, that the *liturgy* of the church of *England,* be truly and *exactly* translated into the *British* or *Welsh* tongue, and the same so translated, and by them, or any three of them at least, *viewed, perused, and allowed,* be imprinted, and the whole divine service be used, and said by the ministers and curates throughout all *Wales,* in the *British* or *Welsh* tongue; and therefore it is that if a clerk be presented to a church in *Wales,* who does not *understand* the language, the ordinary may lawfully *refuse* him, because he is *incapable* of the cure.

D. It is certain by the *act* you mention, that *bishops* were in those days appointed to the *Welsh* sees, who perfectly *understood* the language; for to what purpose were they ordered to *view* and *peruse* the translation of the *liturgy,* if they were not able to *understand* it? Their *successors,* by this *act,* are likewise supposed to be capable from time to time to *view,* and *peruse,* and see the *liturgy* imprinted in *Welsh;* and how sufficient the present *set* are to discharge, or attend such

a business may be easily conjectured, when I believe not one of them can read or understand one sentence in the whole book. I find there is a design at present to publish a large impression of *Welsh* bibles under the direction of the *bishops* of the principality; tenderly expressed! I should be glad to know which of them *peruses* the sheets, or corrects the press? How shocking is it to consider that the bible, on which the salvation of so many thousands depends, should be left to the mercy of a hackney translator, to add, to omit, or alter what doctrines he pleases? What havoc may be made with the article of the *Trinity* at this rate? And then, with regard to the power they have by law to refuse a *clerk*, who does not *understand* the *Welsh* tongue, and to keep him out of the diocese, and to secure by that means, that the divine service may be performed in the language of the country, they are so far from exercising this authority, wherein religion and the good of souls are so nearly concerned, that they frequently present to livings in their own gift, and admit by the presentation of others, such *clerks* as are *Englishmen*, and sometimes *refugees* of other countries, who cannot speak *one syllable*, and understand as little of the language as themselves.

E. What think you of Dr. *Trevor*, the bishop of *St. Davids*? There are many families of the *Trevors* in *Wales*.

D. That may be; but let me go on with my book, I have almost done. ‘The eminently pious bishop BEDEL, when he was promoted to an *Irish* see, thought himself obliged to *learn* that language, to which he so applied himself, as to be so great a master of it, and such a critic, as to correct a translation which he ordered to be made of the *old testament* into *Irish*, in order to be joined with the *new* and the *common-prayer*, which were done before. Having given this example in his own person, he with the more authority could require his *clergy*, as he accordingly did, to conform themselves unto it; he therefore plainly told them, that such only he would encourage and prefer there, who could *officiate* and *preach* in the *Irish language*, which was, he said, a qualification *absolutely necessary* in every minister that had the care of an *Irish* congregation.

‘It was upon the same view, that is, of being as useful as possible to his diocese, that the late most *learned* and *pious* bishop *Lloyd* of *Worcester*, on his promotion to the bishopric of *St. Asaph*, thought it his *duty* also to *learn* the language of the country, so far, at least, as to be able to *read* it, to

‘ administer the sacraments, to confirm them,
 ‘ and to officiate publicly among them in their
 ‘ own tongue; which was a means, not only
 ‘ to render him more serviceable, but of
 ‘ mightily endearing him to his people, who
 ‘ could not be insensible of the goodness, and
 ‘ singular condescension he expressed, by be-
 ‘ ing at the pains of learning their language,
 ‘ for no other end, but to shew his earnest
 ‘ desires of doing them more good. Again, it
 ‘ was upon the same principle, (as I am in-
 ‘ formed) that Dr. Bradford, the worthy and
 ‘ learned bishop of Carlisle, though there were
 ‘ many motives to induce him to it, did yet
 ‘ decline of accepting a bishopric in Wales,
 ‘ because he was a stranger to the language;
 ‘ and that he therefore conscientiously feared
 ‘ he should not be able to be so useful to his
 ‘ diocese, nor so capable of edifying and in-
 ‘ structing them, as he thought himself obliged
 ‘ to be.’ What think you of such men as these?

E. Those were brave men indeed; but I
 admire, Mr. Dobson, why gentlemen of Eng-
 land will give themselves the trouble of learn-
 ing a strange language, and clambring with their
 portmanteau's and cloak bags into the cold hilly
 country of Wales for bishoprics, when there are
 so many of the natives, who are used to the
 roughness of the roads, and the sharpness of the
 air, that are sufficiently qualified by under-

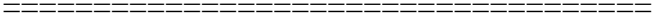
standing the *Welsh* tongue, to execute that venerable office; for *my own* part, I can only answer for myself; I shall be always ready upon the least notice, when God and my king shall please to call me to that laborious and important trust; and I may say without *vanity*—— but, I see one of the *bearers* coming; they stay for me in the *church-yard*; I must take my leave.

D. Remember the *pig* to-morrow.

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A N
A D D R E S S

TO THE
Univerfity of Oxford,

Occafioned by a SERMON, intituled, *The divine Inftitution of the Ministry, and the abfolute neceffity of Church-Government*; preached before that Univerfity by the Rev. Mr. *Joseph Betty*, on the 21^{ft} of September, 1729.

By I. W. L.

———*We know their holy jugglings,
Things that would ftartle faith, and make us deem
Not this, or that, but all religions falfe.*

*By education moft have been miffed,
So they believe, becaufe they fo were bred,
The prieft continues what the nurfe began,
And thus the child impofes on the man.* DRYD.

Nothing is more dangerous, nothing more dreadful than for men to affume to themfelves a power which heaven has denied them; fuch men may indeed poffibly deceive the world under a falfe character, but God will not be mocked, the All-wife will not be over-reached by the crafty prefumptions of feigned ftewards; nor will the monarch of heaven be impofed upon by the pretended credentials of falfe embaffadors. Mr. BETTY'S Sermon.

First printed in the year 1730.

A N

A D D R E S S

T O T H E

Univerfity of Oxford.

G E N T L E M E N,

I Believe you will agree with me, that it is very juft and reasonable, to expect fomething *uncommon*, in a fermon preached before the *Univerfity of Oxford*; the perfons who are appointed to entertain fuch a learned audience, being fupposed to be every way qualified for fuch an honourable employ. This expectation of mine naturally led me to purchafe and perufe a fermon lately published, which recommended itfelf by being preached before that *Univerfity*. I was pleafed with the hopes of being agreeably entertained and inftructed by an *addrefs* to fo learned and polite an audience; but how far, and for what reafons, I was difappointed, will appear by the fequel.

I chuse, Gentlemen, to address myself on this occasion to you, who are undoubtedly the most competent judges of an affair of this nature; and because I apprehend it is in some measure incumbent upon the *University*, to take care that no discourses should be preached before them, at least not *published to the world*, which are *deficient in point of just reasoning or charity*.

That the discourse above-mentioned is remarkably deficient in both instances, throughout almost every paragraph, is what, in my opinion, appears not difficult to prove, to the satisfaction and conviction of any, but those who have the happiness of the same *profound learning and intellects as Mr. Betty*: and all such I freely leave to that *venerable Person, who hath an undeniable right, and undoubted authority, to instruct, reprove and exhort, direct and govern them*.

In the first place, Gentlemen, I think your orator somewhat unhappy in the choice of his text; which, I suppose, he would insinuate as a divine proof out of the holy writings of the main position in his sermon, viz. *the divine institution of the ministry*: whereas there is not the least foundation in the words themselves for any such fancy, they being applicable

cable to the apostle St. *Paul* himself, and no one individual person besides. In the beginning of his epistle he tells the *Galatians*, that he was an *apostle, not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father*; which is very little different from his usual manner of expression, as is evident if we review the beginning of any of his epistles, for in them he calls himself, *an apostle by the will of God*, an expression which is very easy and obvious, and which none who are acquainted with his history could possibly mistake: the reason why the apostle varies from his more general form of expression, in the beginning of his other epistles, none need be a stranger to, who will give himself the trouble of reading the whole chapter.

But what reference hath this to the institution of a ministry seventeen centuries after? what connection hath the appointment of St. *Paul* to the *apostleship*, which certainly was by the will of God, and that revealed in a particular and miraculous manner, with the *institution of Mr. Joseph Betty to the ministry*? or how doth it follow, that because the former was by divine appointment, that this is equally true concerning the latter? I fear if Mr. *B*—— had not taken orders till he had the divine appointment intimated in the

words of his text, the world must have been for ever deprived of his *instructions, reproofs and exhortations.*

But if it was not our preacher's intention to make this use of his text, yet as he hath separated it from the words preceding and following, it was very likely to be understood in such a sense, agreeable to the tenor of his whole discourse. He ought in justice therefore, to have *expressly guarded* his audience against understanding the words in that sense, which his choice of them would naturally lead them to.

After our author hath given us a specimen of his *profound judgment*, in the choice of a text which hath no relation at all to the discourse which is supposed to be founded on it; for with equal reason, and the same propriety, he might have chose the first verse of the first chapter of *Genesis*; I suppose he had a mind to surprize his audience with somewhat *bright and uncommon.* I am indeed an entire stranger to the person and character of our preacher, but upon reading his *first paragraph*, I presently imagined, that when he was preparing this great and wonderful performance, he was somewhat diffident of himself

self and his abilities, for which reason, lest the audience should immediately settle themselves to sleep, he took extraordinary care, and uncommon pains about it: certainly the wonderful discoveries in this first paragraph, must be the product of great study and mature deliberation; there are some very deep and hidden things, which a genius less sagacious and profound than Mr. B———y's could hardly discover. He tells us, that

“ though the loveliness and beauty of religion
 “ are motives strong enough to engage the
 “ esteem and admiration of the world; though
 “ religion itself be highly agreeable to all the
 “ laws of reason; though it be necessarily al-
 “ lowed to be the ornament and perfection of
 “ our nature, yet were its dispensers entirely
 “ unauthorized, had their precepts received
 “ no sanction, nor they themselves any com-
 “ mission; were there indeed no divine po-
 “ sitive institution, all the plausible argu-
 “ ments, all the powerful obligations, which
 “ are generally pleaded in its behalf, would
 “ then be very precarious and uncertain;”

i. e. in other words, that all our obligations to virtue and religion, which are founded upon its intrinsic beauty and loveliness, upon its conformity to the eternal nature and reason of things, and moreover upon its being the

express will * of the Deity, who as the author of our beings, hath an undoubted right to our obedience, yet that all these *powerful obligations*, would be *very precarious and uncertain*, except the *dispensers of these truths*, had been *authorized or received a commission* to tell us, that we are obliged to a *life of virtue and religion*. Strange indeed! that the *certainty* of our obligation to virtue and religion should depend upon a person's being *authorized or not authorized* to tell us our duty: this is bad reasoning, but worse divinity; and yet no less a person than a *master of arts*, and an *university orator*, out of his abundant zeal for he knoweth not what, hath been pleased to assure the world, that all their obligations to religion, and the necessity of their obedience to the precepts of christianity, which arise from the *moral fitness* of the duties and virtues which it recommends, and the *relation* which we bear to a Deity, to *our fellow creatures*, and to *ourselves*, which depend upon the *nature and reason*

* I add this, because if our author hath any meaning to this expression, *had their precepts received no sanction*. he must, I think. mean, had not the precepts which the clergy deliver to the people (which by the way are improperly called theirs, because if they deliver none but what are agreeable to the will of Christ, and the rule of the Gospel, they are the precepts of Christ, and not theirs) received the sanction of divine authority.

son of things which is *eternally unalterable*, neither to be *changed* or *destroyed* by the *caprice* of men, nor by the *arbitrary will* of the *Deity* himself: yet I say that the certainty of these divine principles, and the necessity of our conformity to them, depends upon an appointment and designation of some *whimsical and chimerical powers*, in the hands of a particular set of men. Whether by such a conduct, and *such principles*, our preacher hath recommended the christian religion, and the constitution of our church in particular, which in their *nature and tendency* they are *inconsistent* with, and directly contrary to, I leave to the impartial world to determine.

What he immediately adds, is not indeed a confirmation of what he hath said, a thing that is false, being for that reason, incapable of a confirmation; but our author points out his meaning, in yet stronger terms, by adding “ a voluntary choice might indeed recommend, or a discretionary power would perhaps naturally enforce its doctrines; but an absolute necessity of actual obedience would be entirely cancelled.” *A voluntary choice recommending, and a discretionary power naturally enforcing*, are certainly flowers of university-rhetorick; perhaps indeed peculiar to the fellows of *Exon* college. I suppose our
author

author means, that if there were no *dispensers* authorized to instruct us in our holy religion, yet that some persons would chuse to be virtuous, and others from prudential considerations would conform to its precepts and doctrines; but yet that upon the above-mentioned supposition, an absolute necessity of actual obedience would be entirely cancelled. What! not only cancelled, but *entirely cancelled*; in the former paragraph he only told us, that except *dispensers were authorized*, all the *powerful obligation* to religion would be *precarious and uncertain*: but upon second thoughts, I imagine that appeared too favourable; wherefore he now adds, that the necessity of our obedience would be entirely cancelled.

And by way of illustration, our orator tells us, "That the harsh and more severe precepts of christianity would easily find too good a friend in our corrupted natures to be rightly observed and embraced." In my opinion, the words themselves carry their own reason along with them; the *harsh and more severe* precepts of religion, for that very reason, and because our *natures are corrupted*, are not rightly *embraced and observed* by us; but then this doth by no means follow, which our preacher intimates to us, from the want of *authorized and commissioned dispensers*; for the

the supposition, of such authorized dispensers would be of no service to us in the present case; for without all doubt, these *harsh and severe* precepts would find the same good friend in our *corrupted natures*, whether we had a divinely commissioned ministry or not: neither will the odd and fanciful observation which is immediately subjoined clear up this matter at all.

And though Mr. B. doth *conceive*, (wondrous modest!) that the truth of the above assertions are too plainly evident to be denied; yet for fear others should not conceive in the manner that he doth, he is pleased to *quicken and promote* their *conception* with a familiar observation, "That the most proper advices, the most prudent counsels, the most useful admonitions, unless given by a person who has a warrantable right of admonishing, and an uncontested power of instructing, are commonly looked upon as unseasonable, trifling, and impertinent." From hence our preacher would infer, that except the clergy had a warrantable right of admonishing, and an uncontested power of instructing, their preaching would be looked upon as unseasonable, trifling, and impertinent.

And really, if I may speak my own opinion of this matter, I do not apprehend that the case differs much at present; for though they are allowed to have a warrantable right, and an uncontested power of instructing, yet I fear their discourses are generally esteem'd, and if managed in the same manner as our preacher's, very deservedly, *unseasonable, trifling, and impertinent.*

But because Mr. *B.* conceives that this observation confirms the truth of his assertions, it may not be improper to enquire into its nature and pertinence.

It is certainly a very just remark, that when a person *unasked* interferes in the common affairs of life, we generally think him *impertinent*, and his advice *unseasonable*; but then this will not, as I apprehend, be of any service to Mr. *B.*'s cause; for if we ask or desire the advice, I think then we very seldom, (I am sure we ought, never) esteem it *unseasonable or impertinent*; nay, I doubt not, but such a request would be looked upon by any person, as a better warrant and power, than any commission or warrant which another forward to give his advice should pretend to from heaven: but our preacher's observation must be

be enlarged, in order to do him any service, for as it now stands it answers no end; he must observe farther, that the advices and counsels of a person, who hath a *warrantable right of admonishing*, are (and for that reason, I mean, because he hath such right) well received, are esteemed *seasonable and pertinent*; and in the case before us, that this warrantable right cannot be as well given by the people who are to be instructed, as by divine appointment, *i. e.* he must observe, that of two persons, the one of which hath his *powers from the people*, who are to be instructed, who authorize and pay him for so doing; and of the other, who *pretends a divine commission* to teach: I say, he must observe, that the *instructions* of the former are reckoned *unseasonable and impertinent*, and those of the latter attended with success. Except Mr. B. is pleased to observe thus much, his observation might as well have been spared; for as it now stands, to use his own words, it is *unseasonable, trifling and impertinent*.

Our preacher adds, “The truths themselves, how important soever, are generally neglected, and he that too zealously propagates them is, not always undeservedly, ill treated.” This, I think, is very oddly expressed, for who would imagine that by too
zealously,

zealously, should be meant *persons not authorized*? He goes on, “ But what if noisy and “ impudent pretenders are justly punished, for “ presumptuously arrogating to themselves a “ claim to which divine laws have never gi- “ ven, and to which human laws can never “ give, any title?” I am somewhat at a loss to know who are these *noisy and impudent pretenders*; it must certainly refer to those in the former sentence who *too zealously* propagated unseasonable truths, but then I think it is strangely connected: in the former sentence, they are ill treated for propagating truth *too zealously*, in this truly, though he certainly means the very same persons, and those guilty of the very same crimes, yet they are justly punished for arrogating a claim, to which divine laws have never given, and human laws never can give them a title. But what, pray, is this mighty claim, for the arrogating of which these persons are punished, and to which divine laws have not, and human laws never can give a title? All the claim already mentioned, and to which this can possibly refer, is that of some persons instructing others without a warrantable right; and it is certainly somewhat very strange and unaccountable, that human laws cannot give a person a right of this nature. That divine laws have never given *noisy and impudent pretenders* any title to teach and instruct

instruct others, I am indeed very ready to acknowledge; and this makes me inclinable to believe, that our *preacher's ministry is of men, and not of God.*

After this, our orator goes on in a very moving and pathetic strain, to lament and mourn over “some venerable persons, who
“have an undeniable right, an undoubted
“authority, a legal commission, to teach and
“instruct, to reprove and exhort, to direct
“and govern.” He hath not told us who these venerable persons are, but whoever they are, I cannot see any reason we should pity them, for it seems they are “the angels
“of God’s church, the stars in his right hand,
“and have a power superior to * angels and
“archangels themselves;” and doubtless, these wonderful privileges and powers are able to support them under all their calamity and distress.

But what is it that these venerable persons have an undoubted right to? It is, he tells us, to teach and instruct, to reprove and exhort, and at last comes out, to *direct and govern;*

* I think our preacher should have acquainted us with the nature of this power, and wherein it consists.

govern; which is, I fear, the grand secret and main spring of this mighty machine, which gives motion to all its parts: in the former pages, we had never a word about *government*, though were it not for the sake of this, I imagine, we should not have heard any thing about warrantable powers to *admonish, teach and instruct*: I doubt not, these venerable persons would have been very easy in their demands of such a power as the latter, and the people as easy in the grant of it; but when once they come to talk about *government*, and presumptuously arrogate a claim, to which neither divine nor human laws, ever gave them a title, no wonder then, that they meet with that scorn and contempt, which our preacher laments in such a moving strain. But it seems, he is not willing barely to lament, and deplore their hard and unhappy fate; no, he thinks it not unseasonable “to vindicate their
 “mission, to prove their authority, and mag-
 “nify their office;” and I think it not unseasonable to see how he hath acquitted himself.

He begins with *endeavouring* to demonstrate (wondrous modesty!) “First, that God has
 “instituted and established a ministry by Christ
 “and his apostles, to act between himself and

“man-

“ mankind, in the great and important affair
 “ of their salvation.”

He begins the proof hereof with a remark, that there have been priests in all ages and nations, and that these priests were constantly looked upon, in a *pious sense*, as successful * mediators between God and men.

It is indeed a truth too great to be denied, and at the same time a melancholy instance of the *degeneracy of the human mind*, that in almost all ages and nations of the world, there have been some persons of an infamous character; who, to carry on some mean and base designs, to promote their own interest, vanity and pride, have taken advantage of the weakness and ignorance of their fellow-creatures; and it is not improbable to suppose, sometimes under the particular direction and assistance of their master the devil, *whose servants they were, and whose proper work and business they were doing*, have put in practice
 all

* A very odd expression in a christian divine; for though our great *high priest*, and author of our holy religion, is stiled the *mediator* between God and men, yet to apply this character to the priesthood, and call it a *pious sense*, is an instance of *uncommon vanity and weakness*, not to call it worse.

all possible and plausible arts to impose upon the *judgment and imagination of mankind*, and vainly pretended to greater degrees of favour with the deity, or some imaginary superior beings, and under that pretence have seduced their respective followers and admirers into gross and scandalous errors, unworthy of men, or of reasonable beings; insomuch that they forfeited their proper character, and acted far beneath the rank and dignity of intelligent creatures, by an *abject and servile submission* of their reason and understanding, to the guidance and direction of their priests, and by a conformity to all their *silly trumpery and ridiculous rites*, under the *false and equally foolish* notion of religion toward the Gods. This hath been the constant business, this the true character of those *priests* which our orator refers to: but why he hath thought proper to bring this miserable state and condition of mankind into our view, except it be to raise our abhorrence against those vile seducers, and their successors in the office, I cannot possibly imagine; for this, I hope, is far from being a proof, that *priests are of a divine appointment*; not only far from being a direct proof, but likewise far from adding the least force or strength to his argument.

But having done with these, our preacher proceeds to tell us, that the true religion hath had its *ministers*, if not from the beginning of the world, yet certainly from the *patriarchal* ages, and that the priesthood was lodged in the first-born, which he would insinuate as an argument of its dignity; or, as he hath expressed it, that *the dignity of it was reputed very great*. In the preceding section he tells us, that it was the business of the priests, to *teach, exhort, and instruct*, and here, oh admirable discovery! he says the priesthood was lodged in the * first born, so that they were *kings* and *priests* at the same time; and from hence he draws his argument for its dignity. I wonder much who our preacher would have to teach and instruct his family, but its master or head; ought not he therefore, who is its king, to be its priest? Certainly none is so fit and proper for that office; which, in my opinion, entirely destroys his curious argument for its dignity, which perhaps he was conscious of: for though he says, *from hence it doth manifestly appear*; yet he

* I suppose our preacher means the *master of the family*, for it is hardly to be imagined, that the *first-born* was *king* of the family while his father was living; or that after his decease he was king in the family of his brethren.

he immediately adds, *but be this as it will*; intimating, as one would imagine, that no great stress ought to be laid on it; and if he is content thus easily to yield up his own arguments, I see no reason why I should be concerned for them: wherefore let us attend to what follows, which is, “that the office was really executed, and that to no insignificant purpose, that its *threats* were neither looked upon as mere *niceties* or *dreams*, nor its censures esteemed as altogether *vain* and *ineffectual*, is, I think, *indisputably certain*, from the famous story of *Abraham* and *Abimelech*.” The office, as he before described it, was to teach and exhort, but by this which immediately follows, it seems to be of a different and contrary nature, for he talks of *threats* and *censures*. But he hath *abused* Abraham, and *perverted the scripture* in a most scandalous manner, in the instance which he hath made choice of, as a divine proof of the truth of his position; for if *Abraham*, as a *priest*, did *threaten and censure* *Abimelech*, in the instance before us, he too much, I fear, resembled some priests of our days, and was without all doubt a *very wicked priest* for so doing; for *Abimelech* had the testimony of the deity himself, that what he did was done in the *integrity of his heart*; see the sixth verse of the same twentieth of *Genesis*,

Genesis, which our author himself quotes: nay, if we more narrowly examine the history, and consider it according to the account which our preacher hath given us of the *priesthood*, he seems entirely to have mistaken the character of the persons; for *Abimelech* seems to be the *priest*, and not *Abraham*: however he certainly assumed the office in *reproving* *Abraham*; for he tells him in the ninth verse, he did deeds which he ought not to have done, which was undoubtedly true. I hope when our preacher is disposed to favour us with another sermon on the divine institution of the *priesthood*, he will please to review this instance.

In the mean time, as though he was sensible that this instance was nothing to the purpose, he tells us, “ that it will be *more* “ *fully* confirmed, by the consideration of “ *Noah’s* blessing *Shem*, and cursing *Canaan*; “ of *Isaac’s* blessing *Jacob*, and of *Jacob’s* “ authoritatively dispensing his paternal bene- “ dictions to his children.” If it be confirmed at all by these instances, I very readily agree with him, that it will be *more fully* confirmed by the latter than the former; though, I must confess, I am utterly at a loss to know what the *patriarchs* blessing or cursing their children hath to do with the *priesthood*,

except it be that our orator would insinuate, that our priests have the same powers now, that the patriarchs had then ; and when Mr. *B*— or his brethren can give an instance of this their power, when we have reason not to look upon their *threats* as *mere niceties and dreams*, or not to esteem their *cen- sures* altogether *vain and ineffectual*, then, and not till then I fancy, will mankind believe their divine institution, in the sense in which *He* contends for it. But to keep up the shew and appearance of an argument, our preacher adds, “solemnly to pronounce a benediction “in the name of the Lord Jehovah, is a “full and undoubted act of authority, and “can never be valid without an express com- “mission from God.” What he means by this, I profess I know not, nor indeed is it very material. How the pronounciation of a blessing, which must be either praying God to bless, or else a declaration that he will bless, can in any tolerable propriety of speech be called an *undoubted act of authority*, is what I can by no means comprehend ; though I easily imagine, that none can truly declare that the divine being will bless any particular person, either in general, or in any particular instance, except he hath received an express commission to make such a declaration : but what then ? To what purpose hath our orator asserted this, and

and in so pompous and rhetorical a strain? The reason, if we are to have any, is still behind, which is ushered in with a “*now*” “*that* these blessings, and these curses, were really ministerial acts, and must be absolutely considered as such, is plain even to demonstration; because when they were once delivered, it was not in the power of him by whom they were published, though ever so willing, or ever so passionately desirous, to reverse or alter them.”

What our orator means by calling these *ministerial* acts, where the whole stress of the affair lies, is hard to determine; the nature of his argument requires him to mean, that they are *such acts as are peculiar and confined to the office of the priesthood*; but then the reason which he adds, is so far from making this matter plain, even to *demonstration*, that it makes it neither *plain* nor *probable*, nor doth he mention any medium to prove it by: and there is neither reasoning nor connection in his argument; for it doth not by any means appear, that because the person *pronouncing the blessing* could not *reverse* it, that *therefore* he acted in the character of a *priest*. It is true, indeed, this act may in a proper sense be called *ministerial*, *i. e.* that the person who pronounced the blessing, did not act, as we may say, *in propria persona*, but as the *mi-*

nister of another, and as the publisher of the divine will; which indeed is sufficiently proved by the reason which our preacher gives, that it was not in his power to *alter* or *reverse* the *blessing*; but then what can be inferred from hence? Or what relation doth this bear to the *priesthood*? In the former sense of the word, his reason is no manner of proof; in the latter, though it be a proof, yet it is nothing to the purpose.

But moreover, if these acts were entirely *ministerial*, and it was not in the power of the *publisher* to *alter* the *blessing*, how can this be called an *undoubted act of authority*? How doth it argue either power or *authority*, to *deliver*, or *publish* the will of the divine being, in any particular instance; which will, as to its effects, doth not depend upon its being published or declared; for if it could not be altered after it was published, there doth not seem to be the least reason to suppose it would not equally have taken place, if it never had been published: but suppose we grant our author even more than he desires, that the fate of the person did in some measure depend upon the pronunciation of these blessings and cursings, the divine being having regard to these in the dispensations of his providence towards the particular persons thus

thus blessed or cursed, which I think seems not improbable from the history of the patriarchs; but then this, which must be allowed to be an undoubted act of authority, a power of a superior nature to any thing which our preacher contends for, who resolves all this power into *no power at all*, viz. the publishing and delivering the blessing, hath not the least reference to the priesthood, or our preacher's argument.

The true state of this affair is, that the patriarchs were favoured, by the divine being, with a privilege, which none since them seem to have enjoyed in so great a latitude, of blessing or cursing their immediate descendants; but that this power extended to other indifferent persons, doth by no means appear; and something analogous to this obtains amongst us even at this day, which hath given rise to that common and well known saying, that the *curse of a parent falls heavy*: but then in several instances this ought not to be considered under the character of a *power*, but rather as a mere privilege only, of *fore-seeing* and *declaring* the divine counsel and will. God *ab origine* designed to bless *Jacob*, for *Jacob*, says he, have I loved, and *Esau* have I hated, even before they were born, or had a being; it was therefore upon

all accounts necessary, that by some means or other, *Jacob* should have the blessing of his father; for if the patriarch had actually blessed *Esau*, as this was contrary to the will and design of the supreme being, *Isaac's* blessing would have been *vain* and *ineffectual*, and would never have been confirmed by God. Agreeably therefore to this privilege, granted to the patriarchs by the divine being, of blessing their offspring, some peculiar circumstances in that affair procured the declaration of the blessing in favour of *Jacob*, the person designed to be blessed by God.

But what hath this privilege, peculiar to the patriarchs, and to them not as *priests*, but as persons in a particular manner favoured by the divine being, to do in the present case? What reference hath this to the *priesthood*? What foundation is there, either in the nature of the thing, or in the holy writings, to imagine that they acted in the character and capacity of *priests*? Or even supposing they did, yet where is the connection between them thus acting, and the divine institution of a christian priesthood in our days, which confessedly hath no powers of this or the like kind? I shall therefore leave it, with this farther remark only, that even in circumstances of a lesser and more indifferent nature,

nature, our preacher is mistaken; for I think it will puzzle him to give us an instance of any one, who after the blessing was published, was *passionately desirous to reverse it*; and if he cannot, his position, as it now stands, is very lame and defective. What he seems to refer to, is the affair between *Isaac* and his sons; but it doth by no means appear, from their history in the holy writings, that * *Isaac* was at all *willing*, much less *passionately desirous* to have it reversed, but certainly there must be allowed to be a vast difference between the *father* and *son*. But this is not the first instance our preacher hath given us, that he is above consulting his *bible*.

* It is indeed said, that when *Isaac* discovered how he had been imposed upon by *Jacob*, and that he had given him the blessing, which he designed for *Esau*, that he trembled exceedingly; but this is no argument of his desire, nor indeed doth it at all appear, that it was his desire, after *Jacob* had the blessing, to *reverse* or *alter* it, but rather the contrary; for we are told, in the following chapter, that at a time when there doth not appear to be any occasion for it (*Jacob* having already had the blessing, and *Isaac* had told *Esau*, that by virtue of that blessing he should be blessed) I say, we are there told, that *Isaac* called *Jacob* and blessed him.

But our preacher not willing to dwell on the “scanty beginnings of a religious ministry,” (though, by the way, according to his own account, these beginnings were not so very *scanty*) and I having as little inclination to dwell there as he, will very contentedly follow him to those brighter times, when our blessed lord “founded and established that church, which, our preacher assures us, all men must enter into, who will be intitled to the benefits of Christ’s incarnation, passion and resurrection.” I profess he is once more got above my reach; if he had been so good to tell us what he meant by *entering into that church*, or whether he meant joining in communion with the present established church, which by the rant that follows I shrewdly suspect, I could then have given some answer to it; but till he is pleased to explain himself, I must even leave it as I found it.

He then proceeds to acquaint us with the methods which our Lord made use of in the establishing his kingdom, which he doth in a pompous and rhetorical strain; but if less regard had been had to this, and a greater to the sense and meaning of the words, it might have been altogether as well. In one line
 he

he tells us, that "our Lord's divine mission was fully confirmed by his surprizing miracles;" and in the next he adds, "that the great seal of heaven gave an authentic testimony to what he did:" where, though the expression is different, and he would be thought to convey a different idea to his audience, yet certainly he means one and the same individual thing: but after this follows, what every one, who hath read the history of our Lord in the holy gospels, must know to be false, "that he was glorified by all that heard him." Afterward he acquaints us, that Christ made choice of his apostles to preach his gospel to mankind, and that after they had received their commission, he tells us, "that they respectively propagated their uniform doctrines, and imposed the observance of them upon all christian converts, as absolutely necessary to salvation." These are some of our orator's flowers, which, in my opinion, need a small explanation; for what those uniform doctrines were, the observance of which were imposed on the christian converts, as absolutely necessary to salvation, is somewhat hard to determine. The manner of his expression seems to refer to those doctrines of our holy religion, which are the articles of a christian's faith or belief, separate from his practice;

and then these *uniform doctrines* must be reduced to this *single one* of the divine mission, or messiahship of Christ.

After he hath given us a relation of the acts of the apostles, in the first planting and settlement of the christian churches, he comes to “and lastly, to keep up a lawful succession of men qualified to adorn and explain the doctrines of that great and glorious high priest, God their saviour, in all things; and that none might profanely intrude into the sanctuary of our Lord, or sacrilegiously invade the altar of God, they constitute and ordain officers in such a regular subordination, as should be most effectual to preserve a lasting establishment of peace and good government in the church of Christ, which was to continue till all its faithful members should be triumphantly received up into glory.” He seems to have reserved this to the *last*, as being the most important and material action of the apostles, and certainly in his present argument, all that goes before is *unseasonable, trifling and impertinent*. But that we may have a clear and just notion of his argument, (for by the way, he hath aimed at none before) let us add what immediately follows, which is “*now, the adversaries of our church, may then, if they please, be informed, or rather*

“ rather fully convinced, that from hence it is
 “ we receive our power, from hence we claim
 “ our authority, from hence we derive our
 “ commission, and from hence also, in a very
 “ justifiable sense, we sufficiently prove our
 “ uninterrupted succession.”

Here is a great show of words, and by his *now then*, somewhat like the appearance of an argument: but really there is nothing but a mere empty shadow, without the substance. He says, the apostles ordained officers in the christian churches: and what then? What have these officers to do with *government* and *authority*? Or how doth it appear, that because the apostles ordained them, that they were to ordain others? This our preacher ought to have proved, either out of the holy writings, or from the nature and design of the office; the only proof, which in the nature of the thing, the point in debate is capable of: but I imagine, that he was conscious of his want of proof; for which reason he thought it proper to substitute some bold assertions to supply the place of evidence. The truth is, as it was inconsistent with the design of the apostles constantly to reside any where, when they left any particular place, where they had met with success in making many converts to the religion of Christ, they thought proper to make

choice of some persons to supply their place in their absence, to *teach* and *instruct* their brethren, and confirm them in the principles of their holy religion; but that they conferred any *power* or *authority* upon these persons, as our preacher would seem to intimate, doth by no means appear: or that they had a right of appointing persons to succeed them in their office, is very unlikely; for though great regard was paid by the primitive christians, to the judgment of the apostles, and for a very good reason, because they were *divinely inspired*, yet it doth not from hence follow, that equal regard was paid to those who succeeded them. It is not improbable, for the reasons just mentioned, that they should apply to the apostles, to make choice of a fit person to teach and instruct them; and no wonder likewise, that the apostles “composed differences, determined controversies, received accusations, punished offenders, and censured the scandalous;” but if the same spirit rested not upon their successors, where is the reason that the same regard should be paid them? The people, no doubt, were as proper judges, and in some sense more so, who were the fittest persons to supply the place of the immediate successors of the apostles, and were as capable to give them a *power* to *teach* and *instruct* them, as their predecessors

decessors in that office; nay, it is undeniably certain, that no predecessor could commission his successor, to teach and instruct any particular church, without the churches concurrence and approbation.

But suppose we should grant our orator, that it was customary for the ministers of the gospel, and them only, to examine all such as were candidates for that office, and upon their being satisfied of their abilities to *teach* and *instruct* others, to give them in an *improper sense*, a *formal order* to execute it: yet what mighty service would this concession do his cause? Or what reason have we to imagine, that this custom had its rise from a divine institution, when another more probable and natural cause may be assigned for it: for it is not at all unlikely, that the people might judge it necessary, that the abilities of such candidates should be inquired into, and who more competent judges of this than their teachers? It may therefore be very easily supposed, that they left this affair entirely to them: but if they made an ill use hereof, and by their orders pretended to confer any *power* or *authority*, in a strict and proper sense of the word, which the person had not prior to such their order, they abused and deceived both themselves and the people; for what

four-

foundation is there for this? Or what possible reason can be assigned; why these persons had not the same power and authority to teach and instruct mankind, before, as after they received this order? certainly the very same; with this difference only, that probably the people without this approbation of their ministers, would not be equally disposed to attend to their instructions: and if the continuation of that ceremony of the *laying on of hands*, which obtained in the first ages of the church, led people into this error, it was continued to very ill purpose. We grant, indeed, that the *Holy Ghost* was conferred by laying on of hands, but when the Holy Ghost was no longer conferred, the laying on of hands, was a mere form, and insignificant ceremony; and if any was so weak to imagine, that by the continuance of this rite, any powers were conferred, it would have been much better, that it had been entirely laid aside; better, when the substance was gone, that the shadow had in like manner vanished and disappeared; and if it had, possibly our preacher would not have been so mistaken about the imaginary power and authority of the priesthood. But suppose we grant our author all that he can desire of us, I much question whether he will ever be able to make his argument bear; for though we should

should allow it to be the will of our Lord, that none should publish his law but those whom he appointed, and that they, and they only, appoint their successors, and so on to the end of time; yet I fear, notwithstanding what our orator says, that “from hence, in a very justifiable sense, we sufficiently prove our uninterrupted succession,” (a manner of expression I do not very well understand) that he will be at a great loss to prove his uninterrupted succession; for if one link of this long chain should happen to be broke, and strange if in seventeen centuries it hath not been broke at least seventeen times; down goes christianity and our holy religion at once. I admire our preacher should place his own power and authority upon such a weak and sandy foundation; for it is certainly very improbable, that he hath derived his powers in an *uninterrupted succession* from the *apostles*.

Our preacher proceeds to acquaint us, that we have the very same ministry, that was established in the apostles days, which, says he, “is plain even to demonstration, because the first writers are silent about any new or different institution:” but this is a very odd way of demonstration as ever was heard of; their silence about any new or different institution, doth by no means demonstrate, that there

there was none; for though the remark may possibly have some force in it, yet it can never amount to *demonstration*. Or how doth Mr. B. know that no intimation hath been given us hereof in some writings that are lost? But I wonder much, why our preacher should refer us to councils, and the authority of fathers on this head; for if it was the will of our Lord, that these particular offices should obtain in his church, if he had laid that stress on them, which our preacher seems to do, without all doubt, we should have had an *express declaration* of this in the holy writings, the *only rule* of a christian's faith and obedience, with a particular description of the nature of their respective offices, and the proper boundaries and limits of the one, in contra-distinction to the other: but to make use of our author's words, with a small variation, to which I think I have much the best right, "these being entirely silent
 " in this affair, it amounts to demonstra-
 " tion, that the three orders of ecclesiastics
 " we now have, were never instituted by
 " Christ and his holy apostles;" but that this affair was left wholly indifferent by them, that christians might hereafter make choice of such officers as would best answer the end of religion, and at the same time should be best suited to the different circumstances
 of

of the several respective christian churches and nations in the world.

The paragraph which our author adds to confirm his assertion, hath certainly something in it very *remarkable* and *uncommon*, God forbid he should have many followers; “ that
“ the truth of this, *i. e.* of the divine in-
“ stitution of bishops, priests, and deacons,
“ stands upon the *very same basis*, and is con-
“ firmed by the *very same* arguments, by
“ which the authority of *scripture itself* is
“ demonstrated.” I leave this to our preacher’s serious consideration and review, without any remark.

But to proceed, I think our author had much better have omitted the argument from the promiscuous use of the terms, except he had given a more satisfactory answer to it; for it is certain and undeniable, that no argument can be drawn for *distinct* offices from the use of *different* terms, if these *different* terms are promiscuously used, and indifferently applied to these supposed *different* officers: I mean, that no argument from the mention of the terms * *bishop* and *elder* in the holy wri-

* Perhaps, the following instance may explain this matter; suppose there is mention made in any author,

writings, (which by the way, is the only argument made use of) is conclusive for a *different order or office* comprehended in and denoted by the *different* terms, when they are allowed to be indifferently applied to the
 same

author of the terms *constable* and *headborough*, yet none, I believe, would imagine, that merely because he made use of two words, that he meant two distinct offices, but rather that he meant one and the same by both, if he made a promiscuous use of the terms, and indifferently applied them to one and the same person, calling him sometimes a *constable*, and sometimes an *headborough*: neither can I imagine any so weak to think, that because I sometimes call Mr. B. an *orator*, and sometimes a *preacher*, that I mean a different person, or distinct order; when it is certain, I make an indifferent and promiscuous use of the terms, and apply them to the same individual person.

But our author seems not to have apprehended the nature of the argument, or where the force of the objection lies, which doth not consist in this only, that the promiscuous use of the terms, is a direct proof of the identity of the offices; but where the matter, which is the present case, is left unsettled and undetermined by the apostles, where we have no express declaration that the offices are different or distinct, nor any thing in the nature of the thing which supposeth such a difference, there no argument can be drawn from the use of two different terms, if these terms are allowed at the same time to be indifferently and promiscuously used.

same individual person; so that he who is called an *elder*, is called *bishop*, and *vice versa*.

But our preacher not being disposed critically to pursue this fruitful point, adds this unanswerable remark, "that what he hath advanced is acknowledged by catholicks, by hereticks, by schismaticks, by men of opposite interests, different sentiments, and contrary parties, who have all agreed to acknowledge the fact, as being insuperably overcome by the native evidence of truth." If what he hath advanced refers to the divine institution of the three orders, which I think it seems to do; If Mr. *B.* hath assurance enough to assert this, there is nothing, I believe, but what he may prevail upon himself to say.

After what hath been already said, I think it needless to remark upon the use which he hath made of the fathers; though, probably, if a narrow inquiry was made into this affair, our preacher might appear as *sullen* as St. *Jerome*, whom he is pleased to compliment with the character; I shall therefore beg leave to pass on to his sixteenth page, where, having once established his *power*, he grows outrageous, raves and rants in the most scandalous

lous extravagant manner; by virtue, says he, of their divine mission, “the evangelical priesthood translates us out of darkness into God’s marvellous light; raises men from the earth, and brings God *himself* down from the regions of heaven. By blessing visible elements, it makes them invisible grace. It disposes of that body which was given for the life of the world, and that blood which was poured out to redeem mens precious and immortal souls. Oh miracle of goodness! oh adorable bounty of God! that such transcendent power should be given to the sons of sinful men! what amazing dulness is it therefore not to admire! what shocking *prophaneness* is it not to *revere* so great an authority!” and he immediately adds, “temporal princes have indeed a power to bind, but that affects the body only, whereas *ministerial* power binds the soul, is extended beyond the grave, reaches even to heaven, and triumphs even with eternity itself.”

But now let us see what we can make of all this *rant*. That the evangelical priesthood *brings God himself down from the regions of heaven, and by blessing visible elements, makes them invisible grace*, is, in my opinion, a very odd expression in a *protestant* divine; it smells very strong

strong of *popery* and *transubstantiation*, not without a mixture of *conjuratiō* and *legerdemain*: for no sooner are the words *hoc est corpus* (or in the corrupt conjuring stile, *hocus pocus*) pronounced, the mighty wonder working words from the mouth of the *priests*, but the *visible elements* we are told, vanish at once, and what pray have we left in their room? why it seems, *invisible grace*, or rather *God himself*; for if our preacher did not design him for this purpose, I cannot possibly conceive, what other reason he had for *bringing him down from the regions of heaven*; and therefore well might he in rapture and extasy cry out, oh miracle! oh transcendent power! and well might he call it *shocking prophaneness* not to *revere* so great an authority, an authority it seems infinitely superior to that of kings, for *their power affects the body only, but this same ministerial power binds the soul, and is extended beyond the grave, and triumphs with eternity itself*: so that if his majesty, or the state should happen to be at variance with our preacher or his brethren, I fear, they would come off by the worst; for though he might bind their bodies, yet I dread to think what a vast and mighty revenge they would take; a revenge, I doubt not, equal to the very utmost extent of their power; which brings to my mind the noble earl of *Warwick's* wish, which,

which, upon our preacher's principles, is neither unseasonable nor impertinent at present.

* *Oh might I live, to bless the happy day,
When Rome no more usurps tyrannick sway;
Or, that deny'd, may our descendants see
The land throughout from superstition free:
With kings, who fill an independent throne,
And know no power supreme besides their own.*

But sure our preacher is not in earnest, when he thinks himself possessed of this mighty power; God forbid he should have it, for I fear he would make furious work: nay, I am somewhat in pain, lest I should be made to feel its dreadful and wondrous effects. I think whoever gave Mr. B. orders should have previously consulted the temper and disposition of his mind, and not have intrusted so great a power in the hands of a person, who seems so very unfit for it; but however, as he hath not that same *temporal* power, which he seems to despise, which affects the body, I am, methinks, pretty easy, and should not be very much concerned if he did try his other power upon me; though perhaps, I might be in the wrong, for he says, "that it is
" the very utmost extravagance of madness, to

* *Humfrey duke of Gloucester.*

“ despise or deny a power, without which we
 “ can hope for no salvation.” How! not
 hope for salvation without the power of a
 priest? Very sad truly: but how doth this
 appear? Why, for our comfort, the next sen-
 tence begins with a *for*, and there I suppose
 we are to look for the reason, if perchance
 we can find any, “ for if none, says our
 “ preacher, none in a *regular* way, can enter
 “ into the kingdom of heaven” (but by the
 way, I hope none enter there by an irregular
 way, or if they do, if they are once there,
 I believe it is much the same thing) “ un-
 “ less he be first regenerated with water and
 “ the Holy Ghost; if he that eateth not
 “ the flesh of the Lord, and drinketh not
 “ his blood, is *absolutely* deprived of eternal
 “ life; and if it be by the *hallowed* and *up-*
 “ *lified* hands of the *ministry*, that all these
 “ things must be done; how can either the
 “ inextinguishable fires of hell be avoided,
 “ or the radiant crowns of glory prepared
 “ for men in heaven be obtained, without
 “ their help and assistance?” We have abun-
 dance of *ifs* here, and yet if any one be de-
 ficient, I fear our preacher’s fine scheme is
 entirely destroyed; and according to Mr. B.’s
 usual manner of reasoning, it would be no great
 wonder, if they are all defective. By the
 first and second, I apprehend him to mean,

if none can enter into the kingdom of heaven except they are *baptized*, and receive the *communion*: his argument and manner of reasoning supposeth they cannot; whereas nothing is more true than the reverse, nay, our preacher seems to be an entire stranger to the principles of that church whereof he is a member and priest, which never esteemed *baptism*, and the receiving the *communion*, necessary to salvation, and much less according to our preacher's manner of expression, that he who did not receive the communion was *absolutely* deprived of eternal life: nor doth there seem to be the least foundation for this *idle fancy* of his in the holy writings, or in the nature or reason of the thing. Is baptism, or receiving the communion, recommended or enforced in any *particular manner* in the scriptures, upon christians? not in the least, there is no *stress* laid on them, nor are they *pressed* upon us as our duty; mentioned as such they are indeed, and that is all. As to the *eucharist*, I do not remember, that throughout the whole gospel or epistles, the apostles do in a particular manner *insist* upon this as a christian duty; it is mentioned, I think, but once by St. *Paul*, and that is a bare narration of the method observed by our Lord, in its primitive institution; whereas was the practice hereof necessary to salvation,

he

he would, without all doubt, have recommended it in the *strongest terms*, and have frequently pressed it upon Christians. And it is a yet wilder imagination, to suppose baptism necessary to salvation; for as infants themselves are incapable of having it done, if they should die in their nonage, or when they are adult, they should omit it upon supposition they had been baptized, when at the same time, we beg leave to suppose they had not, this necessarily makes their salvation to depend not upon their virtuous or vicious conduct, but upon the will and conduct of another; which is so precarious and foolish a foundation, as is utterly unworthy the God of infinite *mercy* and *wisdom*. But suppose we grant our orator his assertion in both these particulars, which, by the way, he ought to have proved, and not place the main stress of the controversy upon an *if*, and then presently tell us, he hath proved the point in debate; yet except his other *if* be proved true, which unfortunately for him and his cause is manifestly false, it will be to no purpose: “and if, says he, it be by the hallowed and uplifted hands of the ministry, that all these things must be done,” *i. e.* that baptism and the sacrament of the supper must be administered.

In answer to which, I beg leave to observe, that there is not the least foundation in the holy writings, for us to suppose that baptism ought to be administered by the hands of the clergy *only*; nay, our preacher is condemned, if not by his own, yet by the church of *Rome*, which is too fond of power to share any part of it to the laity, but upon a just and proper occasion; which, though it prefers the practice of baptism by the clergy, as most agreeable to order and decency, yet doth not esteem this *essential* to baptism, she allowing it to be valid when administered by the hands of a *midwife*; and certainly there is nothing in the nature of the thing, that it cannot be performed as *well* and *effectually* by the equally *hallowed* and *uplifted* hands of the *latter* as the *former*. The same holds good with regard to the other sacrament; but as I design to resume this argument before I conclude, I beg leave to dismiss it at present, with this farther remark, that what hath been already said, doth entirely destroy the imaginary force and strength of Mr. *B's* reasoning upon this head.

We are now arrived at our preacher's second *observable*, (any one but an university orator, it is very probable, would have
been,

been content with the old word observation) which is, “that all opposition to this ministry, really is, and must be looked upon as exceeding sinful.” He begins his proof of this point thus, “if the religion of Christ cannot be duly propagated and performed without a constant succession of preachers and ministers; if the office and succession of the ministry be actually implied and instituted in the holy scriptures; if these very men, who by God’s own appointment are the ministers of his word, are also the ministers of his holy sacraments; if they who have laboured in the ministry, without being regularly appointed to it, have been constantly condemned by the whole church of Christ; then it is certain, that all opposition to this ministry, is an opposition to religion itself, and consequently must be a sin.” But if all these *ifs* should prove to be false, which it would be no difficult matter to make appear; nay, I doubt not but most of them appear so already, then the consequence drawn from them is weak and invalid; nay, if all of them are allowed to be true, yet no such conclusion can be justly drawn from such premises: for upon supposition of their truth, how will Mr. B. make it appear, that all opposition to this ministry, is an opposition to religion itself? None

are so foolish to oppose a minister of the gospel, merely as such ; for where is the wrong done to any people or party in being taught or instructed ? or why should they oppose such for no reason ? No ; our preacher hath certainly mistaken the true state of the case. If the ministers of the gospel do not act agreeably to their character and profession, if instead of *teaching* and *instructing*, they are only desirous of *rule* and *government*, no wonder they are opposed, and certainly not without just reason, and consequently this is far from being an opposition to religion itself. To which, in answer to his premises, I beg leave to add, that if these men had never been born, our holy religion would have been *duly propagated* and *performed*, with equal, or rather greater success ; perhaps indeed, by persons not *regularly appointed*, in the sense of our preacher ; and perhaps, for want of such an appointment, they might have been *condemned* by some very *weak* and *ambitious* men ; yet this would have done *them* no disservice, nor have been any hindrance to the progress of our holy religion.

But our author was perhaps conscious, that what he advanced was no service to his cause ; he goes in his next section a step farther : “ But farther, says he, if Christ has received

“ men to salvation upon terms and con-
 “ ditions proposed and offered by him, not cal-
 “ culated and contrived by them, then it is ne-
 “ cessary that these terms and conditions should
 “ be nicely weighed, and seriously regarded ;
 “ if Christ has a power of making any in-
 “ stitutions, the impious consequence of de-
 “ nying which I dare not pursue ; if Christ
 “ (I say) has a sufficient power, or a divine
 “ right, of making any institutions, then cer-
 “ tainly these institutions ought strictly to
 “ be observed. And lastly, if Christ has a
 “ right to our obedience, he has undoubtedly a
 “ right to prescribe the rules, the forms, the
 “ measures of that obedience ; and for men
 “ to violate these rules, would be a profana-
 “ tion of his laws and injunctions, and there-
 “ fore cannot but be a scandalous contempt
 “ of heaven.” I cannot but remark, that
 this section differs from the preceding ; in the
 former, neither *premises* nor *conclusion* were
 true, but in this they are both so ; but at the
 same time, they are attended with this unhap-
 piness, that they are nothing at all to the
 purpose ; therefore our preacher is disposed to
 try it *again*, to see whether he can mend the
 matter at the third trial.

“ Again, says he, if christianity itself en-
 “ titles us to salvation, no otherwise than as it

“ is a covenant of grace, if the only ade-
 “ quate and proper obedience to christ’s laws
 “ is strictly obeying them in the very same
 “ sense that Christ really intended them; if
 “ for very weighty reasons we are obliged
 “ to assent to some of Christ’s doctrines, in
 “ the same sense in which he taught them,
 “ it will also for the very same reasons *fol-*
 “ *low*, that we are indispensibly obliged to
 “ obey some of his institutions in the very
 “ same manner in which he has prescribed
 “ them ” This section is of the same na-
 ture with the preceding, both its premises and
 conclusion are true, but have no relation to
 the present argument, wherefore our preacher
 is willing to try it *once more*. “ Once more,
 “ says he, either divine institutions are to be
 “ complied with, or they are not. If they
 “ are not, (why I pray) may not divine re-
 “ velation also be laid aside? This we are
 “ sure of, they stand on the very same foun-
 “ dation; the reason and nature of their
 “ obligations are perfectly and entirely the
 “ same, they are both the indisputable will of
 “ God discovered to mankind; the one of
 “ them to be nicely observed, the other to
 “ be fully believed. If, therefore, we are
 “ not bound to comply with his will in the
 “ one case, it will seem very difficult, to any
 “ impartial judge, to determine upon what
 “ grounds

“ grounds we are obliged to submit to it in
 “ the other.”

Here, I must confess, I am somewhat at a loss to know what our preacher drives at : suppose we grant, which I believe none will deny, that divine institutions are to be complied with ; what then ? What service will it do him ? Why then, the order of the priesthood must be complied with ; but what is meant by *complied with* ? Doth any one refuse to be *taught* or *instructed* ? But perhaps this is not sufficient ; for besides this, they must submit to be *ruled* and *governed* : but this is a thing of a quite different and contrary nature, which is by no means *essential*, *proper*, or *fit* for the office of the priesthood ; no wonder therefore, if they are not complied with here. But if any one should be so fullen to deny, that divine institutions are to be complied with ; What then ? says our preacher, “ why, pray, may not divine revelation also, “ be laid aside ? And perhaps, the same persons may be willing to oblige him in this instance also ; and what then ? Why then ——— nothing at all. It was certainly our author’s business, to have proved these principles, and then have applied them in a strict proper way of reasoning and argument, and not talk with his *ifs* and *ands*, in such a loose,

rambling way, about an affair which hath long been, and, I doubt not, ever will be, matter of debate.

Our preacher having trifled so long under this head, is willing at last “briefly and effectually to dispatch it;” and, I confess, I think it time; let us therefore attend to him, and see how he acquits himself: he adds, “If the power, the mission, the authority of the ministry be constituted of heaven; if it be commanded of God for a perpetual ordinance; if it be imposed upon us by him, whom all things in heaven and earth gladly obey; if it be appointed to be forever observed in his church, woe! eternal woe be to him that fighteth against God!—— The true, the humble, the pious christian, can no more be the creature of his own frail * opinions, than he can be the author of his own eternal salvation.” This is as little to the purpose as

* It is certainly a very mean argument, either of piety or humility, for a person to be guided by the opinion of others; so that upon a stricter enquiry into this affair, I doubt not but our preacher will allow it to be the duty of every christian to be guided and actuated by his own sentiments, though really never so weak in themselves, or in the opinion of others.

any thing that goes before ; our preacher seems to be contending only with some adversaries of his own *fancy* and *imagination* only ; for, I dare say, no person living would oppose the preachers of the gospel so long as they kept within their proper province ; his eternal woes might therefore have well been spared for those, who, for juster reasons, are the objects of his displeasure.

We are now at last happily arrived to our preacher's third and last observable, which is, " that no excuse can possibly be found out by men, which will induce God to pardon those that obstinately persevere in opposing the established ministry."

I am really weary of following our author, step by step, through his several wanderings, I shall therefore beg leave only to make some general remarks on this head, not forgetting to take particular notice of what appears most remarkable ; with a promise, that if ever it be required, I will submit to the drudgery of examining every individual paragraph, and doubt not to point out the folly and inconsequence of his reasonings, I might have said ravings, throughout almost every sentence, to the satisfaction of any reasonable person.

In the mean time I beg leave to observe, that our preacher is an entire stranger to the nature of *schism*, which he makes to consist in a separation from the *established church of a country*, whereas nothing is more true, than this is false.

A separation, or the not joining in communion with the established church, is in itself a thing of an harmless innocent nature, and ought by no means to be considered in the odious light wherein our orator represents it. Is not the dissenter a christian equally with our selves? Doth not he equally believe that Jesus is the messiah? Doth not he equally depend upon the merits and intercession of the same common saviour and mediator, for his acceptance with God? Have we not one hope, one faith, one baptism? Where then is the difference between us, or where doth *schism* lie? Why, it seems he differs from us about the use and significancy of some *external modes and ceremonies*, which, it is agreed on all hands, are not at all *essential* to our holy religion: but this difference in opinions is no matter of strife and contention, and though he disagrees concerning these lesser trifling things, yet he still continues in peace and charity with us, so that here is no rending the body of

of

of Christ, or destroying that harmony, union and peace which ought to obtain among the followers of the blessed Jesus. But perhaps it may be objected farther, that he doth not join in communion with us, which, though granted, does not prevent, or cut him off, from being a *member* of the same *undivided body*; for though he joins in communion with those, whose modes of worship are in his opinion, more agreeable to the will of our Lord, yet he may in a strict and proper sense be said to be in union with us, and that equally so, as if he should receive the communion in our churches, and according to our manner. The nature of *schism*, which the apostle so earnestly guarded us against, consists in a *factious contentious temper*, and disposition of mind, discovering itself in our malice, envy, or hatred against our brethren, against those members of Christ's holy body, whom it is our duty to love, cherish, and assist: this is truly schism, of which the members of the same particular religious society are as capable, as those of different communions; and this, according to our preacher's description of schism, "is directly opposite to that spirit of love and union, that meekness and goodness, that candour and tenderness, that patience and long suffering, which is the peculiar mark,

“the distinguishing character, the bright and
“essential badge of Christ’s disciples.”

A person of this temper and disposition of mind, is a *schismatick*, in the strict and proper sense of the word; but he that differs from his brethren in small and trifling matters, though we suppose him to differ in what are generally esteemed the *fundamentals* of christianity, yet if he continues in charity with his brethren, (and a meer difference in opinion hath certainly no natural tendency, to destroy peace and charity amongst mankind) doth by no means deserve the severe character, or treatment of a *schismatick*; for the bounds of peace and love are not broken, nor the body of Christ rent or divided, but the same divine harmony subsists, as though they agreed in every the most minute particular.

But to pursue this argument a little farther, the dissenters have an equal right to insist upon our agreement with their modes of worship, and our joining in communion with them, and to charge us with *schism* upon our refusal: for what right or pretence have we to insist upon their compliance, more than they have of ours? Perhaps it may be said, that our modes of worship are preferable to theirs; but how doth this appear? We indeed think
the

the one, and they, perhaps with equal reason, think the contrary. But then our author says, that we are the *established church*, and they ought to comply upon that account: a weak argument truly, and if it proves any thing, proves too much; for truth is not established by number, nor reason by a majority; and though the minority in lesser indifferent matters, for the preservation of mutual peace and charity, ought to submit to the majority, yet when this end is not to be answered, as in the present case, (for why must any want of peace or charity be supposed to attend our different religious sentiments) then the argument is of no force, and the minority may as well preserve their christian liberty and freedom, there being no reason to the contrary.

But if the dissenter is obliged to pay that deference and regard to the *established church*, merely because it is *established*, I fear our preacher, if he had lived in 48, or goes but on the other side of the *Tweed*, must either renounce his religion, and those favourite principles on which he lays such a mighty stress, or else yield up his cause as entirely defenceless; for the same arguments on which he founds the absolute necessity of conformity to the *established church of England*, are equally
valid

valid in *Scotland*, with respect to the *kirk*; for, as he observes, though with what justice applied, I leave others to judge, “that the
 “ eternal and immutable nature of things can
 “ never be altered; and that it is absolute-
 “ ly impossible that truth, always simple and
 “ uniform, should ever become falshood, or
 “ that falshood should become heavenly truth.”

“ As long therefore, adds he, as the church
 “ requires no terms of communion, but what
 “ are in themselves *lawful* (and no longer
 “ is it the true church of Christ than when
 “ it does so) as long as the church imposes
 “ no articles either of faith or religion, but
 “ what are entirely consonant to the holy
 “ scriptures; as long as the authorized mi-
 “ nisters preach no doctrines, but what are
 “ grounded upon these very scriptures, so long
 “ will all opposition to the *established* ministry
 “ be a rending the body and bowels of our
 “ blessed saviour, be a destroying the peace,
 “ order and government of the church, be
 “ a promoting the designs of hell, and en-
 “ larging the spacious kingdoms of intolerable
 “ darkness.”

But cannot this be pleaded with as good
 a grace by a presbyter of the *kirk* of *Scotland*,
 as by a priest of the church of *England*? If
 these

these arguments, and this plea are valid *here*, they must necessarily be esteemed equally valid there; for that the kirk of *Scotland* requires *unlawful* terms of communion, or imposeth articles of faith *dissonant* to the holy scriptures, or that their ministers preach doctrines, which are not grounded upon these scriptures, is what, in my opinion, will not be asserted, much less proved in haste: or suppose our preacher should think so, yet he seems to have entirely precluded himself from the benefit of this plea, by telling us, “ That
 “ as for the plea of conscience, which men
 “ so loudly trifle with in this important point,
 “ it must be superseded by the only great
 “ and adequate rule of conscience, which is
 “ no other than the scripture itself, which
 “ highly condemns *all schisms and separations*,
 “ and openly denounces the severest anathemas against them:” by which he would seem to intimate, that in the present case, there is no possible relief, but that our obligation to a visible union with the *established church*, is *absolutely and indispensably necessary*, and that *nothing* can excuse it; though by reviewing the paragraph just above quoted, one would be apt to imagine, that this is not his sense and opinion: for there he seems to place our obligation to *communion with the established church*, upon this supposition, that

she requireth no *unlawful* terms of communion. But then, who is to be the judge in this case, concerning the lawfulness or unlawfulness of the terms required? If the persons themselves, then I think our author must admit, that their judging the terms of communion required to be unlawful, is a sufficient excuse for their separation. But I can hardly suppose, he will allow the *laity* power and authority to *judge* in *spiritual* matters; no, this power must certainly be lodged in the priesthood: but then, without all doubt, one priest who hath equal power and authority with another, hath an equal right of judging for the laity; so that a *French*, a *Remish*, a *Spanish* (or even a priest before the reformation) has a right of judging in the room of the people equal to Mr. *Betty*.

But notwithstanding I have examined our author's meaning very exactly, I am still at a loss to know whether he doth allow any *thing whatever*, to be a just ground of separation from the *established church*; for though by the paragraph last referred to, he seems to do it, yet presently, as though he had made too large a concession, he seems to retract it, by telling us, "That the eternal nature of things is the same, that notwithstanding people's scruples and pretences, schism is
" schism

“ schism still, and can never be made to be
“ union ;” and then he adds the paragraph last
quoted, “ that the plea of conscience must
“ be superseded by the scripture, the only
“ great rule of conscience, which highly con-
“ demns *all schisms and separations.*” Here
again, he seems to own and deny it in the
same breath : first, he calls the scripture the
great rule of conscience, intimating, as one
would imagine, that a christian ought to act
pursuant to the guidance and direction of
the scripture, which is the very *plea* that all
our *separatists* use for their *justification*; and
then immediately adds, that the scripture high-
ly condemns all *schisms and separations*, which
intirely destroys what he had just granted :
for it is impossible, that the scripture should
both *justify* and *condemn* men in the same *in-*
dividual action; for if, as our *separatists* assure
us, that the scripture is the rule of their con-
science in their separation (whether this be
reality, or pretence, does no way concern us,
that must be left to the great searcher of
hearts) that same scripture cannot at the same
time condemn them for separating.

With regard to the truth and foundation
of this plea, whether, I mean, in their sepa-
ration they act according to the direction of
the scripture, is a question of a different na-
ture ;

ture; possibly they may be mistaken concerning the true sense and meaning of those particular parts of the holy writings, upon which their separation is grounded; but if they have taken due and proper means to inform their judgment, and act in the integrity and sincerity of their hearts, nothing is either more *true* or more *plain*, than that they are excusable for their error; and our preacher himself, I doubt not, upon second thoughts, will admit the justice of their plea, and acquit them of this grievous sin of *schism*: for who, I pray, must be judges, whether they understand the scripture in its true and proper sense, they or we? *they* without doubt have the same right to judge for *themselves*, as *we* for *ourselves*, and an equal right to judge for *us*, as *we* for *them*.

The next thing which our preacher takes notice of, is *episcopacy*, and there he goes on in his usual ranting pompous strain: to give him his due, he doth not aim at an *argument*, I shall therefore only point out some of his *flowers*. He says, "episcopacy is the
 " *very pillar and foundation* of all pure re-
 " *ligion*, and the *best and greatest*, if not the
 " *only security* of our present happy establish-
 " *ment*." If this be true, I am very sorry
 for

for it; we are, I think, in a very unhappy condition, both our *religion* and the *state* have but a very slender *pillar* and *support*. This account of our religion and government, though perhaps it may be agreeable to the character of an *Oxonian orator*, is certainly unbecoming a *christian divine*, and a *true Englishman*: I trust in God our holy religion hath a much stronger pillar and foundation, and would subsist in all its *purity*, and *splendor*, if there was no *bishop* in being: nay, I cannot discover any reason we have to boast of greater purity than our neighbours in the *north*, or our brethren of the *reformed churches* abroad. As to our present *happy establishment*, if *episcopacy* was its only, or its *best*, or *greatest* security, I should sincerely mourn over and lament its weak condition. Nor, by the way, can I see any reason why our preacher should mention this, if he did not design it as a tacit reflection upon the *dissenters* for their want of *loyalty*; and if so, he doth, in my opinion, deserve a severe rebuke; for they, to their *honour*, and our *shame* be it spoken, have always approved themselves to be hearty friends to the present happy establishment.

Much of the same nature with the foregoing, is what follows in the same page, "the spiritual powers that be, are ordained
" of

“ of God ; to rebel against them, is to rebel
 “ against heaven ; to invade their authority, is
 “ to infringe upon Christ’s peculiar property.
 “ And we have demonstrative arguments, drawn
 “ from the worth and excellency of the soul,
 “ to prove that our obligations to ecclesia-
 “ stical obedience, are stronger than those
 “ that flow either from civil or natural re-
 “ lations.” Our preacher seems here to be
 got into the third heavens, or into the gloomy
 regions, where, surrounded with clouds of thick
 darkness, he is far out of our reach : what
worth, or *excellency* there is in *ecclesiastical* obe-
 dience, or indeed what obedience is due, or
 how any argument to this purpose can be
 drawn from the worth and excellency of the
 soul, is all above my comprehension ; but as
 he thought it needless to mention his argu-
 ments, I think it equally needless to give any
 guess, or be at any concern about them. The
 next remarkable thing our preacher presents
 us with, is the character of those *vile* and
wicked persons who have presumed to instruct
 their brethren, without *episcopal* ordination ;
 and here he hath set his invention on the
 rack to *abuse* and *vilify* his brethren. One
 would think it impossible, that any thing in
 the shape of a *man*, much less a *gentleman*,
 (though upon second thoughts, there are not
 many

many priests who deserve the character) should discover so much *malice, envy and rage* against his innocent brethren, guilty only of the imaginary crime of teaching others their duty, without first receiving an order from a bishop to do what they can as well do without. “ They profane, says he, the sacred
 “ function, and make a trifle of the *most*
 “ *dreadful* sin. They crucify their blessed
 “ Lord afresh, and put him to an open shame :
 “ they are incessant troublers and seducers
 “ of the people: they are infallible subver-
 “ ters and destroyers of souls. They take
 “ away all distinction between the shepherd and
 “ the flock. They are usurpers of the broad
 “ seal of heaven. Blind as *Samson*, they exert
 “ all their strength, to pull down the pillars of
 “ our ecclesiastical constitution; and bold as
 “ *Phaeton*, with a glaring *ignorance*, and uncon-
 “ scious impudence, they *burn up* the spiritual
 “ world.” After our preacher hath painted them in these colours, no wonder he should add in the next paragraph, that “ with regard
 “ to those presumptuously arrogant teachers,
 “ and their obstinately blind *followers*, charity
 “ herself, that heaven-born virgin, repines
 “ that it is not in her power to think so
 “ favourably of them, as *Origen* did of *their*
 “ *father* the devil, who falsely imagined he
 “ might be saved.”

Much of the same nature and strain is the last which I shall take notice of: “After all, says our preacher, how rigidly severe, or exalted soever, our notions of a divine mission, or the absolute necessity of church government may seem; yet in case of a real and absolute, not a false and pretended necessity (not the daring and presumptuous plea of the *kirk*, not the feigned, but more plausible excuse of *Geneva*, not the boasted moderation of those who falsely call themselves *churches* reformed) we would not *willingly think* those men, who, though unauthorized, piously preach the religion of Jesus, to be guilty of sacrilege, or to incur the dreadful penalty of damnation. No; in pity to their unavoidable misfortune, in compassion to their unconquerable necessity, we consign them not to the indolent state of a gloomy deprivation, nor shall we commit them to the merciless and irreversible fate of eternal misery. They are in the hands of a merciful creator, we leave them to their guardian angels, and to that providence which continually preserveth all things.”

I believe these three paragraphs last quoted are *originals* in their kind; I scarce think

they are to be paralleled by any thing to be met with, in any controversial dispute, since that famous one which the devil had with *Michael* the archangel: and it is possible, as being agreeable to his temper and character, that he might manage his dispute against the archangel, much in the same manner that our preacher doth against his brethren; but whether such conduct is consistent with the character of a *divine*, a *christian*, or a *gentleman*, I leave to the impartial world to judge. As for myself, I profess I stand amazed at his consummate impudence, weakness and uncharitableness; for *though I would kindly draw a veil over every human ill, yet in vain I strive, in vain I labour to excuse him;* and if this be a specimen of university reasoning and charity, God forbid it should have any admirers or followers.

Our preacher hath at one stroke consigned to *eternal damnation* about one third of the *English* nation, all *Scotland* in general, with only a very small exception, the church and state of *Geneva*, and the whole body of *reformed churches* abroad; and for what? Why only because they happen to differ from him in their opinion concerning the use, necessity, and divine institution of the *episcopal* order; wherein it is certain, except our preacher is

infallible, and I can hardly imagine him vain enough to pretend to it, they may be in the right, and he in the wrong.

As for those amongst us, who wickedly and impiously presume to instruct their brethren in the principles of our holy religion, with regard to such, I say, and their blind followers, it seems *charity herself, that heaven-born virgin*, cannot think so favourably as *Origen* did of the devil; but I fear, that charity, which cannot think thus favourably of them, instead of being an *heaven-born virgin*, ought rather to be esteemed an *hell-born whore*.

As for the *kirk of Scotland*, whose plea it seems is daring and presumptuous; and *Geneva*, though it hath a plausible excuse, and though the *reformed churches* have moderation, yet these are guilty of no less than *sacrilege*, and incur the dreadful penalty of *eternal damnation*. But our preacher is not *willing to think* (a manner of expression which seems to intimate, that he is somewhat *dubious* about it) thus hardly of those, who under a real, absolute, unconquerable, and unavoidable necessity, (pray observe how it is guarded) though *unauthorized*, do *piously* preach the religion of Jesus “such he doth not
“ *consign*

“ consign to the indolent state of a gloomy
“ deprivation, nor commit to the merciless
“ and irreversible fate of eternal misery.”
but yet notwithstanding this great necessity,
it is observable how unwilling he is they
should be saved; for he only leaves them in
the hands of a *merciful creator*, and their
guardian angels, where I am in like manner
desirous to leave them and our *orator* too;
for I thank God I have at last done with
him, and perhaps, *gentlemen*, you think it time,
for it is not improbable that I have wearied
you, I am sure I have *myself*, in following him
through all his wanderings, uncharitableness,
scandal and raillery.

I thought it improper to destroy the con-
nection of the remarks, by any particular ap-
plication to *you*, but now I beg leave to re-
sume my address, and ask you how you think
your orator hath acquitted himself? Has he,
in the performance under our consideration,
behaved like a *scholar*, or a *divine*? He himself
tells us, methinks he might have had it more in
view, “ that the gentleman, the scholar, the
“ wit, and the politician, the philosopher and
“ the christian, should complete the character,
“ and exhaust the idea of a divine;” but what
there is peculiar to either of these characters
in this discourse, lies, I fear, in a very nar-

row compass. Are such harangues as these any credit to the university? or rather, if they are encouraged, will not our nobility and gentry fear to send their sons thither, lest their tender minds, capable in their youth of almost any impression, should be poisoned and corrupted with such *pernicious* principles? Principles not only *false* in speculation, but when reduced to practice, having a fatal and natural tendency to destroy the *peace* of every *society*. What encouragement, or rather what discouragement, doth this give our gentry, for the endowment of schools, or places of literature, or to join in the expence, or any way promote the education of one of their poor neighbour's sons; when they are no sooner sent to the university, but presently they imbibe false and pernicious notions of the grandeur, power, and authority of a *priest*? Upon which account, it ceases to be a wonder, that after they have been instructed in these principles, by persons for whose superior knowledge and learning, they have entertained a great veneration and esteem, and at an age, when they themselves are incapable of judging between right or wrong, truth or falsehood; I say, it is no wonder, that when once they get *orders*, they should be puffed up with pride, self conceit and arrogance, and upon account of their imaginary power and authority, should look down with scorn and contempt upon

upon the laity, thinking themselves superior to their patrons and all mankind: and it is this, that doubtless gives rise to the bickerings and quarrels, so common between the *esquire* and the *parson* in most of our *country villages*: this very easily and naturally accounts for the small progress of our holy religion, and the small success which attends the preachers of it: for when their heads are turned with *fancied powers*, and instead of instructing their parish in their duty toward *God*, their discourses tend only to direct them in their duty toward *themselves*, no wonder, that they meet with that scorn and contempt, which their *arrogance* and *pride*, and that manifest *abuse*, and *perversion* of their *office*, do so justly deserve.

Would it not, upon these accounts, have been more agreeable to the character, of a *christian* divine, and an *Oxonian* orator, instead of attempting what he calls, the proof of his *mission*, and the *divine institution*, of the *ministry*, to have proved what is certainly of vastly more importance; I mean the *mission* and *messiahship* of our *Lord*; and to have vindicated the *divine institution* of *christianity* itself, which at present, with grief and concern I speak it, seems to be the only subject of controversial debate? If our preacher had done this, he had acted worthy of his character,

and had deserved the thanks of every christian: but instead of this, he hath done all within his power to *weaken* and *destroy* it, and hath given the adversaries of our holy religion an *unanswerable* argument, if true, against its divine origin: nay, upon the supposed truth of our author's *principles*, I will at any time undertake to demonstrate the falshood of *christianity*, and shall think it no hard task; for his principles, when pursued through their just and natural consequences, which I have charity to think Mr. B. might not see, would introduce nothing but *confusion* and *disorder* into the world, are *directly contrary* to the *peace, happiness, and good* of society, and are *entirely destructive* of all the *civil and religious* rights and privileges of mankind. Are we therefore guilty of any wrong or injustice to such a religion, in calling it *diabolical*, instead of *divine*, and in judging it impossible, that such an institution should come from God, which is so contrary to the *purity and perfection* of his nature, who is a God of *peace*, and in all his dispensations consults the good and benefit of his creatures? For it is inconsistent with all our notions of infinite wisdom and goodness, that the *divine* being should fix the happiness and salvation of mankind upon a *foolish* foundation, and make it so *precarious and uncertain*, as to depend upon

the will of a *proud* and *ignorant* priest: for suppose, what has often happened, that a man should not be able to procure sponsors for his child, or that he mistakes the use of the cross in baptism, as favouring, in his opinion, too much of popery and superstition, it being, without all dispute, no essential part of baptism, neither appointed by our Lord, nor for aught appears, in use amongst the apostles; and suppose the above mentioned person should address himself to a priest of Mr B's temper and complexion, and he should, as is very likely in either of these instances, refuse the child baptism, is it possible for any man to be so weak as to imagine, that this child should be damned for want of it? Or suppose, which is another very common case, that a christian should be disposed to receive the *communion*, but should have some scruples, relating to the *gesture*, esteeming a *table posture* most proper, (it being evident that our Lord and his disciples, at its first institution, received it so) and should be unwilling to comply with *kneeling*, not only for the reason just mentioned, but because, in his opinion, it might seem to countenance the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, or the *corporal presence*, which, I make no doubt, first gave rise to the change of the posture; and suppose this person should offer to receive the communion from the above-

mentioned priest, and he, which is not unlikely, should refuse him; can any imagine that the folly of our priest, should occasion this man's eternal damnation? The very mention of these instances without farther reasoning, may suffice. *Res ipsa loquitur.*

Once more: would it not have been more agreeable to the character of a minister of the *gospel of peace*, (of that dispensation which recommends nothing more to its profession than charity and love, insomuch that it seems to make that the criterion and distinguishing characteristic of a *christian*) to have preached up *peace and charity*, that greatest of all virtues? Might he not very agreeably have entertained his audience with a particular description of the person and character of that *heaven-born virgin*, set her forth in all her *shining graces*, and made her appear as lovely and amiable to *them*, as she is really in *herself*? Here his oratory and rhetoric would have been well employed to his own credit, the honour of the university, and the advantage of his audience: but instead of this, he breathes forth nothing but *fury and rage*, stirs up the coals of *wrath and contention*, preaches up *envy and hatred* among christians, rails against, and abuses his brethren, with all the eloquence he is master of, miscalls them

schis-

schismatics and *heretics*, and consigns them over to *eternal torments and damnation*; and doubtless, if he had power equal to his inclination, would consign them over to *temporal burnings* as well as eternal: nay, it is very probable, this is one of the powers which he expressly claims, but if not in words, in just consequence he doth; for if the *peace and security* of the church should require it, of which they, and they only, are the supposed judges, it would, without all doubt, be reckoned expedient and necessary to have such obstinate adversaries to the church's peace removed: but though as yet, he hath not thought proper to speak his mind fully and plainly, yet he hath made a very handsome beginning, and hath one paragraph in his sermon, that, in my opinion, looks very much this way; where he tells us, that "it was
 " a very serious consideration of this impor-
 " tant affair, *i. e.* the dreadful nature of
 " schism, that animated the first christians to
 " the practice of so laudable a custom, that
 " whenever * *heretics*, or *schismatics* were
 " pro-

* The same reasoning holds good with respect to the promotion of any heretic and schismatic in the state, as in the church, and, I doubt not, our preacher would be understood in this sense; but as he hath only pointed out the promotion

“ promoted to any eminent post in the church,
 “ both clergy and laity remonstrated to the
 “ emperor, and the patriarch or metropolitan
 “ piously refused the consecration.

It is no difficult matter to know where our preacher, and those of the same mind with him, would stop; for the same principles, *viz.* the dreadful nature of schism, and the good of the church, which justify the one, would quickly leave them, if other milder methods should be found ineffectual, and not sufficiently answer their end entirely to root out and destroy their adversaries: these principles, and these alone, are the main support of that grand-mystery of iniquity, the *papal inquisition*; for if once the clergy are allowed to direct and govern, there is nothing left for the laity but a state of mere slavery and bondage, and how or by what reasons to account for it

of *heretics* and *schismatics* in the church, he doubtless had his eye upon some particular person, or persons, under this character, who have been promoted; and designed this observation (for it certainly answers no other end) as a tacit reflection on his majesty for promoting, and on the bishops for not piously refusing to consecrate, some particular *heretical* and *schismatical* bishop. I shall now leave it with him, whether this ought not to be esteemed high-treason and rebellion against the spiritual powers.

to I know not, but by fatal and constant experience throughout all ages and nations, it hath been found that the *clergy* are the least fit of any persons whatever to be entrusted with power and authority.

Having done with our preacher, and his performance, I beg leave to subjoin my own sense and sentiments concerning the institution of the ministry, and some incidental remarks about the nature of the christian religion.

When the divine being thought proper to make choice of the *Jews* to be his peculiar people, whom he would in a particular manner favour with the knowledge of himself, as the *only true and living God*, in opposition to, and distinction from, that vast variety of *idols and gods*, whose worship obtained throughout the several habitable parts of the earth *, he found it necessary in compliance with the *froward temper and genius* of that *perverse* generation, to give them a religion full of

* Nothing but this can, I think, reconcile the *divine* institution of the Jewish religion; a religion, I was going to add, unworthy of its divine original, and fit for no other people, but those to whom it was given, and to whose genius it was in a particular manner suited and adapted.

numerous rites and pompous ceremonies; and as God himself tells us, to "give them statutes that were *not good*, and judgments whereby they should not live:" for the *Jews*, by being so long conversant with the *Egyptians*, whose priests were famous, I mean infamous, for their *holy jugglings* and *pious trumpery*, had entertained such a fondness for a ritual scheme of religion, that even the divine indulgence above mentioned, could scarce restrain them from idolatry: but in order to preserve them from it, and keep them within the proper boundaries of their duty, he sent them one prophet after another, to teach, guide and direct them, but these they abused and evil entreated, and their religion they rendered wholly void, by the neglect of the *moral and truly religious* part thereof, and an attendance to nothing but its *mere rites* and *beggarly ceremonies*. Now therefore, when the fulness of time was come, it pleased the almighty, from a tender and compassionate regard to the weakness and ignorance of mankind to send his beloved son and our blessed Lord, to retrieve the languishing dying state of religion, to teach and instruct the world in their duty toward their God, their fellow-creatures, and themselves: having received his divine commission, the blessed saviour of mankind came to dwell amongst us, and not only
give

gave us a pure and perfect religion, but was himself a bright pattern, and example of that purity and perfection which his religion recommends. He abolished the numerous rites and ceremonies of the Jewish polity, and substituted in its place, a religion every way worthy of its divine original, worthy of a deity to give, and of rational creatures to receive and observe; for the christian religion, like the great founder and author thereof, is holy, just, and pure; its doctrines, those I mean which relate not to * practice, have nothing dissonant

* Such as the resurrection of the body, or I might even add the divine mission and messiahship of our Lord; for the truth thereof being supposed, which, by the way, admit of as easy proof as any fact at equal distance of time, yet it cannot, I think, be said in a *strict and proper* sense to have any *other* influence upon our practice or conduct in life, than that we have a *divine* testimony, that the practice of those duties, which arise from the eternal nature and reason of things, and the relation we stand in to a deity, mankind and ourselves, are agreeable to the will of God: and it is in this light, that *christianity*, as a *system of religion*, ought to be considered as an improvement, and enforcement of natural religion *only*, from which it differs *merely* in the institution of the two sacraments, of which more hereafter; so that separate from these, nothing can be said to be the duty of a *christian*, which was not the duty of a *man*, prior to the institution of christianity.

dissonant to the reason of mankind; its precepts, or the duties which it recommends, are founded upon, and conformable unto the eternal

As for those doctrines of a *mere speculative* nature, peculiar to the christian institution, they cannot in a strict and proper sense be said to be any part of *religion*, the belief, or disbelief of these being no otherwise religious, or irreligious, than as a person is *open* and *disposed* to conviction, and gives a greater, or smaller *attention*, to the evidence on which the truth of the doctrines depend: for a *mere belief* or *disbelief* of any principle, argues neither *virtue*, nor *vice*, because neither the one, nor the other depends on our will, or any thing within our power; the very *make* and *constitution* of the *human* mind being such, that when the evidence of any truth appears great and strong, we cannot, how much soever we may be disposed to the contrary, refuse our belief or assent to the truth of that principle: and on the other hand, if the evidence appears *weak* and *defective*, our inclination, how strong soever, cannot supply the place of evidence; and in that case, it is absolutely impossible for us to believe, or to assent to it: whence it appears, that we are no otherwise *commendable* for our *belief*, or *blameable* for our *disbelief*, than as we are more or less willing to attend to the evidence on which the truth of these doctrines depends.

The considerations above-mentioned, give us a clear insight into the nature and importance of the present controversy concerning the truth of christianity, and which all our writers seem to have taken no notice of; though one would imagine,

eternal nature and reason of things, and are perfective of the human mind. His religion, even as our blessed Lord did himself in person, recommends nothing more than peace, charity and * love amongst his followers: would to God, that a greater regard was paid to the example and precept of our Lord

gine, that when they were disputing concerning the truth of christianity, they ought first to have defined and settled what christianity was; which considered under its proper character, as to its sum and substance, is not at all affected by any objections brought against it by its adversaries: and if these persons designed their present attack only as introductory to their future designs upon *true and real religion*, I mean the *practical* part of christianity, which, for reasons just mentioned, may not improperly be called its *sum and substance*, better they had began here, and not have vainly amused both themselves and the world, with what is entirely foreign to the main intention and design which they have in view; for by their *plausible* objections against some particular parts of the christian system, they have *artfully misled* some *weak and inconsiderate* persons to doubt concerning the *truth and reality* of religion itself.

* *A new commandment*, says our Lord, *I give unto you, that you love one another*: a manner of expression which seems to intimate, that besides the practice of those duties, our obligation to which arises from the nature and reason of things, it was the design of our Lord, that his followers should in a very *particular* manner express a regard to the *duty of charity and love*.

Lord in this instance. But as our Lord himself was but a small time on earth, that he might complete his great and good design, and diffuse the knowledge of his divine religion throughout the world, he gave particular directions to his apostles to teach and instruct mankind in the knowledge of the deity, and of himself their saviour; and that their mission might be attended with suitable and desirable success, amongst the great variety of barbarous nations, who in all probability would be fondly tenacious of the rites peculiar to their own religion, he qualified the apostles in an extraordinary manner; for they were divinely inspired by the Holy Ghost, and endowed with a power of working miracles. And thus qualified, they went and preached the gospel to various people and nations; and their success, as is easy to imagine, was different, according to the different tempers of the people to whom they addressed themselves: some of them despised the apostles, and the holy religion which they taught; others, persuaded of its reasonableness and purity, forsook their former folly and idolatry, and became professors to the christian religion; but as it was impossible (it being inconsistent with their design of visiting other people and nations) that the apostles should reside wholly with any particular city or province, they,

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lest their labour should prove vain and ineffectual, appointed some particular persons amongst the people, who had a superior knowledge in the principles of their holy religion, that in their absence they might confirm and strengthen their brethren in the faith, and that by their pious conduct, and the purity of that religion which they taught, they might make converts of others. These, as is very natural to suppose, were chosen from amongst the seniors of the people, which probably gave rise to the name of *presbyter* or *elder*; and that due care might be taken of the *poor*, that office was assigned to some or other particular persons, called *deacons*, lest, if both offices were joined in one, they might be burdensome and inconvenient. That these officers were appointed by the apostles, under the notion of their conferring distinct powers or authority upon them, or of their giving them any particular commission to do what others were not allowed, or were forbid to do, doth by no means appear. Another plain and obvious reason may be assigned, why they were appointed, or at least approved, by the apostles, because they were certainly the most competent judges, who were the properest persons for such an office, I mean the office of an *elder*; for I think any man of tolerable sense and common honesty, is sufficiently qualified

lified to take care of the poor; nor does there seem the least occasion for an apostolical appointment, or approbation of such. Nor indeed is it at all improbable to suppose, that the people very often made choice of their own * elders without the privity of the apostles; for doubtless it very often happened, that they had no opportunity, or conveniency of consulting them; and that one elder upon his decease, bequeathed his church as a legacy to another, is what I cannot see the least foundation for. That there was a particular form made use of, when these elders were appointed, or set apart for that office, is not unlikely to suppose; it being very probable, and certainly very proper, to implore the divine blessing upon their future instructions; but that any circumstance obtained, which should denote their receiving any *distinct powers, or proper authority*, which they had not before,

* It is certain and undeniable, that when the *deacons* were first instituted, they were chose by the *people*, on whom the apostles praying *laid their hands*, which in the present case had something particular in it, and ought not to be considered as a mere empty form; for it is immediately added, that *Stephen*, who was one of them, full of faith and power, did great *wonders and miracles*. This indeed is *power* in the strict and proper sense of the word, and which in all probability was conferred by the laying on of hands.

fore, more than by such a form it was evident that the elder was disposed to instruct, and the people disposed to be taught, is a mere groundless conceit, a conceit fraught with nothing but pride and vanity.

It is not at all improbable, to suppose it to be the will of our Lord, that these officers should continue to the end of christianity, if we consider the corruption and degeneracy of mankind, how prone they are to vice and impiety, how regardless of their duty, and unmindful of their obligations to the practice of virtue; whence it appears, if not *absolutely* necessary for the good of mankind, yet *very* fit and expedient, that there should be some particular persons, whose more immediate business and design it should be, to teach and instruct their fellow creatures, and remind them of their duty. This account of the nature of their office, represents the *clergy* in a just and proper light, and convinces us of the service and advantage which *that order* is of to mankind; and so long as they act agreeably to their character and profession, they not only *are*, but doubtless would be esteemed by all persons worthy of *double honour*: and those libertines, both in principle and *practice*, who make the clergy the constant subject of their insipid jests and raillery,

raillery, only discover their own folly and want of judgment, in making that the subject of their *scorn* and *ridicule*, which in itself is neither *contemptible* nor *ridiculous*, but when performed as it ought, is both useful and honourable, and tends to promote the happiness and good of society; upon which account it must be acknowledged, that the legislature acted a very wise and prudential part, and consulted the benefit and advantage of the nation, in making such a provision for the clergy, as should set them above poverty and want, which would necessarily expose them to do some things unworthy of their character, and beneath the dignity of their office.

But then on the other hand, if the clergy, forgetting their duty, and the nature of their office, instead of preaching peace, charity and love, stir up envy, strife and contention amongst christians, they are then the ministers of satan, and not preachers of the gospel of peace. If instead of instructing and teaching mankind their duty, their discourses are full of fancied grandeur and power, and instead of *reasoning*, they *rant* and *rave* about *government* and *authority*; if they misbehave themselves in so scandalous a manner, and act a part so very disagreeable to their character and profession, it is no wonder that they

meet

meet with that scorn and contempt which their conduct so justly deserves ; for, blessed be God ! the mists of error and superstition, which formerly darkened and overshadowed the land, are now vanished and gone ; truth seems to have resumed her empire amongst the sons of men ; we no longer now are fond of a state of darkness and ignorance, but a disposition to a free and rational enquiry into the nature and reason of things seems universally to prevail. The *English* clergy have it no longer in their power, (would to God that none had an inclination !) to abuse and deceive the people with their *pious frauds*, and *consecrated trumpery* ; for they seem determined to make a *proper* use of their faculties, and see that with their own eyes, which none can so well see for them, and to *judge and think* for themselves (the indisputable and unalienable right of mankind, and which it is not in their own power to give away) in matters relating to their eternal salvation, in matters which concern none but themselves, and wherein no man's judgment can be of any service to them, because they must eternally *stand and fall* by their own.

That the three orders of *bishops, priests* and *deacons*, did obtain in the apostolical ages, or were designed to be continued in the future,

is so far from being certain, that it is not even probable. The two latter we have already accounted for ; but then it must, I think, be allowed, that the office of our *deacons* is vastly different from theirs ; so that we have retained the bare name only, and given their office to officers of our own choice and appointment, I mean the *church-wardens* ; but if we rightly consider the nature and reason of the thing, the office of a *bishop* seems to have no foundation in the holy writings, or in the truly primitive practice.

When christianity was first preached in any particular place, and the apostles substituted one or more elders amongst the people, to teach and instruct their brethren, it must be supposed, that these persons were best skilled in the principles of our holy religion, and yet doubtless their knowledge was but comparatively small ; no wonder then that in matters of difficulty they should apply to the apostles for their advice and direction, or if they had no opportunity of consulting them, or after their decease, that they should apply to some particular elders of neighbouring churches, who, by their longer standing in the church, by a greater acquaintance with the apostles, or other intelligent christians, had attained to a superior knowledge in the
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principles of their religion : but that they apply to these, I mean the latter, under the notion of their being a different order of priests, or having superior powers, is a vain and silly opinion : and yet doubtless this gave rise to the order of bishops. Men are fond enough of power and authority, and desirous of lording it over their brethren ; no wonder then that some more ambitious than the rest, tho' perhaps less knowing, made a handle of this, and usurped a power, which neither God nor nature designed them : for when all inspiration ceased, and one elder was upon a level with another, what possible reason can be assigned, why one should be obedient or subject to another ? But suppose this was so originally, and so designed by the apostles, yet when one bishop died, what became of the clergy ? I hope the bishop did not bequeath them by will, as a man doth a flock of sheep ; it is very likely, in that case, that the people made choice of another to supply his place, or that the clergy agreed amongst themselves, upon a proper person to preside over them, and set him apart to that office by the laying on of the hands of the *presbytery* ; but in either case, I fear, we have an instance of persons conferring a power, which originally was not in them.

But before we close this account, it may not be improper to settle the affair of the *divine institution* of a gospel ministry.

We will therefore suppose, that it was the will of our Lord, and that will of his expressly revealed in the holy writings, the only rule of our faith and obedience, that there should throughout the several ages of the world, be such officers as *bishops, priests, and deacons*, in the christian church; and this in a general sense may be called the divine institution of the three orders, is the very same sense in which it may be said, that the authority of princes is a *divine institution*: for, no doubt, it was equally his will, that for the general good and peace of society, and to prevent the ill effects of mens impiety and wickedness, there should be such persons as *princes and governors*; for the powers that are, says the apostle, are of God, and we are to be obedient to them for conscience sake. But then having granted it to be the will of our Lord, that there should be such officers in the christian church, yet how doth it appear that any power or authority was designed to be lodged in the hands of such persons: there is nothing in the nature of the offices themselves, which includes or comprehends

hends any power of any kind whatever, except that the bishop must be supposed to have some power over the inferior clergy, but this is vastly different from any imaginary power supposed to be lodged in the clergy, over the laity: they are indeed to teach and instruct them, but this argues neither power nor authority; except we must consider them under the character of *school-masters* that if the people will not be taught, they must be *corrected and chastised*.

But suppose we advance a step farther, and grant all that can be desired of us, that some powers of an *odd unaccountable nature*, neither fit or proper in themselves, nor agreeable to the nature of the office, were designed to be annexed to the priesthood, then this spiritual power hath the same foundation, and is exactly upon the same footing, with *temporal* government, there being a *divine* institution of both powers alike; but who should be the particular persons with whom these powers should be intrusted, must be left to the people to judge and determine, so that at last the power in both cases is derived from the *lords the people*: for we may with equal reason suppose, that one king should hand down his power and authority to his successor, without the consent of his kingdom, and so on to the

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the end of time, as that the priests, without the concurrence or consent of the people, should bequeath theirs to whom they please.

This account is not only agreeable to the nature and reason of the thing, but likewise to the very constitution of our *church* itself, and the *laws* of the *land*. Is not his majesty supreme in *all causes*, and over *all persons*, *ecclesiastical* as well as *civil*? Are not the powers which our clergy have, derived from him their supreme head? For it is he who makes *bishops*, who *ordains* them, and by their orders gives them these mighty powers which they are so proud of: for except his majesty first granted the *conge d' eslier*, what follows consequent upon it would be but *trifling* and *ineffectual*; for the whole bench of bishops without him are not able to create another, whereas he by his sole authority can do it without *them*; for all, **excepting** his choice and appointment, that is **done**, ought to be considered, strictly and properly, as no more than a mere form and empty pageantry. Nay, we have had a late instance, not only of his majesty's power to create, but even when created and conferred in all its due and proper forms, of the state's power to destroy this *episcopal power*. Is not bishop

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Aiterbury a melancholy and recent instance of this truth? Was not his bishopric taken away from him? His power to teach and instruct in the *British* dominions entirely destroyed, all relation between him and his clergy dissolved, and all their obligations of obedience to him superseded and cancelled? Nay, I much question whether a *deacon's* order, granted by him in his present unhappy condition, would be valid in *Great Britain*.

And though our orator hath told us in his curious sermon, that "no human laws can give a person a title to teach others," yet if we advance a step higher, and review the common and well known case of *Dr. Sacheverell*, that dear brother of his, both in his reasoning and divinity, it will be very evident, that though no human laws could give the title, they could take it away; which, by the way, is somewhat strange, that they should have a power to destroy, what they have none to create: the legislature thought proper to suspend him for three years; and the very same power, if it had been agreeable to them, and if they had punished him equal to his crimes, might have done it for his whole life, have taken his orders from him, and have entirely silenced this *authorized dispenser*,

notwithstanding his pretences to a *divine* mission and institution: but what need we recur to these particular instances? It is, I think, a principle universally acknowledged, that by the laws of the land, a clergyman may be degraded for some crimes of a heinous and particular nature; and if a sentence of this, or the like import should be pronounced against him in a civil court, it would be altogether valid and effectual, though it should not pass through any particular forms in use in the spiritual court.

Upon the whole, it appears impossible, that any person, who is but tolerably acquainted with the constitution of our church, with the laws of the land, and with the nature and end of an ecclesiastical ministry, should run into any error concerning its divine institution, or whether any, or what powers are annexed to its respective offices.

Before I dismiss this point, I desire that nothing which I have said, may be understood in such a sense as to suppose me to be an enemy to our ecclesiastical constitution, or to episcopacy in particular. With regard to the order of the priesthood, or the inferior clergy, I have I think, sufficiently explained myself already; to which I beg leave to add, that I have a
great

great regard for the episcopal office and character: and though I may not entertain the same high opinion of it as others do, nor believe it to be, in the strict and proper sense of the word, a divine institution, and consequently think, that an undue stress ought not to be laid upon this order, nor that it should be matter of strife, or contention among christians, yet I esteem it highly useful and expedient, of great service to our church, and in a particular manner suited to the temper and genius of the *English* nation: and though several may not agree with me therein, yet there are few, I believe, but what will allow it to be of use, if for no other reasons, yet for this, that it may be a check upon such preachers as our orator.

I could easily point out some of that venerable order who are a *credit* and an *ornament* to their profession, who are an *honour* to the *British* nation, who are hearty *friends* to their *country*, and the present happy establishment, and steady *advocates* for our *civil* and *religious liberties*. I believe no *prot-stant*, or true *Englishman*, but what will agree with me, that this character doth in a particular manner suit the *great and good bishop of Sarum* *, for whom, I must confess, it was principally drawn.

* Dr. *Headly*, late bishop of *Winchester*.

Perhaps some persons may be surprized, that in our account of the institution of the christian religion, I have taken no notice of the two sacraments of *baptism* and the *eucharist*; but these I have reserved till last, that we may make a more distinct and particular inquiry into their nature, and the design of our Lord in their institution.

It will be very easily granted, and indeed I believe denied by none, that the author of our holy religion, had a right to appoint some *positive* institutions, which it is for that very reason, (I mean, because instituted by him) the duty of a christian to observe: but then, as the obligation of our obedience in these instances, is not founded upon the nature or reason of things, there being no natural goodness, religion, or virtue in the actions themselves abstracted from, and prior to, their institution, but is resolvable entirely into the sole will of our Lord; it is necessary that we inquire into the nature, end, and design of these institutions, lest we lay an undue stress, and pay a greater veneration and regard to them, than was ever designed by our Lord.

The mere actions themselves, separated from the circumstances, which, according to usage
and

and custom, generally attend them, and which ought not to be considered as essential to them, are of a common indifferent nature; what is there in *washing the body*, or in *eating bread and drinking wine*? Neither goodness nor virtue: when therefore these actions are adopted into our religion, and the performance of them required of christians, we are to carry our views farther, to consider the nature and design of the institutions, and what are the principal things signified and represented to us by these ceremonies; it is this that we are *chiefly* to attend unto, for the mere outward action was instituted, and is performed, for the sake of that *only*, which it signifies and denotes. If therefore the thing signified is sufficiently attended unto, and regarded by us, we do, I think, answer the great end and design of the institution, though we omit the outward action. Thus, for instance, we are to eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of our saviour, and of his body broken like bread, and his blood poured forth like wine, for the remission of our sins; but if this be done as well and effectually (and without all dispute it may) without the performance of the outward material action, is not the end and design of our Lord in the institution of this ordinance, as well and effectually answered, as with it: I

say this, not that I think, that if it is the express will of our Lord, that these outward actions should be performed, we may dispense with our obedience, and refuse the performance of them; but to abate and take off that undue stress which persons place upon the mere actions themselves: and if we make a strict and narrow enquiry into this affair, I doubt not it will appear, that christians generally lay a greater stress upon these ceremonies, than our Lord himself did, or ever designed they should: for it is not at all improbable, that our Lord instituted them, *principally* and *chiefly*, in compliance with the temper of the Jews, the ceremonial part of whose religion he having entirely abolished, he knew it would be almost impossible, to prevail upon that people to accept of a new institution, so contrary to their former, that should be perfectly simple, and without any rite or ceremony whatever; for we find, notwithstanding the institution of the two sacraments, how fondly tenacious they were of the law of *Moses*, and that they would have imposed the observance of it on the christian converts, insomuch that the apostles found it necessary to comply with this froward temper of theirs in other more material instances.

Thus

Thus much is certain and undeniable, that our Lord took the two sacraments from the Jews: baptism is allowed by all our best writers, to have been in use amongst them, which custom of theirs, is Dr. *Wall's* chief and principal argument for infant-baptism. That the feast of the supper, with all the minute particular circumstances attending it, were taken from the custom and usage of the Jews, in their religious feasts; that the particular appointment of bread and wine for this sacred repast, the method of their being consecrated, the breaking the bread, the distribution of it to the company, the giving thanks, and lastly, the singing a psalm or spiritual song; that these were severally taken from the customs and usages of the Jews, will appear plain and evident to any who will give themselves the trouble of reading Mr. *Godwyn's* account of the Jewish feasts. Upon these accounts it seems not improbable to suppose, that our Lord's chief end and design in the institution of the sacraments, was, as I hinted above, in compliance with the temper of the Jews, and to recommend christianity to them, by making it more agreeable to the Jewish institution, and to their *ceremonial* temper and disposition.

It is very certain, however, that neither our Lord, nor his apostles, laid any great stress upon the sacraments: baptism seems to be mentioned by them only *en passant*, and we never find the observance of the supper recommended by him or his apostles, as necessary to salvation, or as what in any particular manner was required of christians. As to the former, as our Lord never gave any particular directions concerning it, the custom of the Jews must, I think, be necessarily supposed to be the rule of christian baptism, with whom, as it was customary to baptize their proselytes *only*, it is not at all improbable, to suppose it to be agreeable to the will of our Lord, and consistent with the original design of the institution itself (which doubtless was to make a distinction between a christian and a gentile) that the use of it should be * discontinued, when a whole people and nation became christians; for if the root is holy, so are the branches.

* This matter is set in a very clear light by the author of Dr. WALL's history of infant-baptism improved, printed in the year 1709, an author of indisputable learning, and good sense. Vid. also Mr. *Emlyn's* previous question, which, in some parts of it, seems unanswerable.

As for the sacrament of the supper, it doth by no means appear, that our Lord laid that stress upon it, which his followers have done since; the notion of the corporeal presence, which obtained in the early ages of the church, (which doubtless was a contrivance of the priests, in order to promote their own power, and advance their office and order in the opinion of the people) was what first gave rise to the manifest abuse and perversion of the nature and design of this religious feast.

It doth not appear, from its original institution, from any part of the holy writings, or the nature of the feast itself, that it was the will or design of our Lord, that the administration of it should be confined to the *priesthood*. As our Lord left this affair undetermined, nor gave us any particular directions concerning it; the custom and usage among the Jews, from whom the institution itself was taken, ought alone to determine this matter, I mean, what is essential to it; and it is certain, that the master of the house, or any other indifferent person, presided in their religious feast; he consecrated the cup and the bread, and gave thanks. And what reason can be assigned why this feast should not be performed in the same manner? What hinders,

ders, when any number of christians are met together, that they may not eat and drink in remembrance of Christ, and that any one of the number may not consecrate the elements and return thanks? And this seems to have been the practice amongst the primitive christians in the apostolical ages, according to the account which we have in the holy writings, who feasted in this religious manner as oft almost as they met together: neither, by any thing which appears, did they apprehend it necessary, that these feasts should be confined to the place of their religious assemblies, or consecrated churches, or that their teacher should preside over them, though it is not improbable to suppose, that when their teacher was one of the number, they passed the compliment upon him in desiring him to consecrate the bread and wine, and return thanks; (in like manner as is usual amongst us, when any clergyman happens to be in company with us at our common meals, for the master of the house to desire him to crave a blessing and return thanks) and from hence it is not unlikely, came the custom of their teachers constantly officiating at these religious feasts, till at last for the reasons above-mentioned, they thought fit to deny this power to the laity, and confine it to their own order.

Having now finished my account of the origin and nature of the christian institution, and of the office of the priesthood, as it stands opposed to Mr. B's, I leave the world to judge whose is most agreeable to the general nature and reason of things, to the particular institution of christianity, to the constitution of the church of *England*, and the sense of mankind. For some reasons I have not thought proper to subjoin my name at length; though, as on the one hand, I have not the vanity to imagine, that my name would have been of any service to the cause wherein I am engaged; so, on the other hand, I am far from thinking that it would do it any disservice or discredit.

I have only farther to observe, that if Mr. B. will apprise me of having either through haste or inadvertence omitted any material argument of his, or that in any part of his performance, I have neglected to give his reasonings their just weight (which may not be improbable, if we consider the short distance of time between the publishing of his sermon, and the sending these remarks to the press, the far greater part of which was taken up by more necessary business) I say, if he will apprise me hereof, I assure him, that I will take a more accurate review of the argument, and will consider his principles

204 *The Pillars of PRIESTCRAFT, &c.*

in their full extent, and the several consequences arising from them. In the mean time,

I am,

GENTLEMEN,

With great regard,

London, Octob.

29, 1729.

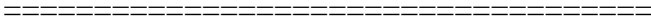
Your most humble servant,

L. W. L.

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to keep page numbering consistent.



If every American does his or her best for America and for Humanity we shall become, and remain, the Grandest of Nations – admired by all and feared by none, our strength being our Wisdom and kindness.

Knowledge knows no race, sex, boundary or nationality; what mankind knows has been gathered from every field plowed by the thoughts of man. There is no reason to envy a learned person or a scholarly institution, learning is available to all who seek it in earnest, and it is to be had cheaply enough for all.

To study and plow deeper the rut one is in does not lead to an elevation of intelligence, quite the contrary! To read widely, savor the thoughts, and blind beliefs, of others will make it impossible to return again to that narrowness that did dominate the view of the uninformed.

To prove a thing wrong that had been believed will elevate the mind more than a new fact learned.

Emmett F. Fields
Bank of Wisdom

Bank of wisdom
P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201
U.S.A.

The NATURE and EXTENT of the Office of the
CIVIL MAGISTRATE;

Considered in a

DISCOURSE

Preached before the Right Honourable

Sir George Thorold, Knt.

Lord-Mayor of the City of *London,*

AND THE

Court of ALDERMEN,

AND THE

Liveries of the several COMPANIES,

AT THE

PARISH-CHURCH of *St. Lawrence-Jewry,*

On *Thursday, September 29, 1720.*

Being the Festival of St. Michael the Archangel, and the Election-Day of the LORD-MAYOR for the Year ensuing.

By BENJAMIN IBBOT, D. D.

Rector of *St. Paul Shadwell,* and Chaplain in
Ordinary to his MAJESTY.

NE QUID RESPUBLICA DETRIMENTI CAPIAT.

Cic. pro Milone.

First printed in the year 1720.

ACTS XVIII. 14, 15.

And when Paul was now about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong, or wicked lawdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: but if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters.

THE crime which the Jews here laid against St. Paul, and for which they brought him before Gallio, was * *blasphemy* against their religion, affirming, that the religion established by the law was now no longer obligatory, and professing a religion different from that, and persuading others to embrace it. For thus they represent the case to Gallio, at the 13th verse, saying, *this fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.* To which accusation the apostle was going to reply; but Gallio prevented and saved him that trouble, and put an end to their pleadings on both sides, by declaring at once, that the case did not come before him, nor fall under his cognizance.

* Acts xvi. 13, 14.

Gallio said unto the Jews, &c.

This chapter is the only place of scripture, where we find any mention made of *Gallio*; but from the account which we here meet with of his behaviour upon this occasion, as well as from the character which other writers have given us of him, we may justly conclude, that he was a man of great candour and humanity, as well as a wise and discreet magistrate.

He was the *Roman* præfect of *Achaia*, a consular province under *Augustus*; and a brother of *Seneca*, who gives him this character, * that he was a man of a sweet temper, universally beloved, free from all vices, and the greatest hater of flattery. *Tacitus* † also makes mention of him to his advantage, and *Statius* gives him the same testimony ‡.

* Solebam tibi dicere, Gallionem fratrem meum (quem nemo non parum amat, etiam qui amare plus non potest) alia vitia non nosse, hoc etiam (viz. adulationem) odisse, ab omni illum parte tentasti——Nemo enim mortalium uni tam dulcis est, quam hic omnibus, &c. *Senec. Nat. Quest. l. 4. Initio.*

† *Annal. l. 15.*

‡ Aut dulcem generasse Gallionem. *Statius, Sylvarum l. 2. Genethliac. on Lucani.*

Notwithstanding this, some have severely censured his conduct in this affair, as if it proceeded from carelessness and indifference in religious matters; and to render him the more infamous, have invented a new name for this sin, and called it *Gallionism*. But I hope to justify the *Deputy's* behaviour and to shew, that what he spoke on this occasion, was wisely spoke; and that if he had acted otherwise in this matter than he did, he had transgressed the bounds of his duty.

It is worth while to take a nearer view of his words, and examine more closely into their drift and meaning.

*If it were a matter of * wrong, or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews —* If you could accuse this man of any injustice, whereby he had invaded any one's *right and property*, or could lay to his charge any other flagitious and villainous action, done with a mischievous design, and whereby he had disturbed *the public peace*; † *reason would that I should bear with you*. It would be but right and just, that I should bear with this trouble which you would now give

* Ἀδικημά τι ἢ ραδιέργημα ποιεῖν.

† Κατὰ λόγον αἰ ἠεσχόμεν ὑμῶν.

me, and hear with patience what you have to say. I should then be obliged by the duty of my place, to take cognizance of your matter. *But if it be a question of words, and names, and of your law.* If the *controversy* as it seems to me, be, not about *civil*, but *religious* matters: as about the *word* which *Paul* preached, and the truth of that *word*, and whether it be agreeable to your law; or about *names* of different sects in religion, and of their founders; as whether the name of *messiah*, or *Christ* belongs to that *Jesus* whom *Paul* preaches, and what appellation is to be given to his followers; or about the sense and meaning of those prophecies which *Paul* applies to *Christ*: or if the dispute relates to the rites and ceremonies of your *law*, as whether *circumcision* be still in force, and all that are *uncircumcised* are out of God's favour: I say, if the matter about which you are at variance be concerning your *messiah*, who he is, and what is agreeable, or contrary to your *law*, or any thing else of this kind, *look ye to it.* Make it up among yourselves, or dispute as long as you please about it. *For I will be no judge of such matters.* It is none of my business to determine such disputes. These things no way affect the *public peace and quiet*, which it is my *duty* to take care of;

of; nor do they make any one guilty of any crime against the *law of the land*.

And this was a wise answer, and shewed, that he was well acquainted with the nature and extent of his office; and he was too good a man to list himself in any party, and to abuse the power which was lodged in his hands, by applying it to purposes foreign to the original design of it, and *executing wrath upon them who had done no evil*.

The words thus opened, naturally lead me to treat of *the nature and extent of the office of the civil magistrate*. And because this is a subject, which would take up more time, than is usually allowed upon such occasions as this; I shall confine myself, to that *distinction* which *Galio* here makes between matters of a *civil* and a *religious* nature; between the affairs of *civil government*, and those of *religion*. The *former*, he lays claim to, as falling under his cognizance, and belonging to his *jurisdiction*: but the *latter*, he disclaims, as wholly foreign to his *office*, and what he had nothing to do with.

This *difference* between *civil government* and religion, is what I shall endeavour to illustrate and confirm, and to settle the just bounds
that

that lie between the one and the other. And this I shall do, by considering distinctly what the end and design of *civil government* is, and what is that of *religion*.

I. Then let us consider *the end and design of civil government*.

It is plain, that *civil government* was instituted for the preservation and advancement of men's *civil* interests, for the better security of their lives, and liberties, and external possessions.

Men soon became sensible of the necessity of *civil government*, for these ends, from the inconveniencies they suffered by a private life independent on each other. For in such a state, unless every man would keep strictly to the rules of justice and equity, which the pravity of human nature, and long experience forbid us ever to hope for; the weak would become a prey to the strong, every one would lie at the mercy of him that was mightier than himself, and the world would be full of fraud and injustice, cruelty and oppression.

No sooner did mankind begin to multiply, and to contract new relations and new duties but their interests interfered with one another, and gave rise to those wrongs and injuries

injuries which daily increased in the world, and quickly moved men to enter into *societies*, for the mutual security and defence of their persons and properties, both against violence from abroad, and rapine and fraud at home. For these ends and purposes, *societies* were at first erected, and grounded upon the mutual compact and agreement of those who entered into them, to stand by, and assist each other, both against foreign violence, and domestic wrongs. To repel the *first* of these, there must be external force and strength, which consist in arms, riches, and multitude of hands; the remedy of the *other*, lies in wise and wholesome laws, agreed upon by the society; and the care of *both* is, by common consent, committed to the *civil magistrate*, who is moreover armed with the force and strength of all his subjects, in order to put these laws in execution *.

From this brief account of the nature and design of *civil government*, it plainly appears, that the proper business of the *magistrate* is to preserve the external peace of the *world*, and the temporal good of the *community* over which he presides; to protect every man in

* *Letter concerning toleration. Mr. Locke's works, V. II. p. 249.*

his just right and property; to see that * *no man go beyond, and defraud his brother in any matter, or do any wrong of any kind to his neighbour; and to this end, to inflict proper punishments, and † execute wrath upon them that do evil; to restrain and chastise those who are unruly, who transgress the laws, and violate the rights of others; who are guilty of any of those sins, which are injurious to the society, which disturb the peace and quiet of the government, and endanger mens lives and properties; such as fraud, injustice, and oppression, lying and perjury, theft, murder, adultery, and the like.*

All these fall under the censure and cognizance of the *civil magistrate*; and it is *his* office and business to restrain men from such outrages as these, by bringing the offenders to condign punishment.

But then it is to be considered, that these transgressions are subject to be punished by the *civil magistrate* in a *civil* sense or capacity only, and not in a *religious* one. They fall under his cognizance, as they are injurious to mens *civil* interests, and destructive of the good order and government of the world;

* 1 Thes. iv. 6. † Rom. xiii. 4.

and not as they have an inherent turpitude in them, and are immoralities and transgressions of the divine law: for in that capacity, I conceive, they are out of the magistrate's power, and not cognizable before any courts of human judicature.

The not observing *this distinction* has introduced no small confusion in this subject. For since the same actions, which are violations of the *divine law*, are also prejudicial to *human society*, and so many breaches of the *public peace and quiet*; hence it has been thought as much the *magistrate's* duty to prevent the *one* as the *other*, and that *religion* was as much *his* care and concern as *civil government*.

Whereas, in truth, if the ill influence which these vices have upon the *peace and welfare of human society*, could be separated from their *immorality*, and their being *transgressions of the laws of God*, the *magistrate* could have nothing to do with them; his *business* being nothing else but to preserve the *public peace and quiet*, and to protect men in their *civil rights and properties*, and to take no other notice of the actions and behaviour of his subjects than is necessary to this end.

But because such a separation is impossible, and those vices which are so many *transgressions of God's laws*, have also a natural tendency to injure our neighbour in his *civil interests*, and to disturb the *good order and government of the world*; (it being hard to instance in any vice, which does not some way or other, immediately or remotely, do this;) therefore it unavoidably happens, that the *magistrate*, in the due execution of his office, does *indirectly* intermeddle with *religion*. I say *indirectly*, because *religion* is not his proper *business*, nor ought he *directly* to intend it in the execution of his office. For THAT I shall shew is the care and concern of a *higher power*, and is to be promoted by rewards and punishments peculiar to itself, and fetched from another world.

But though we cannot actually separate the *ill influence* any vice has upon the *society* we live in, from its being a *transgression of some divine law*; yet in our minds we may make this separation, and consider every vice as a mixed action, as a transgression of the *laws of man*, and of the *laws of God*. In the *first* capacity only, it is subject to *human-judicatures*; in the *second*, it is cognizable only before the *tribunal of heaven*. As it is a

matter of wrong, or wicked lewdness, i. e. as it is an injury to any private person, or a breach of the public peace, it is certainly the magistrate's duty to restrain and punish it. As it is a transgression of the rules of morality and virtue, of any of the laws of natural or revealed religion, it is equally certain that it belongs only to the supreme law-giver, even God himself, to exact an account of it.

For this reason, because vice and wickedness are punishable by the *civil magistrate* only upon a *civil* account, sins are differently estimated and indifferently punished by *human*, and by *divine* laws. *Human* laws make an estimate of sins from the damage they do to private persons, or to the publick good, and inflict the greatest punishment upon those sins which are most injurious in this respect. For there being no standing law of God, which has annexed any *civil* punishment to any sin, (if, perhaps, we may except murder) this is the only rule the *magistrate* has to direct him

~~in~~ punishing offenders. And therefore, if there be any sins wherein the *society* is not concerned, which it neither feels, nor is affected with, the *magistrate* has nothing to do to punish them. And even those sins, which in their own nature, are prejudicial to

mens *civil interests*, if they could be so circumstantiated, as to do no prejudice to any, nor to have any ill influence upon the welfare of society; they could not, in those instances, be the proper subject of *civil punishments*. Nothing is so, but what does some way or other injure a private person, or the public weal. Consequently, secret intentions and designs of wickedness, if they never break out into act; treasonable thoughts, rebellious wishes, and seditious purposes, can never be liable to civil punishments. Nothing but *overt acts*, whereby the *society*, or any member of it, actually suffers, or is brought into danger of suffering, can lawfully be punished by the *civil magistrate*.

But with regard to the *laws of God*, the case is far otherwise. *He* takes an estimate of our sins by other measures, from those degrees of light and knowledge against which the offence was committed, and often punishes those sins most, which are least, or not at all, censured by the *civil powers*. Thus *anger* and *revenge*, with *him* is *murther*, and *lustful thoughts and desires*, *adultery*; and the determined will and intention of committing any sin, with *him*, amounts to the sin itself, though through fear, or shame, or want of opportunity, it was never actually committed. And those

those sins which the *civil magistrate* does not punish, because they do not prejudice men's *civil interests*, do yet render men highly guilty before God, and will be severely accounted for: such as covetousness, pride and vain boasting; sensuality and voluptuousness; murmuring and discontent; furliness and ill nature; disrespect to superiors, and ingratitude to benefactors; envy and malice; calumny and detraction; fraud and circumvention; I say, these, and numberless other instances, which human laws can take no hold of, can neither punish the sinner, nor prevent the sin, are expressly condemned by the laws of God, and have severe penalties annexed to them. And other *actions* there are, which though justly punishable by the *civil powers*, are in their own nature guiltless, and do not displease God, but by being transgressions of that general law, of paying all due obedience to *those whom he has set over us*.

To which we may farther add, that criminals may satisfy the law, and so stand clear before human judicatures, and yet remain as guilty before God as ever; and on the contrary, they may have made their peace with God, and procured his pardon, and yet be equally guilty in the eye of the law, and equally liable to civil punishment.

From all which, it is abundantly evident, that the end and design of *civil government*, is wholly taken up with the care of men's *civil rights*, and consequently, that the office of the *civil magistrate*, is confined to this *one thing*, and that religious matters, *as such*, lie out of the verge of his power. But if this wants any further light, it will receive it from what comes next under our consideration, and that is,

II. *The end and design of religion.*

Though *religion* is a great friend to *civil government*, and the practice of the duties which *that* enjoins, tends very much to our present happiness, and makes this world a much more easy place than it would be without it; yet all this is but *remotely* the effect of *religion*, and makes no part of *its main and principal design*.

Religion, in a true and proper sense, and as the *word* itself imports, is an obligation upon us to *God*, and was designed to recommend us to *God*, and secure an interest in *his* favour, by performing acceptable service to *him*, and doing those things which are well pleasing in *his* sight.

And

And therefore, though men formed themselves into *societies* for *civil* reasons, such as have been already mentioned, they did not do it upon any *religious* account; because *religion*, as it relates to *God*, is transacted between *a man's self* and *God*, and is what nobody else is concerned in. So that it is neither necessary in itself, nor essential to *true religion*, that great numbers of men should meet together, and be incorporated into *societies*, for the better discovery, or the more due exercise of it*.

Hence it is, that they who lived before the *institution* of *civil government* or the *foundation* of *commonwealths*, were as famous for their *piety* and *religion*, as any who have been since. They who lived in the first ages of the world, when the earth was but thinly inhabited, were not therefore destitute of *true religion*, but performed it in a manner that was acceptable to *God*: and so may any single person, or any small number of men, who happen to live in a desert place. They are not to be looked upon as having no *religion*, because they do not live in *towns* and *cities*, because they cannot make up a great assem-

* See Puffendorf of the relation between church and state. Sect. 3, 5, 6.

bly, and are not formed into a *civil state*. For *religion*, as I before said, is transacted between *God*, and a *man's self*, and equally obliges us at all times, and in all places, in solitude as well as society, under whatever *government* we live, or whether we live under *any* at all. And that which makes *religious worship* most acceptable to *God*, is open to *his* view alone, as *he* is a *discerner* of the *heart*; and that is *sincerity* and *integrity*, the *worship* that is in *spirit*, and in *truth*. This *religion* took place before *societies* were erected, and is of an *older date* than any *civil establishments*, as well as of a *different origin*. It commenced the moment we were created: it is contemporary with human nature, and began with the race of man, though it came not from the will and invention of man; but is grounded upon the will and law of *God*, who sees men in the dark, has in his hands rewards, and punishments, and power enough to call to account the proudest offender. Whereas *commonwealths* were founded, and *government* instituted long after, by the will and invention of man, and for quite other reasons, and different ends.

In this *state of nature*, I mean before the institution of *civil government*, *religion*, as it related to *God* alone, had no other hold upon

men, but from the fear and reverence of *God*, and was a perfect stranger to all human power, and outward force; and every one embraced *that religion*, which either his own *reason* dictated, or *revelation* discovered to him, and had a right of ordering for himself the external circumstances of *religious worship*. In all these things, every one was left to his own liberty, and was accountable to none but *God*. In this state, no man whatever could require me to conform to *his* judgment in *religious* matters, nor could I require him to conform to *mine*. But if any man out of charity to my soul, and because he believed himself to be in the right, had a mind to bring me over to his opinion, he must convince me by proper arguments, that he was in the right, and I in the wrong; but must use no outward *force* or *compulsion* of any kind; and that for this plain and short reason, amongst others, because the care of every man's own soul which is the whole concern of *religion*, belongs to himself alone, and is to be left to himself; and to use any *force* or *violence* here, is not only unjust, but, as shall be shewn, wholly useless and insignificant.

This was the case of *religion* in a *state of nature*. Let us next see, whether any alteration was made in this case by the *institution of civil government*.

Now since those wrongs and injuries which men daily received from one another, and which first moved them to enter into *societies*, did not affect their *religion*, but their lives and liberties, and goods ; it follows, that when they waved their natural freedom, and combined together, they did not at all submit themselves in *religious matters* to the will of the *civil magistrate*, as they submitted their persons and properties to be disposed of by *him*, for the obtaining the end of *society*, the mutual defence and preservation of one another. Men might, and did still retain their natural freedom in *religious matters*, very consistently with all the ends of *civil government*, which oblige them to give up their natural right in other things. For there is this remarkable and essential difference between mens *civil* or *temporal*, and their *religious* or *spiritual* rights, that the *former* are *alienable*, and may, by their own consent, be restrained, or remitted in some cases, for the better security of them in others : but the *latter*, their *religious* or *spiritual* rights are their *unalienable* property, in which they cannot be restrained, and which they cannot give up in any case, or upon any account whatever. Men cannot abandon the care of their souls, as they may that of their bodies and estates, and
blindly

blindly leave it to the magistrate to prescribe what faith or worship they shall embrace. For besides that the care of every man's soul belongs to himself, because *every one of us must give an account of himself to God*, Rom. xiv. 12. And the nature of religion is such, as makes it a strict personal duty incumbent upon every man; and whatever of this kind is done, must be done by ourselves: I say, besides this, we cannot, if we would, conform our faith to the dictates of another, and believe just as he believes, and because he believes so; nor can it ever possibly be lawful, upon any account, to comply with, or agree to any thing in religion, that is contrary to our judgment, and the inward persuasion of our minds; to profess for truth, what we believe to be a wrong faith, or false doctrine; and to worship God after any other manner than that which *we* conceive to be most agreeable to the divine will. In these matters, we can neither give, nor can another usurp any authority over our consciences; nor can we submit them to any other ruler, but God, and our own reason. And therefore the *magistrate* ought not to insist upon terms of *purely a religious* nature, with those who are under his *government*, or exercise his power and authority over them in this respect.

This will quickly appear, by taking a view of the chief and principal parts of *religion*.

To begin then with *morality* and *virtue*, which though unhappily distinguished from *religion*, are the chief and main things wherein it consists. These are founded in the eternal and immutable nature and reason of things, whereby some things are evidently fit, and others as evidently unfit to be done, whatever the consequence of them be here. This being plainly the nature of things, and there being this essential difference between them, we justly conclude it to be the *will of God*, who made us what we are, and puts this difference between some things and others, that we should observe this difference in our actions. And herein we are to be directed by our own reason, or conscience; which is nothing else but the opinion or judgment of our mind concerning the moral pravity or rectitude of our own actions, for the conduct of which we are accountable to *God* alone.

If then I be satisfied in my own mind of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of any action; and do, or forbear it upon that persuasion; the civil magistrate has no right to lay any restraint upon me in this case, because he
judges

judges me to be in the wrong; for one man's conscience is no rule to another, and therefore * *one man's liberty should not be judged of by another man's conscience*; but in all such cases as these, every one must *judge for himself*, and take care to be fully *persuaded* in his own mind, and not to † *condemn himself in that thing which he alloweth*.

But what if any one upon pretence of *conscience*, and to shew his liberty, should commit any *matter of wrong or wicked lewdness*, invade any one's *property*, or disturb the *public peace*? Why then, I say, no pretence of *religion* or *conscience* can skreen him from the *civil powers*. He ought to be restrained and punished. But then he does not suffer upon a *religious*, but upon a *civil* account; he suffers as a ‡ *murderer*, or as a *thief*, or as an *evil doer*, or as a *busy-body in other men's matters*.

If we place *religion* in the *belief* of any set of *doctrines* or in the practice of any particular forms or modes of *divine worship*: here too, every man must judge, and chuse for himself, must *believe* those *doctrines* which he thinks to be true, and *worship* God in such a manner, as he is persuaded is most acceptable to *him*. The *magistrate* has nothing to

* 1 Cor. x. 29. † Rom. xiv. 22. ‡ 1 Pet. iv. 15.

do to interpose in this case, to apply *force of any kind*, to bring them over to any particular persuasion. This is plainly foreign to his office, and stepping beyond the bounds of his duty. The peace and quiet, and good order of the *society*, are the *only* points which he is to take care of; and since these are as consistent with mens holding *different* opinions in *religion*, as they are with their being of *different* sentiments in *other matters*; the *magistrate* is no more concerned to intermeddle in *religious disputes*, than he is in *those of philosophy, law, or physic*.

Indeed, if men hold any opinions in *religion*, which are destructive of the peace and quiet of the world, and undermine the *government*, and act in pursuance of these opinions, their actions then are of a civil, and not of a religious nature; and they render themselves obnoxious to the *civil powers*, and justly deserve to be punished. Or if men manage their *religious* disputes with such heat and eagerness, and carry their differences so high as to fall foul upon, and offer violence to one another, it is the *magistrate's* duty to interpose, to defend, and avenge him that suffers wrong, and to punish him that did it. And therefore *Gallio* was certainly to blame in taking no notice of that insult, which the
Greeks

Greeks committed upon *Sosthenes*, the chief ruler of the synagogue, by beating him in open court, v. 17. This is what he ought to have prevented or punished, both as an affront to himself, and an injury to one of his subjects. But in this case, the *magistrate* does not make himself a *judge of controversies in religion*, nor use his power and authority to decide them; but he acts in his own proper character, as a *guardian* of the public peace of the *society*, and of the *civil interests* of his subjects; both which are invaded in the present case.

And therefore, where men demean themselves quietly and peaceably, and their *different faith and practice* have no such effect, and concern only *God* and their own *souls*, the *magistrate* is no *judge of such matters*; and whatever their errors be, must use no outward *force* or *violence* to compel them, but leave them to the just judgment of *God*, as to their own proper *master*, to whom they are to *stand or fall*.

For the *magistrate* to interpose, and make himself a *judge* and a *revenger* in affairs which are *purely* of a *religious* nature, is to transgress the bounds of his duty, and to invade the prerogative

prerogative of *God*; it is (to borrow the words of an incomparable * author) *to judge and misuse the servants of another master, who are not at all accountable to him.* For nothing can be more clear or certain, than that as *religion* has *God only* for its *author*, so it is properly *his* care and concern only. The laws of religion are the laws of *God only*, and *he* himself has appointed rewards and punishments for the observers and transgressors of them. *He* has taken this whole matter upon himself, and reserved it to himself, and has nowhere authorized any man, or any number of men upon earth, to be his deputies, or vicegerents in this behalf. So that it is highly wicked and unjust in any man, to usurp any authority over others in cases of a *religious nature*, in matters of *faith* and *conscience*. For here *God* himself has laid down the rule of our actions, and not left it to others to prescribe to us. He himself has set before us our duty, and has told us, that he will judge of the performance: and for any man, after this, to pretend to any power over us here, is to forestall the judgment of *God*, and to take *God's* cause out of his own hands.

* Mr. Locke's letter of toleration, p. 238. Vol. II. Ed.

But such attempts as these are not only wicked and unjust, but very foolish and fruitless, as will appear, if we consider, that the nature and the virtue too of all *religion*, consists in a free and willing choice, in the consent and approbation of our minds, in the sincerity and integrity of our hearts, in our being fully persuaded of the truth of what we believe, and of the goodness of what we practise. Whatever we do in *religion*, we *must do it heartily, as unto the Lord*, in obedience to *his* commands, and compliance with *his* will, and because we believe it will recommend us to *his* favour. Whatsoever is not done with this assurance of faith, is neither well in itself, nor can it be acceptable to *God*.

But of what use can human laws, enforced by civil penalties, be in all this? They may make me do things which are in my power, and depend upon my will: but to believe this, or that, to be true, is not in my power, nor depends upon my will, but upon the light, and evidence, and information which I have. And will civil discouragements and incapacities, fines and confiscations, stripes and imprisonment, enlighten the understanding, convince mens. minds of error, and inform them of the truth?

Can they have any such efficacy, as to make men change the inward judgment they have framed of things? Nothing can do this, but reason and argument. This is what our minds and understandings will naturally yield to; but they cannot be compelled to believe any thing by outward force. So that the promoting of true religion is plainly out of the *magistrate's* reach, as well as beside his *office*: and though temporal rewards and punishments are very proper *means* to produce an actual external compliance with *human laws*, which is sufficient to answer the end of their institution; yet these are very improper motives to be applied to the *laws of God and religion*, because they cannot produce that inward obedience in sincerity of *heart* and *conscience* which these laws require, nor that thorough persuasion of the *truth* of what we believe, and of the *goodness* of what we practise, without which no outward compliance with the *divine laws*, nor any thing which we do in *religion* is of any account.

And therefore, if the *magistrate* interposes here, and either chuses a *religion* for me, or enforces *that* which I have chosen, with temporal rewards and punishments; he destroys *my religion*, and spoils the virtue of what-

ever I do under that name. If he imposes upon me, and forces me to profess, (for he cannot make me believe) a religion, which I do not think to be true; he makes me a *hypocrite* and a *dissembler*, and exposes me to the reproaches of my own heart, and the just vengeance of *God*: which is highly absurd and unreasonable, considering that the end of all *religion* is to secure the favour of *God*, and the peace of our own consciences. If he forces me to profess and practise what is *true religion*, and what I myself believe to be so, he at the same time destroys the virtue of this *religion*, and deprives me of my reward in heaven. For whatever I do in *religion* out of force and constraint, upon worldly motives and considerations, out of fear of the *civil powers*, or the like, is no *religion* at all, nor is there any virtue in any actions which are performed upon such principles as these. For *religion* must be built upon our regard to *God*; and whatever regard we pay to men in the performance of religious duties, takes off so much at least from our regard to *God*, and so far diminishes the virtue of what we do. So far as temporal motives and temptations prevail with us, and are the springs and causes of our professing or practising religion; so far most certainly we are not influenced by the love of *God*, and fear of offending him, which

which is the only foundation of all true religion, which consists in *internal sincerity*, in the obedience of the *heart and conscience*, and in *worshipping God in spirit and in truth*. And for this reason, no doubt, God thought fit to annex no other penalties to the transgression of his laws, but the spiritual and invisible terrors of a future state; and no other rewards to the observance of them, but the joys and happiness of *the world to come*; because present and temporal rewards and punishments, the *countenance* or terrors of men, have no tendency to promote those things wherein true religion consists, can neither *convince* the *understanding*, nor rule the *heart*, nor lead men to the truth with *sincerity*; but are much more likely to have the direct contrary effect: and if they were applied to religion, might make men outwardly comply with it, merely for the present temporal benefit they received from it; but could never make them sincere in the belief or practice of it. And what our saviour said to the people who sought for him, *John vi. 26.* might fitly be applied to such converts and disciples as these, *verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.*

But further; as *religion* consists in such a belief and practice, as we, in our consciences are persuaded to be best, and most acceptable to *God*, as it lies in the sincerity and integrity of the heart, as it is *truth in the inward parts*; so it can be subject only to the judgment of the *great God*, whose prerogative it is, to be a *searcher of the heart*, and a *tryer of the reins*; who sees the secret springs of our actions, and knows our thoughts and intentions afar off. Upon which account, no man upon earth can be a *judge* in religious matters, nor take upon him the cognizance of this cause. He knows not the thoughts of our heart, cannot tell upon what principle we acted, or whether we were sincere in our *religion* or no; and therefore if he should undertake to dispense rewards and punishments; he, through passion, weakness, and frailty, might easily err, and instead of executing righteous judgment, might confound right and wrong, by punishing the innocent, and rewarding the guilty. The apostle's advice therefore is very seasonable in the present case: * *Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the*

* 1 Cor. iv. 5.

counsels of the heart: and then shall every man have praise of God.

By this time, I hope, it appears that *Galileo* acted a wise and conscientious part in this affair, and that if he had proceeded to the hearing and determination of the cause which the *Jews* here brought before him; he had done what he could not justify by virtue of his office, and had given himself much trouble, without doing any good to himself or others, but possibly much hurt to both.

For most certain it is, that the duty of the *magistrate* is confined to the care of the *civil and temporal good* of his people, and does not extend to their *spiritual and eternal affairs*. And as long as men behave themselves quietly and peaceably in the *government* under which they live, as long as they do no wrong or injustice to their neighbour, nor prejudice any one in their *civil rights*, they may and ought to be left to themselves in the choice of their *religion*, and be allowed to worship *God* in that manner, and after that way, which they think best and most acceptable to *him*. This is their natural right, and there can be no greater instance of injustice and oppression, than any ways to abridge it, or deprive them of it.

So that *toleration*, or *absolute liberty* in matters of *religion* and *conscience*, however it has been vilified, and exclaimed against, is as much every man's just right, as any other thing which can be mentioned: and *persecution*, however meritorious blind zeal and bigotry have made it, is as flagrant an instance of cruelty and oppression, as any of those things which are often practised in consequence of it, *plunder* and *devastations*, *fines*, *imprisonment* and *murder*.

The *magistrate* ought to be so far from thus persecuting any of his subjects, upon account of their differing from him in *religion*, that it is a principal duty incumbent on him to take care that different sects and parties do not persecute, or treat one another ill upon this account. His business is to protect people of all opinions and persuasions, not inconsistent with the ends of government, from being insulted by those from whom they differ, or suffering any thing on the score of such difference. It is nothing to him, what false and erroneous opinions men hold, what ridiculous and absurd doctrines they profess, or, in a word, what they believe, or disbelieve in *religion*, so long as hereby they do no prejudice to their neighbour, nor make any alteration

ration in men's *civil rights*, nor disturb the public peace and quiet. For the end and design of *civil government*, was not to provide for the truth of men's opinions, but for the safety and security of their goods and persons.

But here it may be objected, is the *magistrate* to shew no zeal or concern for the honour of *God*, and the authority of *his laws*? Is he to be altogether indifferent what *religion* his subjects are of, or whether they be of any *religion* at all? Is he not to exert his power in favour of the *true religion*, and to see that the rules thereof be duly observed and practised?

To this I answer, that since *God*, who is most certainly the properest judge in this case, and best knows what are the fittest *means* to be made use of for these *ends*; has not thought fit to enforce his *laws* with any *other sanctions*, but the rewards and punishments of a future and invisible state, nor to promote his honour and true religion by any other motives but *these*: what authority has any *man* to make any alteration in what *God* has established, and to enforce his laws with any other *sanctions* than what *he himself* has appointed? *God* has given no *man* this authority; and

and men cannot give it one another. And therefore for any one to assume it, is not only encroaching upon *God's prerogative*, and invading *men's religious rights*, but it is calling in question the *divine wisdom*, as if God who made man, and gave him these laws, knew not what *sanctions* were most proper to secure man's obedience to them, and what motives and arguments were most likely to prevail with him, to be truly good and virtuous.

And as to *true religion*, and a *right belief*, every man is *orthodox* to himself, and thinks his own *religion* to be true; and therefore if this be any argument, why the *magistrate* should use force in promoting his own *religion*, it will plead as strongly for *false religions*, as for the *true one*: it will hold as well for *papery* in *popish countries*, for *Mahometanism* at *Constantinople*, as for *protestantism* in *Great Britain*. But is not the honour of God to be consulted? And are not vice, and immorality, and prophaneness to be restrained and punished? Most certainly they ought; but upon a *civil* account, and because they are prejudicial to mens *civil interests*. As for *God's honour*, he himself is the best guardian of it, and will most certainly take care of it in his own time and way; for he is a *jealous God*. But then I add, that for men to be

restrained from these vices by the power and authority of the *civil magistrate*, and out of fear of his *sword*, is no honour to *God*, whatever it may be to *Cæsar*: it is *obeying men rather than God*, and shews that we are more afraid of men than of God. It is indeed for the interest and honour of the *civil government*, that all vice, immorality, and prophane-ness should be suppressed, because they are prejudicial to it, and the contrary virtues tend to the good and welfare of society; and so far the *magistrate* ought to interpose. And because all manner of wickedness, even in those instances, where it does not directly injure any private person, nor disturb the public peace, has an ill influence upon *society*, tends to make men bad subjects, and worse neighbours, and indisposes them for the due discharge of the relative duties of life; it were much to be wished, that *human laws* could be so contrived, as to take in a *greater compass* here, if that could be done without any *public inconvenience*. For the *wise man's* observation is founded in the nature of the thing, as well as in the decree of almighty God, that *righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people*, Prov. xiv. 34. As the virtue of a nation increaseth or diminisheth, so does its strength at home, and credit abroad.

And further: as they who fear and honour God most, are likely to make good subjects, and do discharge their duty best, while they do it, *not only for wrath, but for conscience sake*, Rom. xiii. 5. So most certainly, upon this account also, it is incumbent upon the civil magistrate, and one great end of his office, to maintain and support the *fear and honour of God*, by *punishing those who do evil, and praising them that do well*, 1 Pet. ii. 14.

But then it is plain, that these considerations are of a *political*, and not merely of a *religious* nature: for the *honour of God*, considered abstractedly from the good of *civil society*, and as it concerns himself only, cannot be thus promoted; and is, what he has infinite ways of maintaining and taking care of, without being beholden to the *secular arm*.

To conclude: since *religion* and *civil government* are, in their original, end, business, and in every thing else belonging to them, thus perfectly distinct, and entirely different from each other; it would put an end to many controversies, and make very much for the peace and quiet both of church and state, if men would observe this distinction, and each party would keep within their respective bounds.

This would hinder them from clashing and interfering with one another, and would prevent those heats and animosities, those acts of violence and rapine, cruelty and oppression, that have abounded in the christian world upon account of religion.

Let the ministers of the gospel keep, or be kept, to their duty. Let them *preach the gospel of peace*, and not *sound the trumpet of war*. Let them mind their own business, which is the *salvation of men's souls*, by teaching and persuading them, both by their doctrine and example, both publicly and privately, to *deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live righteously, soberly, and godly in this present world*: and let them not stretch themselves beyond their *line*, by meddling with the *affairs of state*, and making themselves more ministers of the *government*, than ministers of the *gospel of Christ*.

And let the *magistrate* too confine himself to his own proper business, and attend to the *worldly welfare* of the *commonwealth*, and instead of exercising his power in binding other men's consciences by human laws, let him take care to conform his own conscience to the *laws of God*, and direct all his counsels and endeavours to promote universally the *civil welfare*

welfare of all his subjects. * And let him not think that he bears the sword in vain, unless he employs it in the cause of *God* and *religion*. It was not put into his hands for this use, nor can it be applied to this purpose with any good effect. It was given him for quite other ends, and he will find work enough for it in deciding *civil* controversies, without meddling with those of a *religious* nature; † *in executing judgment and justice between one man and another; in breaking the jaws of the wicked, and plucking the spoil out of his teeth; in checking and controuling the arrogant and ungovernable, in preventing or punishing all fraud and injustice, violence and oppression, and in suppressing faction and tumult, sedition and rebellion.* I say, these and such like particulars will afford the *magistrate* sufficient exercise for his *sword*, without turning the edge of it against *false doctrine, heresy, and schism*.

And if civil magistrates, and ministers of the gospel, would thus contain themselves within their own bounds, there would be the most exact harmony and agreement between them; and we might hope to see the prophet's prediction fulfilled, concerning the happy state of

* *Letter concerning toleration, toward the end.*

† *Job xxix. 17.*

*the church or kingdom of Christ; * when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. When the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. When the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. When they shall not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain. † Then would mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace would kiss each other. Which God of his infinite mercy grant, &c.*

* Isa. xi. 6, 7, 8, 9. † Psal. lxxxv. 10.

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There was a time, known as the Golden Age of Freethought, from about 1865 to 1925, when it was thought that the Higher Religions -- Rationalism, Secularism, Deism, Atheism and other “thinking” religions (as opposed to the lower “believing” religions) would be the main religious force in Western Civilization within 50 years. The failure of this great upward religious movement was no fault of the new and elevating religious ideas; these new progressive religious ideals were forcefully suppressed by the political power of the old beliefs.

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I N F A N T S, dying in Infancy, Inheritors
of the Kingdom of Heaven; or is of
any Advantage to them in the World
to come.

W H E R E I N

Is clearly demonstrated, that such a Doctrine
did not, nor ever can, proceed from a Mer-
ciful and All-wise Being; and therefore not
from God, &c.

By a Member of the Church of CHRIST.

The soul that sinneth it shall die; the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son, Isa. lviii. 20.

First printed in the Year 1733.

T O T H E

R E A D E R.

*I*T is the custom of most persons, when they profess to prove the principles or practice of others erroneous, to use more words in exclaiming against them, than would express the whole of what they have advanced, which might be called reason or argument: but as I have always judged it better for such persons to learn how their own passions may be governed, than to attempt the correction of others mistakes, while they write with a temper quite reverse to the charity and meekness of a true follower of Christ; I have therefore, in the following enquiry, used no more, nor no other words, than what were necessary to give the reader a clear view of the arguments there used, and the matter enquired after; my design being to lead others into a true notion of their own opinions, and thereby, in a friendly manner, to convince them of their mistakes, and not to cast any uncharitable reflections upon them; and to this end, I desire every one to read the following lines with sincerity and calmness of spirit, to consider that God views their hearts, and discerns their secret thoughts; and that

he will punish them in a future state, who are careless of truth, or act not according to the persuasion of their own minds, but are biassed with fashionable opinions, and aim more at wealth and grandeur, than at truth and the real knowledge of the doctrine of Jesus Christ; and when they have thus read it, to let their own conscience be judge, whether my arguments are too weak, or whether they have not sufficient strength to prove what I advance, and to demonstrate my assertions. For tho' nothing can seem more clear to my understanding than the truth of the following conclusions, yet I would have no man believe them without examination, or be convinced of their truth, otherwise than by reason or scripture. Far be it from me, even to wish any one to turn unto mine opinion, from any other motives but only as scripture and reason move him.

The reader is desired to take notice, that this enquiry was written originally in a private letter to a member of the church of England, and is now published with some additions, for the perusal of persons in general.

A N

E N Q U I R Y.

AS I am persuaded your design toward me was good, when you began verbally to attack me for differing from you in opinion concerning the baptizing of infants, I think myself under an obligation to have the same good will toward you; and as mine own opinion could never appear more unreasonable in your judgment, than yours does in mine, I think it is my duty to be free with you likewise, and to give you my thoughts concerning your opinion: whereby you may perceive, that infant baptism hath not so good a foundation as you imagined, before you knew the arguments that may be brought against it.

By what conversation we have already had upon this point, I am persuaded you find that I have many more and much stronger arguments to urge against the practice of pædobaptism, than ever you expected; and I make no doubt but when you read the following arguments (if you are calm and rightly under-

stand them) you will perceive yourself mistaken, and confess that the practice of infant baptism is contrary to the very first principles of things, as well as not taught by Christ or his apostles, in any plain passage of scripture.

But as I delight not in many words, I shall now proceed; and to prevent any misunderstanding, shall begin with the following definitions.

DEFINITION I.

That being whom we call God, is of himself perfect, and could not be made better by any alteration.

DEFINIT. II.

Cruelty is either the afflicting of an innocent person, or the punishing of an offender with more pain than his crimes deserve, without designing either of them a reward for the same. But,

DEFINIT. III.

Mercy is the omitting to punish a guilty person according to the full desert of his crimes. And,

DEFINIT. IV.

Justice is the rendering to a person whatsoever is his proper due. But,

D E F I N I T. V.

Injustice is the withholding some good from a person, which he has a right to enjoy; or the causing of him to feel some pain, which was not due unto him.

But these definitions being sufficient (I think) in the present enquiry, and because I would express every thing in as short and clear a manner as possible, I will now lay down some plain propositions.

P R O P O S I T I O N I.

God is supreme over all beings, and governs them according to his own will; agreeable to the words of *Isaiab*, personating God, *I have made the earth, and ——— stretched out the heavens, and all their hosts have I commanded. — For I am God, and there is none else.* *Isa.* xlv. 12, 22.

P R O P. II.

God is merciful, and not cruel to those whom he thus governs: or, as *David* expresseth it, *the Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works.* *Psa.* cxlv. 9.

P R O P. III.

He is also a God of truth, and doth not deceive his creatures: Deut. xxxii. 4. *Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? For God is not a man that he should lye.* Numb. xxiii. 19.

P R O P. IV.

He is likewise just and righteous, and no injustice is to be found in him: *For all his ways are judgment, a God without iniquity, just and right is he.* Deut. xxxii. 4.

P R O P. V.

He is the fountain of wisdom and knowledge, and nothing is, or can be hid from him: *O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! — For of him — are all things; to whom be glory for ever.* Amen. Rom. xi. 33, 36.

P R O P. VI.

The things which are contained in those books called by us the scripture, proceeded originally from God, and contain so many undoubted truths; as saith the apostle, *God who — spake in time past by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son.* Heb. i. 1, 2.

The assertions contained in the preceding propositions, being such as are believed by almost every protestant christian, I think it is needless to use any arguments to prove them; and therefore I proceed.

P R O P. VII.

Whatsoever appears clearly unto us, by plain reason, as truth, is certainly so. The truth of this proposition I am persuaded you will not call in question; because thereby you would also question the truth of the holy scriptures: for we have no other way to prove the truth of them but by reason; and therefore, if reason cannot be depended upon, we cannot depend upon the scripture.

And that we are capable of discovering truth by reason, is plain from Christ's own words; ——— *And why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.* Luke xii. 57.

From these two last propositions it necessarily follows,

First, That the true meaning of any part of the scripture, is not, nor can be, contrary to any proposition which may be proved by plain and clear reason. And,

Secondly,

Secondly, That all interpretations of scripture, which have been or may be made by men, and which are contrary to reason, are false.

P R O P. VIII.

All consequences necessarily flowing, or which are truly drawn, from any true proposition, are true. And,

P R O P. IX.

All such consequences as do necessarily follow upon the allowing any false proposition to be true, are false.

From hence it necessarily follows,

First, That if any consequence truly drawn be itself true, that proposition from whence it was drawn, is also true. And,

Secondly, That if any consequences necessarily flowing from any proposition be false, that proposition from whence it proceeded is also false.

It is needless (I think) to use any arguments in proof of the two last propositions, or of what I have inferred from them; it being clear to the meanest capacity, that knows what

what reason is, that if these assertions were false, there could be no such thing as reasoning. I therefore proceed.

P R O P. X.

An all-wise and merciful being cannot act, or order any matter in an unwise or cruel manner; for thereby such a being would itself become unwise or cruel: and therefore as it is morally impossible for God, who is of himself omniscient and merciful, to change his nature, and become unwise and cruel; it therefore follows, that it is morally impossible for God to act or order any matter in an unwise or cruel manner.

P R O P. XI.

The actions of parents cannot make their infants any more out of favour with God than before, or procure to them any torment in the world to come. For it is evident, that infants are no ways concerned in their parents actions; they can neither assist or prevent them: and as they are no ways concerned in the operation of such actions, they cannot in any respect become guilty by them; for to say, that they become guilty by them, is the same as to say, that some infants are guilty of very wicked actions, which they were never able to commit; than which nothing can be more absurd. But,
if

if parents commit the vilest and worst of actions, yet as their infants are not therein concerned, they are innocent (for it is self-evident, that all persons are innocent of all actions in which they have no ways been concerned;) and to say that God doth cast infants out of his favour, or will torment them in the world to come, because of their parents actions, is the same as to say, that God doth cast persons, while they remain innocent, out of his favour, or that he will punish them in the world to come; which would make God act, either unjustly, cruelly, or without true wisdom. But will God cast infants out of his favour through their parents actions? God forbid; *yea, let God be true, but every man a liar.*

But having laid down these (which I judge are undeniable) propositions, I shall proceed to the following

E N Q U I R Y.

Whether it is possible for infants by baptism to be made inheritors of the kingdom of heaven?

And first I shall suppose it possible, and observe what consequences will arise from such a supposition.

C O N S E Q U E N C E I.

If infants are by baptism made inheritors (or have thereby a right given them to an inheritance) in the kingdom of heaven, then it follows, that before baptism they had no such right, neither were inheritors of that kingdom. This is plain and perspicuous at first view, and also that

C O N S E Q. II.

God has then given men power to make infants inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. And that

C O N S E Q. III.

Those many infants which die unbaptized, die without having a right to inherit in the kingdom of heaven; and that only because men are ignorant and careless, and do not baptize them.

C O N S E Q. IV.

It also follows, that all men have power to prevent all infants dying in infancy, from a proper right to heaven. And,

C O N S E Q. V.

That those persons who are so wicked as to kill unbaptized infants, do thereby not only pre-

prevent their living in this world, but do also hinder them from having a right to an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, and as it were, kill them in the world to come.

C O N S E Q. VI.

And if the preceding supposition be true, it is true also, that though a man who is appointed to baptize infants, be never so wicked, and guilty of the most enormous crimes, yet, if he be able to administer baptism to them, he can give them a true and proper title to an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, though he himself has right to no such inheritance, but perhaps entirely out of the favour of God. But,

C O N S E Q. VII.

Yet the death of Christ, and whatsoever he has done for mankind, is not sufficient to give so much as one infant a proper title to an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, without some help from men.

C O N S E Q. VIII.

I may also add, that according to this supposition, God hath left infants in a very dubious and uncertain condition, to be prevented from, or have permittance to go into, the kingdom

dom of heaven, according to the fickle humour of frail and oft uncareful men.

Thus you see, what unreasonable assertions you are obliged to believe, so long as you entertain the doctrine of infant baptism, and are persuaded, that infants by it have right given them to inherit the kingdom of heaven. You must believe and confess, that God has left such infants, as are to die before they arrive at the knowledge of good and evil, in a very ambiguous state, and has given men great power over them, either to prevent them from inheriting in the kingdom of heaven, or of giving them a proper title to such an inheritance: that the death of Christ is an imperfect sacrifice, and cannot give so much as one such infant a right to an heavenly inheritance, without some help from men: that such infants as have right to inherit in heaven, obtained it, however, partly by the actions of men, whatsoever good the death of Christ might do them: that some men, who have no right to inherit heaven themselves, can yet give such infants a true and proper right thereto: that many infants, some through their parents ignorance, and some through their negligence, cannot inherit heaven, though they are the creatures of God, and are as innocent, and as valuable of themselves, as any of those infants are

are

are that will inherit therein : and that men have not only power to kill unbaptized infants here on earth, but thereby to prevent them also from having hereafter a proper right or title to inherit in the kingdom of heaven.

How frightful soever these things may appear, when viewed in a clear light by an unbiassed mind, it is plain and evident, that they are no more than necessary consequences, which do clearly flow from the preceding supposition ; and therefore if you believe the supposition, you cannot deny the consequences : for if you disown so much as one consequence, you deny the supposition, and all the other consequences : for by the foregoing eighth and ninth propositions, and from what is there observed from them, it appears, that the supposition and its consequences, are either all true or all false ; and therefore, if you give up one, you give up all : and that they are not all true, I think plainly appears by comparing them with the propositions before laid down.

For, if infants are by baptism intitled to an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, it will follow from our own experience, if we observe how many infants die unbaptized, as well as from what I have observed before, that infants are left in a very ambiguous state, and their
title

title to heaven left, as it were, in a careless manner by the deity.

Now the giving to, or procuring for, the many thousands of infants, which die in infancy, an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, either is, or is not a matter of great concernment: to say it is not, is the same as to say, that the kingdom of heaven is of so little value to infants, that it matters but little whether they possess it or no; which I am persuaded you are far from thinking: and if it is a matter of any great concernment, the merciful and all-wise being has not, nor ever will entail the kingdom of heaven on such dying infants only as men have pleased to baptize. For that is the same in words, as to say, that God (who is perfect in wisdom) has left a matter of great concernment, no less than the giving or hindering of thousands of thousands of infants, to, or from an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, into the hands of men who are frail creatures; and many are ignorant of having this power, some uncareful, and the greatest part wicked, and out of the favour of God. And by the matter being left thus, many thousands of infants will never have a proper right to heaven, not because they are guilty of any evil, but by reason men are ignorant and careless, and do not

convey to them that right: which I think, upon a serious consideration, differs but little from affirming, that though God is perfect in wisdom, yet sometimes he acts, or orders things unwisely. And as it is impossible for an all-wise being to act or order any thing unwisely, without becoming thereby imperfect and unwise; it therefore follows, by a plain and clear demonstration, that God, who is perfect in wisdom, has not, nor ever will order things in such a manner, that infants dying in infancy, will have, or will not have, a right to inherit in the kingdom of heaven, according as they have, or have not, been baptized by men.

But if you object, that your opinion is not that infants are made inheritors of the kingdom of heaven by baptism, but that they will have only some privilege or greater degree of happiness in heaven, by virtue of their baptism: and if you assert this to be your opinion, I could draw much the same frightful consequences as the preceding, and bring it to the same absurdity as before.

For if baptized infants have right to more happiness in heaven than unbaptized infants have, then God has given into the hands of men, power to dispose of some part of the happiness of heaven, at least to infants; but it

is clear, and evident to every rational person, that giving men such power is leaving a matter of great importance in an ambiguous, and, as it were, careless manner; and as an all-wise being will never leave a matter of any great importance in a careless ambiguous manner, (for that would be acting or ordering a matter unwisely;) it therefore follows, that God, who is an all-wise being, will never increase the happiness of infants in heaven, because of baptism, or decrease their happiness therein, for want of it, or any ways vary their eternal happiness through the actions of men. I might say more of this opinion, and confute it in other views, but judge it needless.

However, I think it proper to insert one argument more, which sufficiently overthrows either of the preceding opinions concerning infants being benefited in the kingdom of heaven, by baptism; which argument is as follows.

In the great day of judgment, when the all-wise and omnipotent God comes to pass sentence upon infants, who went out of this world in their infancy, before they could discern between moral good and evil; I say, when he comes to do this, either, he will distinguish
between,

between, and put into different conditions, those which have, and those which have not been baptized, or he will not. If God makes no difference betwixt them, then baptizing of infants will in no way whatsoever increase their happiness in heaven, and therefore it is not proper to baptise them, except the same was plainly commanded by God: and if God will make a difference at the day of judgment between baptized infants and others, then it clearly follows, that God will pass different judgments upon creatures equally innocent, and that from other motives than their unequally suffering in this life, which is absurd to think, and daring to affirm. And what can deprive God of wisdom, more than asserting, that when he will judge the world, the neglect of men toward infants, who died in infancy, will be a prevailing motive with him to determine the eternal condition of such infants, and set bounds to his own attribute of mercy, and the meritorious sufferings of Jesus Christ? And yet this is what they do necessarily affirm, who assert, that infants dying without baptism, will on that account, be deprived (in the life to come) of even the least benefit whatsoever.

I do not in this enquiry pretend to limit the power of God, but all that I affirm, in short, is this, that God is a wise, just and merciful being

being; and as the doctrine which teacheth that the eternal happiness of infants dying in infancy hath any dependance upon their being baptized before death, is inconsistent with the foresaid attributes of God, that therefore God never did, nor ever will teach men such a doctrine: and in affirming of this, I affirm no more, than that God never acts, or orders any thing in a manner contrary to his own nature, or inconsistent with what is truly perfection. But before I conclude, I think it proper to take notice of that which some learned men have thought an argument sufficient of itself, to prove the lawfulness of infant-baptism, which argument they draw from the innocency of infants, and from the words of Christ which he spake concerning infants, related by *St. Mark*, in the 14th and 15th verses of his 10th chapter. They say, if infants are fit to be admitted into the kingdom of Christ in heaven, they are certainly qualified to be received as members of his church on earth. But I take this to be a very wrong way of arguing, and am persuaded you will think so too, when you have considered the following arguments. For,

First, such infants as are permitted to go into the kingdom of Christ in heaven, will enjoy the blessings which are therein enjoyed, which I think no christian will deny (for, if

when infants are in heaven, they do not enjoy the blessings thereof, what good will being there do them?) then according to the forefaid way of arguing, fuch infants as are capable of eating and drinking, ought to partake of the Lord's fupper; for I might fay, if infants are fit to partake of, and enjoy the blessings of the kingdom of Chrift in heaven, they are certainly qualified to partake of, and enjoy whatfoever they are capable of enjoying in the church of Chrift on earth, and therefore of being partakers at the Lord's fupper.

From hence it appears, that this argument is of as much force to prove infants qualified for the Lord's fupper, as for baptifm; and therefore according to this way of arguing, if infants ought to be admitted to baptifm, they ought alfo to be admitted to the Lord's fupper. And,

Secondly, I would have you judge, whether, it is not more reasonable to fay, that becaufe infants are already fit to be admitted into the kingdom of Chrift in heaven, that there is, therefore, no manner of occafion to baptize them; than to fay, that becaufe infants are fit to be admitted into the kingdom of Chrift in heaven, that therefore they ought to be bap-

baptized in so solemn a manner, as the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, when it is not commanded, neither can it be of any advantage to them. But,

Thirdly, to argue for the baptizing of infants from their being fit to enter into the kingdom of Christ in heaven, is not an argument to prove that baptism ought to be administered to infants, but only an excuse for such a practice; for I think none will be so unreasonable as to pretend, that because infants are fit to be admitted into the kingdom of Christ in heaven, that therefore they ought, but only that they may be baptized. And here I might observe, that if those who baptize infants, excuse themselves by saying, that it is lawful to baptize and admit them into the church, because they are fit to be admitted into the kingdom of Christ in heaven, may not they who are against the baptizing of infants, say (and that with as much reason too) since infants are already fit to be admitted into the kingdom of Christ in heaven, baptism is unprofitable for them, and therefore we judge it proper to defer it until we know it may be profitable unto them? But further for every one to take upon him to prove that infants may be baptized, and at the same time not to prove that they ought, is to take upon him an useless task: for as baptism is per-

formed as an ordinance of Christ, and in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, it cannot be a matter of such indifferency, as that infants may or may not be baptized; but I think it is very obvious that they ought not, without it can be proved that Christ commanded, or that his apostles practised it. But,

Fourthly, If you observe the reasons given by the church of *England* in the book of common prayer, for the admitting infants to baptism, you will easily perceive, that those who plead for the baptizing of infants, because they are fit to be admitted into the kingdom of Christ in heaven, do strictly oppose the church of *England*, and argue in a manner inconsistent with her arguing, and in a way which (if it really proved that infants ought to be baptized) would entirely destroy the reasons given by the church of *England*, for her baptizing of them. I might add more concerning this argument (or rather excuse) but judge what I have already written sufficient, and therefore I shall now proceed to the

C O N C L U S I O N.

I now intreat you, as a friend, to weigh impartially the preceding arguments, and if you do, I am persuaded, you will confess, that infant-baptism is not so reasonable as you formerly

supposed, if you do not entirely change your opinion, and for the future oppose such a practice. You know I can have no advantage in writing on this matter to you, but only your good, but only a desire to convince you of error: for so long as I have liberty to worship God according to mine own conscience, it is much the same to me, whether others agree with, or differ from me in opinion or practice. But as I think myself greatly obliged to any person who endeavours to convey truth to my understanding, so I think it is my duty to be as serviceable as time and opportunity permit, in conveying truth to others. But to be short, I have clearly demonstrated in the preceding enquiry, that those who teach, that infants by virtue of their baptism, will enjoy any more happiness in the kingdom of heaven, than unbaptized infants; or that unbaptized infants, **merely because** they are unbaptized, will be deprived of the least degree of happiness in heaven: I say, I have proved to a demonstration, that this is a doctrine irreconcilable with perfect wisdom and goodness, and therefore contrary to the very attributes of God; and therefore God never did, nor ever will teach men such a doctrine. Which in mine opinion entirely overthrows the practice of infant baptism: for this proves that it will be of no benefit in the world to come, and we all know, that in this world it is no advantage to them; and

therefore it follows, that baptizing of infants doth them no manner of good whatsoever: and why then should men baptize them, especially since no man could ever yet prove that Christ commanded, or that his apostles practised it?

I would here ask those what they mean who call the baptizing of infants a charitable work, and speak against us as uncharitable, because we do not baptize them; and I would have such consider, which is of the most commendable opinion, they who believe baptism necessary to make innocent infants happy; they who believe unbaptised infants excluded from the merits of Jesus Christ, and thereby, as it were, confine the mercy of God toward infants to the actions of men: or we who believe, that as infants are all equally innocent, they are therefore all equally valuable in the sight of God; or we who believe that the merits of the death of Jesus Christ, are not extended towards infants by the actions of men, but by the mercy of God, whose mercy is as extensive toward all the offspring of *Adam* as is consistent with justice. I have also by several arguments overthrown the reason, or rather the excuse which some make for the baptizing of infants, drawn from their innocency, and from their being pronounced by Christ inheritors of the kingdom of heaven; and have observed that according to these

these

these mens own argument, baptism is of no benefit to infants, and therefore (as it is performed in the name of God and Jesus Christ) it ought not to be practised without a command from God the father, or his son Jesus Christ. Besides, what excuse can they make, who perform a thing in the name of God, and as if it were commanded by him, when he hath not commanded it? Will it not be said unto them, *who hath required this at your hand?* Moreover, it may deprive many of the benefit designed by God, to man, in the ordinance of baptism.

From, &c.

N O T E.

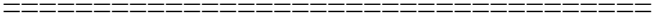
In the preceding lines, it is always taken for granted, that every thing concerning this world, will be so regulated in the life to come, as not to require any further regulation.

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A
L E T T E R

O F

Consolation and Council

To the Good People of

E N G L A N D,

Especially of

London and Westminster,

Occasioned by the late

E A R T H Q U A K E S.

By a L A Y M A N:

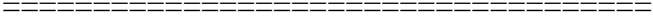
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A

L E T T E R.

Friends and Neighbours,

AFTER two late convulsions of the earth, or the air, or of both, and after a third alarm from a late solemn address, perhaps spreading more terror than either, give me leave to offer you some comforting considerations.

One earthquake is not always followed by another, nor a second by a third, nor a third by one still more terrible; neither do their havoc in one country imply the same in any other country. Where one of them has swallowed a city, or pushed the sea over the continent, how many have been remembered only by being felt? Nobody is frightened at the sight much less at the sound of a shower; yet inundations caused by rains have ruined countries and communities, left more extensive desolation, and produced more frequent calamities, than earthquakes, at least here in *Britain*, and all over *Europe*.

Earthquakes too are produced from natural causes; fire and floods in the cavities of the earth, violent explosions or rarefactions there, such as no weight or bulk can resist, not a shell or globe of iron a thousand miles thick; and as the smallest spark will blow up a thousand powder mills, a small ferment in the earth, even in the center of the earth, will shake it to the surface.

We are not to seek for, or to suppose supernatural causes, where natural ones are obvious and certain: the latter will satisfy every reasonable mind, and supernatural causes are only sought and urged by visionaries, dealers in judgments, and by sharpers in theology, such as pretend to foretell wrath to come, and to avert it; nay, some of them have threatened to bring it.

These men of prophecy and foresight account for all awful and striking events, by intelligence from heaven, and are, or seem, confident, that the almighty will do whatever they think he ought to do, reserving to themselves a right to prevail with him to change, or suspend his measures; as if they could repeal his decrees, even such terrible decrees as they had foretold he would terribly

ribly execute, but for their interposition and charms.

They therefore hate, and pretend to despise, the tracing of any tremendous appearances from nature and reason; a course that would spoil their warnings and importance. No wonder that they treat the most learned and able inquirers into the powers of nature, *as little philosophers*; as men who would utterly spoil and disgrace the theory of judgments, and sink the solemn character of judgment-mongers.

These last have this advantage, that the judgments which they threaten, are not obliged to fall, nor even their most flattering prophecies to be accomplished; for if the people who are threatened, escape, their escape is derived from the warnings and prayers of their monitor, and from his credit and intercession above; and if their hopes from any of his kind predictions fail, the people have not repented enough, or sinned too much.

Many a noted prophet, chimerical and positive, and almost all pious impostors, have persevered in foretelling and mistaking all their lives, yet still passed for authentic prophets: — so safe it is to foretell what will never happen,

happen, provided the foreteller be clothed with proper solemnity and colours.

If there were no philosophers, great or little, then might grave augurs monopolize all interpretation, and derive every earthly, every moral event, from revelation (a rare acquisition!) nor would they then be obliged, nor indeed concerned, to offer facts or reasons, or circumstances, to prove the truth of their predictions, but would justify their omission, by charging infidelity upon all who blamed them for it, exposing them to the wrath of Men, by representing them to be under that of God.

Here is a warrant for power and controul without bounds or end. Whoever has the art or luck to gain the reputation of explaining judgments, or of applying judgments, may create judgments, and is thenceforth able to subdue and govern mankind without a sword, and to convince them without an argument. Whence comes the force of false miracles, but that they are asserted by men whom we believe, and are therefore received because they are asserted? What false miracle would stand a moment's examination? None would.

The same is true of false judgments, as all are but such as God himself declares to be true. And it is agreeable to his divine nature to declare them as often as he sends them. But who dare to examine, or even to doubt, after they are frightened or bewitched? Who would lose the merit of faith and devout submission, when faith is a divine gift, submission a divine duty; and when reason is no more than the common lot of human nature?

Judgments and miracles are the daily topics of the jesuits, and other popish emissaries, to cheat the *Indians* into popery; some of their great engines of conversion, are eclipses and comets, with whatever can frighten ignorance, and terrify dupes. Whoever can read, must have found what dreadful alarms have been raised in armies and communities by eclipses, and how improved by artful men, amongst weak and credulous men; nay, what dreadful doings have followed dreams, mistaken for visions and inspiration? Even astrologers have caused the death of princes, by pretending to foretel it. For then the prophecy warranted a conspiracy, and prompted the conspirators. He, therefore, who could hire a mercenary astrologer to predict the murder or deposition
of

of an emperor, had thence a call to commit it, and a chance to succeed him.

Besides, credulity, and even peevishness, are as quick in foreseeing judgments as anger, or ambition is in applying them. Such tempers wish for judgments, and are always extremely clear-sighted to perceive them.

A clown threatened a gentleman with a severe judgment for ordering a poaching dog to be shot, then set fire to his stable, and when it was burnt, declared that he had foreseen it. He was tried and condemned for the fact, but perceived another judgment overtaking the judge, who past sentence upon him: as the judge died of a fever before the sentence was executed, the incendiary comforted himself, "That he had again proved a true prophet, and that providence had visited his enemies."

To raise frightful apprehensions from imaginary dangers is at best officious zeal; to dress up natural and fortuitous events in dreadful colours, is worse. It is to be lamented that the meanest instruments, and the weakest impostors can scatter terrors, and alarm nations; old women and astrologers can do it, and do it daily. No man, not the wisest man,

man, can guess, no modest man will affirm, against whom, or for whom it is, that the powers of nature are at any time particularly displayed; why black clouds frown, and where lightning is to dart destruction; whose grounds a flood is sent to enrich, or whose sheep to drown. Such doctrine would discredit the deity, and infer notorious partiality in him, if one city or country were thus destroyed, and another, not better, escaped.

His almighty providence is undoubtedly ever armed with equal power to crush hardened offenders; but not blindly, nor is his thunder launched at random. He not only sees guilt, but more or less guilt, and doubtless spreads the wings of his mercy over innocence, and even the degrees of innocence. To advance the contrary doctrine, seems blasphemous, and is *maledictio supremi numinis*, a reproach upon divine justice. Let not those, who are not hardened against his mercy, be exposed to his avenging justice. Divine warnings against particular places and particular sins cannot be dumb and unintelligible; cannot be sent by God to men, yet not be understood by men, like a law made not to be understood, therefore impossible to be observed, yet fraught with penalties, and worthy not only of a tyrant, but of the worst,
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the most cruel tyrant. Would it not be blasphemy to father such a diabolical ordinance upon the merciful God?

To say, that in all nations there are sins enough to merit and invite judgments, would imply, that every day calls for judgments upon every sinner; and thus every pot of ale too much, and every idle word, invites an earthquake to swallow every man who drinks, and every idle woman who talks: a judgment, which would not only imply no equal providence, but no providence at all.

God may send his judgments; and we ought to believe them to be sent by him, when he declares them so sent. When he does not, it is daring impiety in a human creature (uninspired) so to declare them. Are such blind warnings to be believed, yet cannot be explained, or explained by proofs that rather darken than convince? Who will undertake to unfold the unsearchable purposes of God, or even all the designs and casual operations of nature?

Vulgar and superstitious minds discover judgments in the smallest accident, especially if it be bad; and in the most unmeaning appearances, if they be but striking. A

waterman's wife in an angry tone, such as generally accompanies the denunciation of judgments, "blessed God for sending a judgment upon *Westminster-Bridge*, in sinking the pier; declared she had foreseen it, and owned that she had prayed for it." She did not stay to consider, that the remaining piers were full as guilty, and that, had the whole bridge sunk, the calamity would not have been so soon removed, and therefore more pleasing to her praying spirit. A mason who heard her, contradicting, and thereby enraging her, she cursed him copiously, "for having a conscience as hard as the *stones*, and the tools he worked them with." The man laughed; that laugh incensed her more; she swore, and threatened him "with the vengeance of heaven for laughing at judgments," and called him atheist.

Jane Wenham, tried for witchcraft at *Hertford* (I think in Queen *Anne's* Reign) was acquitted. This alarmed the prosecutors, chiefly clergymen, and so incensed them, that they threatened the country with some remarkable vengeance, particularly the judge and jury, for not believing the lying marvels and miraculous transformations sworn against the poor wretch. They published invectives against judge *Powell* particularly,
and

and represented him as an atheist, as he was too able a man to be their tool and dotard.

Witches are accounted by the mob, and the leaders of mobs, the instruments of divine wrath, and judgments are derived from nonentities. Old women, poor, and peevish, are always unpopular. A law was made to murder them, and King *James* the author.

Self flattery is extreme: the lowest, the meanest, and such who have no one good quality to make them liked, often like themselves, though they please nobody else; perhaps the more for that very reason: they conclude their merit is too shining not to be envied; and their spite being equal to their other defects, they hate all who do not love, or not enough love them; and being sure that God loves them equally, and equally hates all whom they hate, they are continually and diabolically awarding divine judgments to all around them. Such a devilish spirit may have marked out old women for witches to vulgar and superstitious eyes.

Old women, scolds, and bigots of both sexes, have been always forward to see and inflict judgments. Their language is, like their spirit, peevish and positive. Their wish
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that God may reward you, is a prayer to God to curse you. Yet the lowest of these wretches, so blind and rancorous, are just as fit as the learned and dignified, to ascertain what no man can ascertain. Mother *Shipton* could foretel public calamities, and explain why they were sent, as well as both houses of convocation.

In general distress people are generally humble, and their fears furnish them with caution to fly to the safest courses. But *when* that distress is to befall them, or *how*, no soul can inform them, unless God first informs them, as he did *Jonas* and *Abraham*. The contrition and humiliation of the *Ninevites* saved *Nineveh*, and their escape enraged the prophet, because it contradicted his prediction: his pride touched him more than the escape of many thousands.

The state of *Sodom* was singular, as their pollution was shocking. Yet no man foresaw any judgment approaching till God declared it in person to *Abraham*, who even then persuaded God to spare it, if there were ten righteous persons found in it. But it was consigned to flames, being not blessed with
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that scanty number; it was consumed by fire from heaven purposely sent.

But there is no arguing from the calamity and overthrow of one city, that the like, or any will befall another: though ill deserving, it may not perhaps be equally ill deserving. All nations are not alike; all people of the same nation are not alike; and, as I have before observed, the creator, preserver, and judge of men will not equally punish pious and impious men, punish a whole city, because some, perhaps *many*, in it deserve to be punished. Thank God, the universal guilt of *Sodom*, is not the universal guilt of *London*. What inference alarming to *London*, can be drawn from the fate of *Sodom*, or to *Englishmen* from that of the *Jews*, ever prone to apostacy and idolatry; a spirit not seen, here?

I have the comfort of being persuaded, that there are more than ten times ten righteous persons in *London*, even among the laity; besides several hundred clergymen: are not clergymen righteous persons, and is not *London* safe?

I remember, during the late rebellion, when a sermon was preached and published by an
 eminent

eminent prelate*, full of warning to this nation, from the judgments which once befell *Ju-dæa*; a learned divine †, in another sermon, removed our terrors, by shewing to us, that as there was no analogy between our case and theirs, we might reasonably hope to escape their punishment. He likewise shewed, how groundless, how iniquitous, yet how usual it was to draw such contrary unrefembling parallels.

Whatever vicious habits, however various sins may abound, numbers are innocent. There are ladies who do not intrigue, nor game; there are men who do not swear, nor riot. God's mercy is equal to his discernment. His wrath is not blind, like that of foolish passionate men. When he intends a general visitation, his goodness will give warnings that are distinct and intelligible, and not puzzle us with cracking in the air, or the nodding of houses. If a volley of thunder maim a church, and spare the parish (as I have known it happen) is it to be construed a divine rebuke to the parson, as a worse man than his parishioners? Or if, in the late concussions, any of the churches in *Lon-*

* Dr. *Sherlock*, then bishop of *Salisbury*, late of *London*.

† Mr. *Warburton*.

don should be hurt, and the playhouses escape, would it imply any sanctity in a theatre superior to that of a cathedral?

Rome, the center of the catholic religion, is perhaps the most debauched, the most polluted city in *Europe*, and the religious men the most vicious men in *Rome*: I would humbly ask any casuist in judgments, who observes, "that a city without religion, can never be a safe place to dwell in," whether the *Romish* system of impostures be religion? I could ask another question, whether the bible be not a sufficient system? Is *Rome* a safe city to dwell in, where all iniquity, all impurity prevails, and where no bible is permitted? It is my own firm opinion, that true religion cannot prevail, nay can hardly subsist, in a city where all religions are not tolerated, and none punished. Laws against conscience make men criminals, when the men obnoxious to them do not observe them, and often make them hypocrites, when they do. In matters of mere conscience men should be subject to no fear, but to the fear of the Lord.

Moral actions are proofs of religion; morality is religion, and every man truly religious will be for tolerating every religion; and

and, whatever any man thinks religion, is religion to that man, whatever grimaces and fanaticism may attend it. *London* and *Amsterdam* abound in religion, because they tolerate all religions. Let us bless God, that *London* is a safe place to dwell in.

Rome too is subject to earthquakes. Have these earthquakes only, or chiefly afflicted the monks and priests, men who are principally immersed in the sin of *Sodom*, and other iniquities as shocking to religion, as that is to nature, immersed in continual frauds, superstition, and idolatry, preaching the same, practising the same, crushing and burning all gainsayers; yet such bold hypocrites, that, engrossing the trade of false prophecy and imposture, they are the most early to foresee judgments, and the most zealous to apply them; never to themselves, but to their enemies; chiefly to protestants, men of reason and inquiry, who are for rescuing truth from imposture, the word of God from the frauds of monks, defending conscience from constraint, and the children of the gospel from the fires of the inquisition.

The everlasting lies and judgments upon *Luther* and *Calvin*, and upon all the lights of the reformation, were rung loudly and

incessantly in the ears of *Christendom*, and are still rung, and believed by all blind catholics; and such as are not blind catholics are not good catholics. I should not wonder to hear that the same inventors of calumnies and judgments had sent one against *Cambridge*, for Dr. *Middleton's* unanswerable writings against popery.

I have often thought that the common preachers and discoverers of judgments were of all men the most obvious marks for judgments. Who could be more so than those *English* doctors, who had long persecuted protestant dissenters, and flattered lawless power; enemies to conscience and law, consequently to society and their country before the revolution, and to legal government after the revolution? Did not the famous *Oxford* decree, in the reign of King *Charles II.* seem to be a call for divine vengeance, as it was a doom pronounced by that university against the constitution, surrendering, or rather sentencing law to will? That no judgment befell a college there since, for the sin of *Sodom*, was less to be admired, as the same was personal and limited. The earthquake was not felt there.

“ The men, who see but little into natural causes, yet offer to account for the
 “ opera-

“operation of nature, are surely *little philosophers?*” But able philosophers, indeed any sensible man, may find obvious natural causes for such operations, for thunder and lightening, and inundations, nay for earthquakes. Sir *Isaac Newton* particularly has done it, and has even taught us how to make an earthquake. He was no *little philosopher*, nor small divine; he did not pretend to derive crazy warnings from fortuitous signals, but professed to promote conviction, as he had received it, by reason and figures, and the express word of God. Fortune-tellers and jugglers take another method, and instead of speaking to the reason of people, speak to their credulity and fears.

The northern lights, though always known in *Europe*, had been so little observed in *England*, that about thirty years ago, appearing very singular, as they were very remarkable, indeed amazing, the colours so various and glowing, the agitations so violent, and the rays so pointed and rapid, that, without the aid or declaiming cant of dealers in prophetic wonders, the people were greatly alarmed, and some of them possessed with horror: some feared public calamities, others rejoiced, as they saw such judgments

declared against the persons, or party obnoxious to them; for so angry and credulous vulgar minds argue: they were sure of approaching changes, national vengeance and a general revolution, from fiery dragons, nay armies embattled and encountering in the sky. Some hoped, some dreaded the restoration of popery; and to many, especially in the north, heaven was seen manifesting its wrath for the execution of rebels. I do not remember that any boding sermons, or doleful addresses followed those lights.

Loose books, lewd women, and brothels abound in *Christendom* much more than in *Turkey*. Is *Christendom* less under the protection of providence than *Turkey*? The christian clergy indulge in wine infinitely more than those of *Turkey*; are the Mahometan mollahs less obnoxious to divine judgments than our Christian doctors?

Do loose books swarm? It is a bad, a common, I doubt inevitable effect, arising from a good cause, public liberty, and the liberty of the press. Take away public liberty, and you check the public progress of books: but with the suppression of the bad, the good will be suppressed. Who can settle the bounds and distinction between them?

them? The worst are sometimes liked and encouraged; sometimes the best are offensive and decried. Who can fix the standard? None but the Pope, or the great *Turk*, the only officers fit to abolish the constitution and loose books, the licentiousness of the press with that of the pulpit; though there be some objections to be made to the great *Turk*, by the advocates for rigid uniformity, since the Grand Seignor allows liberty of conscience.

France abounds with free-thinkers, no kingdom in *Europe* more, nor so much: *Holland*, above all countries, abounds with printing-presses, with free-thinking and obnoxious books, which are from thence dispersed all over the world. *France* and *Holland* are not only more free, but at least more than we are. Yet *Amsterdam* excels (or perhaps it will sound more arch and satirical to say “beats”) all the world, “beats even *London*, in the traffick of infidelity.”

This word infidelity, which is little understood, is for the most applied angrily, indeed at random, to asperse and reproach all men who differ from bigots: it is become a scolding term in craft and bigotry, as other

gross words are in markets and mobs. No man, who is not an infidel in the sight of God, ought to be treated as one amongst christians, nor is so treated amongst candid, well-bred pagans; yet the best men are often marked and blackened as such by craftsmen, and pious railers, who having first given them an odious name, boldly deliver them to some doleful doom here, and then to devils and flames hereafter. There have been few great men, of distinguished talents and ability, but have fallen under the rage of bigots, and the obloquy of craftsmen; witness *Raleigh, Locke, Bayle, Tillotson*, indeed all who laughed at holy dunces, and left the beaten track of their important whims and grimaces. The charge of infidelity, were it not so common, would appear too ridiculous to be believed; ~~and it is still more~~ contemptible to be repeated. The vulgar notions of it are agreeable to the priestly notions; so are the vulgar apprehensions of judgments.

All the public calamities befalling the *Roman* empire for some ages, hurricanes and earthquakes, invasion, slaughter, pestilence, and war, were derived by the pagan priests and divines from the anger of their Gods against the christians, who disbelieved

believed the Gods, and contemned the sacrifices; a popular charge amongst the pagans, and blindly swallowed by the pagan mob. *Orosius* wrote a large volume to confute that prevailing calumny, thoroughly refuted that popular slander, and demonstrated, by a copious deduction of facts, that public calamities of all sorts had usually and equally afflicted the *Roman* state. The christians afterward returned the charge upon the pagans, and perceiving infinite guilt and horror in the superstition of the pagan worship, priests, and idolatry, boldly derived every public misfortune from that source, and pronounced every public misfortune an evident effect of divine judgment; and every phenomenon, however natural, passed for a warning of terrible events to follow.

This wild spirit was found in christians against christians; and every sect of them saw judgments threatening and overtaking a different sect; and it produced higher barbarities than ever was produced by the superstition of pagans. The pagan priests chiefly atoned their angry deities with the blood of bullocks: christians sacrificed christians in pious fury, invoked wrath divine, and applied it to satiate their own wrath; thus the frenzy of christian zeal proved more fierce

and pestilent, than the stupid superstition of heathens.

The misleaders of christians and of pagans (for the thoughtless many will always be misled by the crafty few) had one eternal advantage and temptation: they were always sure, by any strange tale or any awful sound, to make the people stare and tremble, and thence subject to any impressions, especially those of blind reverence, obedience, and liberality to the clergy; no wonder the clergy fattened and multiplied, and took a thousand shaves, hatched a thousand creeds, and had ten thousand disputes. Monks, at first, single and solitary, inspired by craziness, encreased by craft, fed by credulity and lying wonders, appeared in hosts, covered countries, darkened and subdued them, at last engrossed them; always raising devils and terrors, always exorcising them, yet never suffering them to be laid: since a final conquest of *Satan* would have finished the lucrative and important trade. An end of the enemy would have put an end to the army: he was therefore growing every day stronger, tho' they were every day routing him, yet every day magnifying his power, and the dreadful increase of his empire.

Equally

Equally politic was their conduct about judgments. It was they who foretold them, thence they were prophets! an exalted character: it was they only who could deprecate and avert them: this was a miracle, and it was they who worked it. What could be more god-like? Was it any marvel that men so divine, controuled all men? and that holding mankind by the strongest ties, their hopes and fears, they governed mankind, and gained the wealth of the world; another powerful means of swaying it? To secure their importance, or retrieve their sinking credit, they need only raise some public panic, or improve it when it was already raised; a blazing star, a hurricane, weather too hot or too moist, markets very low, or very high, were fertile subjects for declamation and denunciation, a manifest warning to reverence the friars, and a divine rebuke for not doing it enough. Heaven was in wrath whenever they were, and there was no way of pacifying heaven, but by pacifying them: then they opened their insuring office, and warranted public safety and exemption.

I have heard of one of these declaiming heralds, who having lost some apples, scolded his parish for six Sundays successively, and in

every sermon threatened them with some angry judgment from the Lord, unless they averted it by discovering the prophane robber of his orchard. And if the good man had not been preferred to a richer living, it was thought the same zeal might have animated many more sermons. His eloquence and terrors had already so prevailed, that many of the good wives were earnest with their husbands to leave that wicked parish, just ready to be swallowed up. He had before given a specimen of his prophetic or denouncing spirit against a young gentlewoman in a neighbouring village, once very comely in her person, but afterward terribly marked with the small pox. The good man declared it to be a judgment upon her for her pride. The doctor had courted her in her bloom, and was refused. A reverend doctor in *Nottinghamshire*, when the distemper amongst the cattle raged most there, and all over the county, yet saw the cows in his parish swept away by a particular judgment, for that the farmers would not pay him more tithes than were due to him, and had cast him at the assizes. He observed it particularly befalling a farmer who had lost six cows more than any of the rest; for that he had been the ring-leader in the opposition. He forgot to
remember

remember that the farmer had more cows than any other parishioner.

The *Scotch* covenanters, an hundred years ago, were for ever perceiving judgments falling upon the *malignants*, that is, all who differed from their peevish divinity, and narrow politics. *The covenant* was the cry, and wherever the covenant did not prevail, the saints saw nothing but irreligion and universal prophaneness. *The danger of the church* was a cry like it, and followed by all virulence, slander, and a call for divine judgments. Both those cries are now despised, but new ones will every now and then be arising.

Do loose books swarm? So do, or may, books against them. Let books answer books. Is there any other way of answering? The press is open; so is the law which punishes unlawful books. Pains and penalties only would be remedies worse than the disease, and destroy all books at last. The clergy have all encouragement, all advantages; great and exclusive advantages, laws, revenues, and learning; they engross the pulpit, and furnish an army of answerers. It would disgrace them to get all books restrained, and none to be read but their own. Besides, another

law would still be wanting against all places of resort, coffee-houses, the *Exchange*, the *Park*, and at last, another against speech and conversation. Enthusiasts armed and let loose, and the most raging persecution, even the fires of the inquisition, which is only a higher degree of persecution, could not effect such a thorough reformation. But popish priests, and those who are like them, find nothing too high or impracticable, to gratify their spirit, whenever their forwardness is piqued; not power without bounds, nor flames and punishment without mercy.

Does it not reflect some scandal upon the clergy to complain of infidelity, with such infinite succours and champions for orthodoxy? If writings be false, truth will confound them; if absurd, reason will expose them. I hate all immoral writings, as I do all false and immoral sermons. Surely, there have been many such; and I have heard of times, when the immorality of the pulpit has been glaring: it has done more harm; it must have done more, than any infidel productions amongst the mistaught vulgar can do. Were *Sacheverel's* mad mob, or the mad man at the head of the mob, ever suspected of infidelity? No; they were poisoned by mad sermons against peace and dissenters, and lived in the constant practice of drunkenness. It

was not infidelity that filled the high-church rabble with gin, and the streets with swearing. Drinking and swearing are not the vices of dissenters; some of them have been discovered and abused for being dissenters, because they refused to drink and swear. Is not this a remark worthy the attention of the bishops and clergy?

Perhaps the greatest good that *Laud* and his brethren ever did to religion, was, that by their headlong rage against conscience, they multiplied puritans, and by preaching against law, roused patriots to defend law; and thus saved the state, whilst they laboured to destroy it. If these prelates had been infidels, and preached infidelity, they could have made no converts (for the people had an opposite turn) and consequently could have done little hurt; but, as furious zealots and time-servers, they brought upon the nation the heaviest national curses, oppression, misery, and exile, and made war upon civil and religious liberty.

Few men oppose the truths of religion, or opinions really pious; but all men, who esteem truth and sense, will strive to hinder the false masks and disguises of religion, senseless systems of rituals, and incredible mysteries,

ries, from being imposed for religion. And for such virtuous and laudable endeavours, the best men are branded with infidelity by hypocrites; the eternal principles of truth and liberty, are called atheism, and the maintaining such principles, blasphemy. Instances of this would be endless. The thing is notorious, and ever has been; as it is, that for the highest publick blessing, misrepresented and blackened by bigots and craftsmen, the public hath been threatened with divine vengeance, especially for the revolution, and the act of toleration, religion and conscience secured, and the state restored.

There can be no certainty that there is any religion in a country, where none but one is suffered: for all men, and the worst men, may comply with it; but where all religions are tolerated, one of them is likely to be the true one, at least the true one has access there. Conscience and sincerity are the true criterions and trial of religion. Whoever annoys the priests any where, is sure to be an infidel. Enthusiasm and imposture are more pernicious to religion than infidelity, at least the infidelity commonly imputed. He who allows others to think and pray as they list, will hurt no man for his thinking and praying, however different from
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the mode; he who would hurt any man for so differing, is a bad member of society, and would distress it if he could.

All that differ from a bigot, even in whims, and grimaces, are obnoxious to his frowns and detraction; nay, often consigned to *Tophet*. He sets up a standard of belief and forms, and whoever do not blindly submit to it, are marked with bad names; that of *infidels* and *deists* is a current calumny.

We live in an age of light, and consequently of inquiry; an age of liberty, consequently of knowledge. No marvel the age is vilified by narrow and designing men, railed at for incredulity, and menaced with judgments.

The *French* clergy, and the deluded bigots their friends and followers, saw divine vengeance just impending over *France*, for the damning sin of the reformation, and growth of the *Hugonots*, and ascribed to those causes every public calamity, even the calamities of their own bringing. Every event salutary to the kingdom, passed with these madmen for a curse, and every curse of the pope, inferred the curse of God; and they paid their court to the almighty by sacrificing

crificing men. For all bigots would be persecutors, and all persecutors are champions for human sacrifice.

The *Hugonots* too, thought the crying national sins called for a divine visitation; but it was only for the sins of the *French* clergy, their worldly pursuits, the turpitude of their lives, and their implacable spirit.

The cities of *London* and *Westminster*, doubtless abound in vice, lewdness, licentiousness and luxury; so do other, indeed all, great cities. Wherever there is wealth, it will always be abused, and men will riot when they can, even when they are little able. Continual ill examples, and their own wanton inclinations, will be continually prompting them; and in a free country no restraints will be found sufficient; nor can the most arbitrary government extinguish corrupt nature, without extinguishing society.

Here in *England* we want not restraining laws, fines, and stocks, for drunkards and swearers; pillories, jails, and gibbets, for theft and fraud; as also for unnatural pollution, an enormity shocking to nature, expensive and ruinous, and generally abhorred.

Even without laws, all vices bring certain retribution, even in this world: distress and poverty follow idleness and extravagance, as infirmities and pain do debauchery. Disgrace attends knavery; every enormity has its checks, and, what ought to be the strongest of all, we have the ties and terrors of religion; we have a numerous clergy, nobly endowed to preach religion, which flourishes most, and perhaps is only safe, where every one enjoys his own.

The teachers too of religion are so many, so endowed, and so protected, that perhaps it becomes them the least of all men, to be inveighing against the morals of the age, as it may probably imply some failure in themselves. Where they are sober, diligent, humble, and disinterested, wedded to souls, and not to the world, liberal, charitable, patient, and meek, they must soon see glorious fruits of so many virtues, and so much labour. A minister who hardly ever sees his flock, is not likely to mend them by railing at them once a week. The influence of his conduct will be stronger than that of his preaching.

The country fellow had greatly the advantage of his parson, who having just preached a *Jacobite* sermon, and seeing the fellow in the church porch, charged him harshly with some breach of promise. "Sir, says the clown, I have kept my word, as well as you have kept your oath: did not you swear to King *George*?" A dreadful reproach; the more so, as the parson was constant and loud against the growth of irreligion and impiety, yet had committed the greatest that a man can commit! I hope such crying examples are very rare. The time has been when there were many such, since the revolution. What could be more provoking heaven to visit the land with judgments, if heaven poured down its judgments promiscuously?

Were such men fit to combat popery, to recover strayed protestants, or to inveigh against any vice, or sin, when they had committed the highest, the sin of perjury, and lived in the course of that sin?

Can loose books be so crying a crime? We have had many such; many from the hands of clergymen. This was boldly asserted by a reverend doctor in convocation,
even

even in the good reign of Queen *Anne*. His words were strong and remarkable: "With
 " what conscience can we complain of the
 " licentiousness of the lay-writers, when if all
 " the books against religion and the scrip-
 " tures, against the laws of the land, and
 " the constitution of the church, were pack-
 " ed together, I would undertake to pick
 " out the worst, by pointing at those writ-
 " ten by clergymen, even of the most pro-
 " fligate drollery, as well as most serious
 " heresy?"

How glad must we all be to find from a great authority, that though guilt and profligacy, and bad books prevail amongst us, they are all confined to the laity, and the clergy are clear of all, utterly blameless, and assiduous in their duty?

The books chiefly complained of were mostly imported from abroad, or clandestinely printed at home. So were the pictures, especially from *Italy*, where lewdness and priestcraft have so long reigned: the clergy there are not so pure and pious as ours are. Here these detestable performances were sold by stealth, and some of the venders taken up and punished. Such books and pictures never fell in my way, though it seems they might,

might, with some pains, have been found. I cannot think any virtuous man would take such pains. I know some magistrates who were inclined to seize and prosecute them, but could not come at them. It is plain some very reverend persons have fully perused them, doubtless to learn how detestable they were.

Brothels are not confined to this country: They are found in all states, and even tolerated in some of the best, to prevent evils still greater. Haunts of idleness, and places of pleasure are found in all great cities, and encouraged in all rich cities, yet do not always invite earthquakes. The two late shocks were not more felt at *Ranalagh* and *White's*, than in the *Abbey*. Extravagant gaming deserves to be exposed, but will not, I hope, bring an earthquake upon such who do not game extravagantly. The same may be said of other diversions. Even the multiplicity of churches and religious houses, have been frequent subjects of complaint and declamation. In truth, seditious sermons to inflame, and false doctrines to mislead the people, and bad examples from holy characters, wherever they happen, are matter of just sorrow and indignation. A declaiming angry pen can never want a theme, even in favour of the

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the popish lent in a protestant country! Nor can the bishops and clergy always escape the upbraidings of a warm haranguer. How many eloquent invectives were made after the revolution by the nonjuring doctors against all the churchmen who took the oaths and kept them? (for all the Jacobites were not nonjurors). The same raging declaimers were daily threatening judgments upon the nation, for the national submission to the government; and the earthquake after the revolution was reckoned a judgment for it. To the conforming clergy, who still remained disaffected, the same angry orators gave great quarter.

The increase of popery is a great and growing evil, to the misfortune of protestants, and to the disgrace of papists, who buy converts at so much a head. But this evil doth not lie at the door of the laity only. Much of the remedy depends upon the clergy, their diligence and doctrine. They must drop all the selfish tenets, all the wild claims of popery, whatever is derived from popery, or resembles popery. The contrary conduct hath had a natural effect, kept popery in countenance, and poisoned protestants. Whoever would curb conscience, and denies toleration to conscientious opinions, is a papist; who-
ever

ever maintains presbyterians, or any sect of protestants, to be worse than papists, is an advocate for popery. The principles and discipline of the nonjurors, are directly and essentially popish; their jargon of apostolic succession, their keys of heaven and hell, their auricular confession, and absolution, their independent priestly power, coercive over conscience, their conferring the Holy Ghost, their antic postures and ceremonies, and train of pious buffoonry.

He who defends or favours those nonjuring positions and claims, which are literally popish, is unfit to expose popery, or recover perverted protestants. These latter being chiefly the lowest of the people, wretchedly lodged, it requires great patience and zeal, and some drudgery, to visit them in cellars and garrets, stables and stalls, to converse with them, and instruct them. I hope there are some, as there ought to be many, who cheerfully submit to the toil.

Some money in charity may likewise be wanting, and there are churchmen who can well spare it. A late venerable prelate, a true and tried protestant, told a friend of his upon this subject, that it cost him four hundred pounds a year to lessen the pope's subjects
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in England: he told a story at the same time of one of his brethren, very zealous, but very fordid, who preaching once upon the duty of bishops and pastors to preach and convert, one of his hearers said humourously, " I believe my lord would save souls, if it cost
" him nothing."

To conclude. I doubt, my good friends and neighbours, whatever iniquities and errors are found, and whatever want of reformation, you must be chiefly your own reformers. You may easily see your faults, and your own interest and ease are continual motives to remove them. The example of some reclaimed from vice and folly, will have a strong effect upon others, make many ashamed, many afraid to pursue shameful and ruinous courses, in the face of neighbours just reclaimed from them. Every one will find the sweet benefit of a good life, which being seen by all, must encourage all who see it. Act righteously and fear God, and then you need not fear earthquakes. Shew your fear of God, by fearing to offend him in hurting one another. Be honest and virtuous, and you are sure to please him. Your gracious creator cannot send down such vengeance as makes no distinction between guilt and innocence. Certainly you
are

are not all guilty, at least equally guilty; but as crimes are contagious, and as debauchery and riot may have hurtful consequences, even upon such as abhor them, and upon the whole community, it is incumbent upon every man to curb and discourage them.

It is therefore your duty and interest to make the office of the magistrate useless, or less wanted; your vigilance for the public is vigilance for yourselves: and then great officers may be useless without being pernicious; and so may great churchmen be decent and industrious; there are many such amongst you: would to God you were all so! The good are security to the bad, and will find their account in correcting and reclaiming them.

Swearing and imprecations are shocking habits, a disgrace to society, and make men worse than savages: they are proofs of impiety and gross morals (so is drunkenness:) surely they require a speedy cure, and every man is called and interested to work a cure. Let every one mend as many as he can; and in order to it, mend himself first. Without such a disposition, and such zeal, sermons,

mons, invectives, and even laws, will be ineffectual.

You of course frequent such preachers as you find most edifying. Shew that you are edified by them in the sobriety and integrity of your lives. A good life is the sure proof of a good man; without it, pious professions, repeated devotions, and all the parade of ordinances, furnish no solid proofs; for the worst men, and great hypocrites, may act the same part, and wearing a religious mask, may pass for religious men.

It is far from being an affront to religion to try it by morality, which is the law of nature; and the law of nature is a perfect law, as many able writers and divines have amply shewn, particularly your present bishop in a sermon preached many years ago, before the society for propagating the gospel in foreign parts: he there avers, and thinks he has proved, that *christianity is as old as the creation*, and, when it appeared, was no more than a republication of the law of nature.

Agreeably therefore to his lordship's doctrine, whatever is not warranted by reason, ought not to be received as religion. A noble

principle! which had it been attended to, would have done infinite good to the world, by preventing infinite evil in it. Mahometanism, and all other impostures, enthusiasts, crazy systems, and false zeal for them; that zeal, which is always keenest when blindest, monks, persecution, and spiritual tyranny; all lying prophecy, false alarms, and pious panics from the common works of nature

Upon an earthquake in queen *Elizabeth's* time, the bishops applying to her, to appoint a general fast, had a negative answer, and her reason for it: she told them, "her people were frightened enough already."

During an earthquake in *Catanea* (a city in *Sicily*, destroyed by it) the inhabitants, crowding first into the street, then into the fields, were persuaded by the priests and friars to return, and repair to the churches, particularly to the great one dedicated to *St. Agathe*, and to pay their devotion to the reliques of the saint, for deliverance. The poor people did so, and all perished, above eleven thousand, most of them under the ruins of the church. Had they followed their first guides, their eyes and their senses, they might have saved their lives. The monks were then certainly fatal guides, and always are when their guidance is

not warranted by common sense and reason,
more especially when it contradicts both.

Let us all live good lives, and then we need
not fear death nor earthquakes.

I am,

My good friends and neighbours,

With affectionate zeal,

Your sincere humble servant,

A LAYMAN.

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**There is no superstition in Wisdom,
And no wisdom in superstition.**

A SEASONABLE
A P O L O G Y

F O R

^a Father F R A N C I S

C H A P L A I N t o

Prince ^b P R E T T Y M A N

T H E

C A T H O L I C,

But now lying in Durance under the
Suspicion of secret INIQUITY.

In which are occasionally inserted some weighty arguments for calling a general Council of the Nonjuring Doctors, for the further propagation of Ceremonies, Unity, Dissention, and Anathemas; and for the better Improvement of Exorcism and *March-Beer*.

Noſtem peccatis, & fraudibus objice Nubem.

Horat. Ep.

First printed in the Year 1723.

^a Francis Atterbury, late bishop of Rochester.

^b The Pretender.

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P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201
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A SEASONABLE

A P O L O G Y.

IT is not every one that is dubbed a knight, but every man ought to have the spirit of knighthood in him, and valourously do all the good he can. In this sense I myself am a considerable hero; my pen is my spear, my inkhorn is my arms, and for my crest, I bear a burning tobacco pipe, with this dreadful motto, ——— which in a time of conspiracies is not safe to be uttered. I live in a lonely room, frightful and high, and when there is any fun, I have my full share of it; I wish I could not boast the like civility from the rain. Here I spend my time in the defence of the distressed, and in obstinate fasting. All the unhappy are under my protection, and myself among the rest; invisible to all the world, but a certain hobgoblin, who will be mentioned in the beginning of the next paragraph. I have already half finished my apologetic dissertation upon *Sally Salisbury*, with a manifesto in favour of the *Sophy of Persia*; as also an elegy upon the defeat and losses, and mournful flight of

the northern hector the ensuing campaign; and moreover, Lord N——'s last dying speech and confession; likewise an amphibious speech for a noble lord and commoner; a speech of two sentences and a half; besides a certain general's lamentation for his disgrace next *Michaelmas*: to which is added, an appendix upon politics, embroidery, and good eating. There is too this minute upon my table a quire of paper close writ, entitled, *A vindication of a great dead minister, from the unjust calumnies of some ill informed Jacobites, as if he had been their enemy.* N. B. This vindication is clear and full; as is likewise my letter to Sir *John Blunt*, proving that himself and his brethren of the *South-Sea*, though reduced by the parliament to great poverty, will suddenly be full as rich as they were before. But I am particularly fond of my advice to the pretender, recommending to him *John Barber* and *Mrs. Manley* for his first ministers, *Mr. Alex. Pope* for publishing and correcting the memoirs of his reign, and a certain university for a dry nurse for his son. I shall only add here two more performances of mine, *viz.* a consolatory epistle to those who have profitable places and small salaries, with a reproof to such as have free quarters upon certain offices; and a word of comfort to the public creditors four years hence.

All these are elaborate pieces, and gasping to see the light. But Mr. *Curl*, who let me have half a crown upon my note this morning, besides six pennyworth of paper, insisted upon my dispatching this jobb first, and invited me to dinner. There was no answering this argument, and therefore in hopes of a dozen meals, and half a dozen editions, with a joyful heart, and a watering mouth, I set about my work. Mr. *Curl*, who is an eminent critic in authors, not to mention his equal skill in procuring them C—— and a cure for C—— told me, that a haughty author new in town that overlooks his brethren, began his fame with an apology of this kind, an apology which happily degraded him from the summit of the house to a first floor; a downward preferment, which I must aspire to, and would willingly exchange my long acquaintance with the cold tiles, for the comfortable smell of a warm kitchen.

Pray, says Mr. *Curl* by way of encouragement to me, *did you not know two secretaries once upon a time who became considerable ministers from the pure merit, the one of writing ballads, and the other of singing them? Sir, you have as keen a genius as either of them, and for your external conduct, it is in*

your own power to sneak as humbly as Joe, and to make mouths as successfully as Jammy, whenever you shall think fit to put forth those laudable and thriving talents.

I knew all this before; but as it is a piece of flattery, it weighed more with me than my own knowledge. For as bishop *Beveridge* says, with his usual force, *O what a bad thing is flattery! O what a bad thing flattery is!* But I doubt he borrowed this from *St. Chrysofom's* persuasive to humility in the laity, or from the late pious *Mr. Nelson's* devout manual against eating breakfasts on *Fridays*.

I now proceed to offer to my countrymen some considerations in behalf of *father Francis*. And first let it be tenderly considered, that a conspiracy without a bishop in it, would have been a thing incredible. A plot without a *zany* is a contradiction, and no man who judges by history and experience but would laugh at it. We have heard of miracles done once in seventeen hundred years, and the appearance of a phoenix once in six hundred; and both are believed, because they sometimes happen; but the other would be a miracle beyond all belief. That what has never
happened

happened since the creation, will never happen to the end of it, is according to all a probable opinion, and according to some a certainty. We often find that satan's work does not thrive half so successfully as when it is carried on in the name of the lord; nor is that name ever successfully used and abused, but by his sworn and forsworn — Some grave divines and deep casuists maintain, that the father of lies endeavours to ape the father of light in many things, and works by second causes; and lo, cry they, *the devil has his deputies and ministers too!* by which they mean his — To prove this hierarchy of satan's, they assert, that all God's ministers, in every church which differs with theirs, are the devil's ministers; and these ministers say the same of them; and some too (particularly the quakers) are wicked enough to believe both, especially when they see so many scripture-proofs pretended to on each side for the said doctrine. Others keep themselves neuter till they see the two heritages fairly parted, and therefore go from day to day to their grave, alas! without any extreme unction at all.

But beside all these advantages, which the above reverend casuists compliment satan with,

(whether as a friend or an enemy, I leave himself to judge) and by which they seem to make him more than an equal match for *Ec.* — They likewise hold, and bring proofs for it; that he has numerous female deputies in every corner of the universe: for what are witches but the devil's embassadresses, the zealous pastorelles, who feed his familiars and his daily negotiatrices to win people to him, and bring in his harvest? For this end, he has an old withered journey-woman or two in every district. The learned *Jane Wenham* was one of them: she was tried some years ago at *Hertford*, for holding a schismatical conventicle of cats and gossips, who were great heretics, and went a caterwauling from the church. The neighbouring soothsayers were the prosecutors; for as the proverb says, two of a — can never agree. Let us remark two marvellous things on this head: first, how very cheap satan maintains this branch of his administration: their only equipage is a broomstick, and their only revenue is now and then a cold treat in the church-yard. Marvellous sacrilege, that satan and his haggard curatesses, should prophane a place dedicated to better purposes! we see they thrive accordingly, and are never the fatter; whereas the rightful owners are in rare case, and as plump as you

you please. Secondly, let us remark the marvellous diligence and success of these lean and unhired doctresses, even according to the testimony of their own casuists, who are daily lamenting, as well as combating the devil's great and growing power; which looks like a confession, that though they themselves have good artillery, and the best cause, yet satan has very formidable forces; perhaps, because they are not over-fed: a remark which furnishes an instructive moral. This puts me in mind of a saying of the famous *Daniel Burges*; *Sirs, says he, what trow you may be the cause of Belzebub's prevailing interest in the world? Why I will tell you: the greatest part of the world maintains an army against him, of whom he standeth not in awe. Think ye that he is to be bullied with a Lord rebuke thee, from such fellows as they? No, no——it becometh none but a christian to take the old victor by the beard, and kick him down stairs.*

Behold we here likewise two probable reasons why satan's wizards do not, like our non-juring sort, intermeddle in plots and conspiracies: First, because the other sort save them the trouble, and appropriate that work particularly to themselves, with unrivalled industry and zeal. Secondly, because these, his sycophants, are eminently modest as to their secular

cular claims, and even silent about them; they do not pretend to the riches and dominion of the globe, nor even to revenues and dignities: nor do they publicly curse and swear at those who refuse to surrender them their wealth and their wives, and to hold their stirrup.

From all this reasoning, I think it is plain that the plot, how fully soever proved, would never have been satisfactorily proved, had not my client been at the head of it: some gentry of that faculty in popish countries, have been such regular and constant combiners against the peace of states, that all considerable and extensive treasons have been almost engrossed by them; and lay-traitors only admitted collaterally, and as accessaries: nay, matters of blood and assassination, the glory of the whole scheme, both in the projection and execution, has been generally theirs; and all this in a succession so uninterrupted, that plotting seems to be of clerical institution, and secured to them by a right of possession: nor is such a claim more wicked and absurd than some others of theirs.

In truth, those of them who, either abroad or at home, are acted by this spirit, (how many they are, let others determine) have in effect set up an office for licensing rebellions;

for what else means their haranguing and inflaming their votaries to be rebels; and then not only absolving them from the crimes of perjury and rebellion, but making those horrible villanies, marks of sanctity and orthodoxy? Is not this a declaration, that virtue and vice derive their existence from the fiat and good pleasure of these gentlemen? Are not all the enemies to the establishment, and all the scorers of oaths, their staunchest friends? And do they not mark as their enemies, all who adhere to it? And is not reverence for an oath, a mark of disaffection to them; and an honest conscience a proof of schism? It is certain, that the christian religion lays indispensable ties upon the minds of believers: now what sort of religion must they have; what sort of believers must they be, who mock and break all the bonds of christianity? They have a religion *pro re nata*, an occasional religion, which varies with the weather and their passions; a religion which prompts and warrants all ungodliness, and damns all piety and common sense!

Their reasoning is like their religion; the reasoning of an almanack, never two days the same, or steadily wrong. Once it was downright damnation to rebel, nay to resist upon any pretence whatsoever; now it is damnable

not to rebel without any pretence at all. Formerly kings were vice-gods, and to be obeyed and revered with submission, and resignation due only to God, and had they honoured their maker but as devoutly as they did some princes, who resembled a very different being, they would have been no scandal to christianity: but now a days they exceed porters in the brutishness of their language and behaviour toward a prince, whose greatest crime is, that he thinks that his lay subjects have as good a right as themselves to be used like freemen; and that the unsearchable heart of man is only subject to the cognizance of the infallible tribunal of God, and not to any angry faction of pedants, who would make the authority of God truckle to their paltry ambition, and sacrifice reason to delusion, and religion and peace to grimace and fury.

If the liberties of the nation were in danger, as I hope they are not, (from him I am sure they are not) yet still it would be impudence in them to hold up a finger in their defence; they who have eternally been a dead weight upon liberty, and at all times, made formal and professed, and canonical libels against it, concerted registered libels! as to King *James*, their behaviour to him is no exception;

ception; for meddling with *Aaron's* bells, they rung him out of the kingdom; so much more prevailing with them was rage, than the fear of their own anathema and damnation, so frequently denounced against resistance.

But this, perhaps, is foreign from the task which I have undertaken, to write an apology for father *Francis*, and therefore I beg, secondly, that it may be considered in his behalf, that there are dissenters in *England*, a sort of people he could never bear; and since the king and the two houses, would not in duty destroy them, he conceived a zeal in his soul for destroying those who would not destroy them: *D—— me*, says the captain of a man of war, *if the admiralty will not hang my rogue of a lieutenant, by G——, I will sink the ship*. Dissenters were not hanged; and my client found himself provoked, that men of such plain and clumsy behaviour, who made no fine bows to the *east*, and approached it in no birthright garments and furtout shirts, were suffered to eat and drink, and live as well as he who was a great beau in devotion, and the very pink of courtesy toward a place which our homilies very uncivilly call *superstitious*. It was indeed a diverting shew to see with how many pretty airs, crosses, cringes, forms, and coopees, he acted

acted at the house-warming of a certain new building at *Greenwich*, and made it thereby holy. Whereas the dissenters were enemies to the mode, and met in pieces of ground, which, for want of holy water, remained still in a state of paganism.

Thirdly, my client had taken the oaths, and this is no uncommon reason for breaking them. There is a reverend society of men in a neighbouring church, whose authority has never wanted weight with many who pretend to be of ours: they hold the doctrine of probability, that is, that any man may with a safe conscience do what any grave doctor holds to be lawful. Now an eminent high churchman has declared himself very fully in this point; for, says he,

*Oaths are but words, and words but wind,
Too feeble instruments to bind. ———*

And again

*He that imposes an oath, makes it,
Not he who for convenience takes it.
And how then can a man be said
To break an oath he never made?*

Fourthly,

Fourthly, my client had got the keys of both worlds at his girdle: and it was strange, if having them both in his power, he could not make bold with a small part of one of them. It would be as if a monarch who had all *Europe*, could not dispose of *Brentford*. My greatest wonder is, that my client cannot with this master-key of his, open the sublunary lock that holds him fast in durance, especially when they say, even witches and necromancers can do it.

Fifthly, my client has an indelible character; a character which, his holiness says, will render the priest free, secure, and invulnerable, though the man may be imprisoned and degraded. We must distinguish betwixt plain *Francis*, and doctor *Francis*. The former *Francis* is really a human creature, and subject to all the infirmities of humanity; but the said doctor *Francis* is not of earthly mould, but of a contexture and quality altogether mysterious and incomprehensible to mortal understanding. We must therefore carry the same distinction along with us, when we judge of his guilt and punishment. As a *Person*, no doubt, he may be criminal, but as he is a representative of ——— and all that, it is atheism to charge him

him with guilt, let him be as black and as guilty as he will. His head may be taken off, but the indelible stain (which stain is invisible) can never be wiped off. But because this doctrine, however orthodox and prevailing, may seem difficult to minds not thus illuminated, I will explain it beyond a possibility of cavilling. Let us suppose, if you please, an indelible clock; that is to say, a clock which cannot be unlocked. You may indeed take away its weights, stop its wheels and its motion, and prevent its going, and make it entirely useless, yet still it is a true clock, though it performs none of the offices of a clock. Here now is a familiar illustration, which puts this matter in a true light, and out of dispute: Thus my client, if he is degraded, may be a very good B——p of the universal church, though he cannot be one in any one part of it. Just as a soldier may be a soldier, though he never go to war, nor does any duty. What can be plainer than this?

Fortified with this indelible character, his aforefaid holiness holds, that any person may forswear, plot, and rebel, and assassinate, and commit whatever sins he will, and yet be *quo ad hoc* perfectly sinless; or if a spot now and then stick, he could scour it off in a moment by a certain sovereign wash of absolution.

He

He may be a traitor without lessening the privileges, and reputation of a saint. Could mortal man have more tempting qualifications for perjury and treason?

*Possess'd of absolute dominions
 O'er people's purses and opinions ;
 And trusted with the double keys
 Of heaven, and their warehouses ;
 And cast in fitter model for
 The present use of church and war !*

In the opinion of casuists abroad, a popish bishop may be a very good and unexceptionable bishop, let the man be ever so filthy ; so that though he may be unqualified by his crimes for every office of civil society, yet he can never be disabled by the worst of crimes from serving at the altar. *Complebantur templa pessimis servitiorum.*

Behold in the following lines, what is said of the popish clergy.

— *Hoc omnes tanquam ad vivaria currunt,
 Quis res nulla domi, —*

*Quos — aut plagosi dextra magistri
 Territat, aut legum timor, aut quos dedita somno
 Exercet nullis lethæa ignavia curis :*

*Deinde quibus gelidus cum præcordia sanguis
Obstitit ingenio; quos sacro a fonte camænæ,
Quos Pallas Phœbusque fugat; quos siæere torvo
Aspicit infauſto volucer tegeaticus ortu.*

*Hi cum intruggeræ spatium trivere juventæ
Musarum in studiis frustra; jam mollibus umbris
Sic fracti, nec bello pati, nec ducere remos,
Nec terram incurvo norunt suspendere aratro:
Hic sibi desidicæ portum atque ignobilis atî
Esse rati, huc properant. ——— Franciscanus.*

*A worthless fry of cubs, in quest of food,
From orders seek a lazy livelihood;
The spawn of beggars, wanting bread and name,
The refuse of the school, the hangman's claim,
Sluggards in social life the la'ty's shame,
The oafs of nature and the muses scorn,
Daom'd dunces by their stars; in dulness born;
Profane companions for the sacred nine,
And only accomplish'd for their trade divine:
All these (in books mispent their youthful years,)
Nor hinds, nor scholars now, but idlers,
And drones for life, unmeet for war or trade,
To ply the oar, or the stern foe t'invade;
A slothful refuge from the altar find,
And fatten on the sins of humankind.*

So that according to this character of the church of Rome, the king of kings is easily pleased in the choice of his ministers; and

and accepts of such as most kings would reject : they serve him accordingly. Their most important business often lies still for a bottle and a game at backgammon. Nor dares any man amongst them, take the part of the master against these his privy counsellors, for fear of being reckoned an atheist. For whoever reproves the priests, has denied the faith, though he has the bible on his side ; a book which is full of threatnings against laymen ; but is never angry forsooth, at the clergy for the time being, or to come. And in this respect, the antient prophets are according to them discourteous old grumblers : they make the priests of old the fadest dogs, and liars, and cheats, and whoremasters in their generation, and yet never prophesy as if the world were often to expect much better. St. Paul too tells us of ravenous wolves of this sort in his time, and heavily complains of the reverend impostors, who were to come after him, and would be right or wrong his successors. I hope he did not mean my client *Francis*, and a few nonjur-ing doctors ; for I am sure he could not intend to blemish the reverend *Jacobites* of our time ; for whom the fathers of old had a particular affection, as you may see in the works of the reverend doctor ——— and the reverend Mr. ——— According to them, the said antient fathers fully explain and vindicate the

the

the new discipline and ceremonies of the non-jurors, and are sadly out of humour with the dissenters. Nothing especially can be finer than their invective against *John Calvin*, and their defence of king *Charles I.* But I am still more charmed with their vindication of white sleeves, and of good perferments: and with their exhortation for restoring the church lands, and for bowing to the east: nor is their asserting divine right in the priests to the peerage, less remarkable. The encomium of the fathers upon Dr. *Hickes's* litany, and others like it, is really fine; and so is their recommendation of the repeal of the statute of *Mortmain*, and their plea of excommunication for a groat. What can any dissenter say to their dissertation against extempore prayers, and praising God without book, and to their many rules for stewing plumbs, and keeping *Christmas*? What zealous son of this same church can forbear to mention, with exultation, the severe reproof given by the fathers to Dr. *Hoadly*, as the same is set forth at large by a reverend dean. The satires made by *f——t*, and *f——t* and *f——t* and *f——t* and *f——t* in folio, upon round-heads and the modern whigs are likewise admirable, with their curious distinctions about rebellion, and swearing and forswearing, recommended to a venerable nonsitting

Assembly*, whom I need not mention, the same being out of *England*. The apology of the fathers for the morals of the sacred brotherhood of the catholic free-masons, is well worth reading; as are moreover the marks laid down by them for distinguishing their genuine successors, whom they have dubbed all great lords and princes, endowing them at the same time with high-crowned hats, and trusting them more especially with the keys of the cellar. (N. B.) *There is nothing said about their resembling their founder.*

Sixthly, A certain great prince † would not put himself into father *Francis's* hands, who perhaps had a mind to enrich the kalendar with another martyr, by the same counsels and measures that father *William* ‡, about four-score years ago, had followed before him; and since he could not make him a martyr one way, he was resolved to do it another. No prince who would leave the laity any thing, but the leavings of the clergy, was a nursing father of the church, to father *Francis's* mind. The late reverend Mr. *Lesley*, in his book of the divine right of tythes, in answer to this question, says, *Of what species of our*

* The Convocation.

† His Majesty.

‡ Archbishop *Laud*.

substance we are to give tithe? Even of all that thou hast, quoth he, without excepting one's wife. But besides all this tithe of bread, and bed, and beer, and custard, and all that a man has; Mr. *Lesley* made a modest demand of all the good lands in the kingdom, for the temporal good of the clergy, and the spiritual good of the laity; so that his way of feeding us lay-sheep, was to take all our food and pasture from us, and put them into his own belly. I hope he did not mean that we were to have all our good things hereafter; but for him and his brethren, their only hope was in this life, and that having their only portion upon earth, they were to be the only happy men in it. So that here was a divine right in Mr. *Lesley's* clergy to starve us, and woe to the prince or subject who hindered them. I hope my client was not entirely in this holy scheme.

Seventhly, The Convocation has not lately sat, and lay-parliaments have made laws, and given money without them. This pierced the soul of my client, who thought all authority upon earth, nay, above the earth and below it, ought to be vested in a parliament of priests, or derived from them: and that when he swore to the present government, he swore to a ——— and that therefore his swear-
ing

ing was ——— and his forswearing *ex foro conscientiae*, &c.

We have a new church risen up amongst us, which separates from the established church, and sets up against her, and which holds all oaths to the present government to be unlawful. These nonjuring doctors do not think it convenient to meet together to rectify abuses, though it is said that there are manifold uses of their meeting, and that much remains yet to be done by them. They have already indeed furnished us with a system of their faith, called *Dr. Hickes's* thirty-nine articles; but they have omitted a great many other things equally necessary to be done, and which require their meeting again in an holy synod. I shall mention some principal things.

First, there are many heretical opinions gone abroad amongst us, which require the cure and curses of the said meeting, or holy council. It is even maintained, and (*heu pudor, proh dolor!*) maintained by some of *Aaron's* own bairns, that laymen may make laws for the church, and bind the unbindable hosts of *Levi*; and that God may have a church where the priests have none: nay some are not ashamed to hold that *Quakers* may be saved, though they trust but in one saviour, and not at all in his deputies. I tremble at

the thought! But I doubt, if these profane principles go on, some may be bold enough to strike at another precious branch of their prerogative, and call in question their privilege of damning. Besides it is incredible how free-thinkers swarm; audacious free-thinkers, who do not fear the devil; and therefore are going to him; and therefore ought to be sent to him; and therefore the said council ought to sit.

But there is something beyond all this, which seems to call for their meeting. We yet want several offices to be composed for important purposes. Bells are put up in their separate churches as profanely, that is, with as little ceremony, as if they were put up in a hall to call folks to dinner. A form of benediction upon this occasion is *valde desiderata*, and the want of it much lamented. Let me reason with you, O ye reverend nonjuring fathers, upon this great occasion: why are you so neglectful of the state of your bells, which summon us to your spiritual assemblies and make such holy melody in our ears? Why hang they up thus unhallowed; they which are not the least part of your ghostly tools, and clerical gear? You consecrate coarse walls before you will enter therein, and bless dead earth before you will set foot thereon; are

are not bells of as good metal as stone and lime? And is a speechless floor, however sacred, more sacred than these sweet fingers of the steeple? In vain you make broad your hats, and short your perriwigs, and long your petticoats, if you sanctify not also your Bells! your other bells may go astray; but these never do.

Nor have we yet any office for the consecration of coffins and haunted houses. Hence the evil one often makes the dead to walk, and keeps possession of tenements which he never paid for. You, reverend sirs, you only can barricade our houses and our graves against this vile intruder, by words and holy water. For words without chrism, I doubt, make but an imperfect exorcism; else why does this old serpent still make bold to hold his nocturnal cabals in the very heart of your temples? This, sirs, merits your serious consideration, and a speedy cure. Therefore the said council ought to sit.

My next argument for it is this: *Lily's* grammar wants to be corrected, and is a province reserved for you; unless perhaps in a thing of that moment you might differ too much, and proceed to heats and anathemas about it, as a learned and venerable assembly

of clergymen once * did upon the same occasion.

Again, the said council ought to sit for the interest of uniformity, and for the instruction of taylor's. There is a shameful and schismatical variety in the gowns worn by non-juring priests, and indeed in other parts of their dress. Some wear prunella, some cloth, some silk, and some plain crape, like so many sectaries, or men of various faith. Nay, they are dissenters from each other in the shape of their gowns. Some have a great slit in their sleeve (which is a test of true orthodoxy) thro' which they shew a smart wrist, and a good quantity of their linen. Others bury their fists in their sleeve, a token of clumsy apostates. Some wear dark wigs, and some light, and have no manner of orthodox standard as to the size and stiffness of their bands and beavers. This is lamentable! and of ill example: For ought I know it may in your opinion be damnable! sure I am it is schismatical; and we all know the crying crime of schism; and the decency of unity and order. Fie, fie; *turpe est doctori*. Let us not with our own hands give such a deadly blow to uniformity, and thereby strengthen the arguments of fanatics against us. Let our unity

* The convocation in king Charles II's reign.

in hoods and caps be known unto all men. We know the dreadful war of an hundred years between two powerful and orthodox bodies of divines*, about the shape of their coul, a war in which it is said many souls perished, damnation being their chief and constant artillery. Prevent the horrible consequence! You often quote, and upon lesser occasions, St. Paul's advice for doing *all things in decency and in order*; which Saint Somebody would explain, *let your coifs and cassocks be all of a cut*; and if we must be uniform in bowing, let us be uniform in our covering of the backs that bow. Therefore the nonjuring council ought to meet.

Lastly, that venerable assembly ought to meet, that the *October* in their several counties may have time to grow stale.

I say nothing of the obvious necessity of a new translation of a certain book, the present translation being too plain, and much the same with that of *Geneva*: a thing not to be suffered. The prevalence too of carnal reason seems to call loudly for a check from such a holy council. People talk of human reason, and human judgment. Why, what are they? The only first guides, forsooth, that God has given us;

* *Dominicans and Franciscans.*

which is true, and yet nothing to the purpose. It is plain that our reason was not given us to be used, but to be submitted to them, and to be employed by them upon evident matters, which it cannot understand. But, cry some, that is impossible. And what if it be? Is it the less orthodox for that? *O tempora! O Blackmore!* Lend, O valorous and voluminous knight, O lend thy potent and poetical hand, and mow down with thy keen faulchion, with thy rapturous and sounding sabre, this uncircumcised reason, this daring and darling *Gath* of the *Philistines*, and of free-thinkers! Why sleepest thou over dry history? Why loiterest thou in cold narration, which yet thou dost animate and adorn with all the verdure of the bays, with all the sublimity of the *Delphian* God! When, lo! here is a subject worth thy poetical prowess; a subject fit only for a poet; a fight for thy imagination; and a bloodless field!

Evæ! recenti mens trepidat metu,

Plenoque Bacchi pectore turbidum

Latatur: Evæ! parce liber;

Parce, gravi metuende Thyrso ———

P O S T S C R I P T.

I BEG leave to trouble the reader with another argument in behalf of my client, though the same was not in my brief.

Father

Father *Francis* as he was already an holy man, had a mind to be more holy; and therefore grew a traitor to grow a saint: the most certain scale to mount the *Roman* calendar.

*Hac arte ——— ferox Becketus
Innixus arces attingit igneas ———*

The first step in that church, to rise to canonization, is to begin at the gallows, or by deserving them. The sure way there to become a lord lieutenant to almighty God, and a worker of miracles, is to be a determined enemy to mankind, a cheat and executioner for the church, a furious broker of ceremonies, a zealous maintainer of *occult qualities*, a great curser, and a great persecutor of common sense. He is to be a great advocate for devotion, and a warm promoter of damnation; a mighty man for chastity; but disallows the best means that preserve it, the honest means of matrimony. He is a prodigious declaimer against wealth, and a prodigious engrosser thereof: he avers that the church was built upon a rock, and that the gates of hell cannot prevail against her; and yet swears that she is in danger of tumbling at the sight of every small heretic; and if a poor taylor creeps into a barn to pray, he throws her into a mortal ague and convulsions. He preaches charity; but

but damns all moderation and forbearance. He is a professed orator for peace, and a trumpet for war. He preaches humility, and treads upon the necks of kings and kingdoms, He is the strongest loyalist in the world, and the most unbounded rebel. A mighty reasoner, and a mighty champion against reason; always scattering blessings and curses, and masses, and misery. He spiritually feeds you, and temporally starves you. He illuminates your understanding, and fills it with ignorance; and professes no weapon but the spiritual arm, which however wears a sword and buckler, and knocks down governments and nations. He tells you that human society cannot subsist without such as he; and to prove the same, is eternally throwing human society into poverty, chains, and desolation. To do good to the world he dispeoples it. He talks much of trust in God, and to shew how much he has of it himself, will rely upon God for nothing, but crams his nest with the wealth of the world, to prove and disprove his distrust in providence.

He is perpetually haranguing you into a good life; and to set you a good example, ridicules morality, and rails at it as the foolishest thing in the world. He damns you if you do not believe the bible; and damns you if
you

you read or understand it. He is ever appealing to your senses, and making them judges; but if you believe your senses, woe be to you; you have denied the faith, and are no christian. He is for ever proving mysteries to you, and for ever proving that they cannot be proved. *Ceremonies*, says he, *are very significant; and yet they are things indifferent*: yet you are damned if you omit them: though damnation, in my opinion, is no indifferent thing. Then he tells you that the bible is a wonderful instructive book, but wonderful unintelligible; and for your instruction, keeps it from you. *All your possessions*, quoth he, *are by divine right*; and as a demonstration thereof, holds out a secular parchment of human institution. He boasts of the daily miracles worked in his church to convince believers; for they never travel forth to convince heretics and unbelievers; and he brags of his great power over the devil; yet he is eternally frightening you with the devil's great and invincible power. *O*, says he, *how miserable were the antient pagans, who wanted us*: and at the same time makes the world, where he prevails, ten times more miserable than ever paganism made it. *Repent*, quoth he, *and seek the Lord, else you cannot be saved*: and yet you need not repent and seek the Lord; for he the saint, and his brethren, can save you without either

either. *Fly from satan*, adds he: *but you need not, for I the priest will flirt some holy water in his face, and send him to the devil.*

Behold, says he, *we saints are as lambs amongst wolves:* and to fulfil the saying, devours you. He has a wonderful antipathy to the heathens, and rails bountifully at them; but if you put in your word against the heathen religion, and the imposture of their priests, *have a care*, says he, *that you wound not us through their sides.* By which he confesses, that there is not a sword's length between them (which is not my opinion) and so he takes these his near kinsmen under his protection. *Riches*, says he, *are pernicious things, and poison to the soul, and so is pride. O beware of riches and pride!* And in kindness to your soul, or to shew you that he values not his own, he takes all the riches and pride of the world to himself.

For a full justification of this my levitical treatise, let me add a passage out of the *Stromata* of that early and eminent father St. Clemens Alexandrinus, and indeed one of the clearest in him, Ποίῳ λαμπρὸν φαῖναι καὶ δαρμόν περιπυλῶϊτόν, καὶ παρσῶν κακαίπραϊ-τρῶν, τὰς ἐνθρονίσαιαί υπερ Γαλλῆσαιῶν. *Stromat. lib. p. 308.*

I cannot forbear inserting here another quotation from the said most learned father; a quotation full of mystery and beauty; it contains an account of some indiscreet amours between the angels and the antediluvian ladies, who, according to him, were enchanting coquets, and drew out of these their gallants, secrets not fit to be named. But hear the holy father: Ὁ ἀγγελος ἐκεῖνος οἱ τὴν ἄνω κλῆρον εἰληχότες, καλολιθίσαντες εἰς νας, ἐξεῖπον τὰ ἀπόρρητα ταῖς γυναίξιν. &c. *Id. Strom. l. 5. p. 227.*

And now I will make bold to say and prophecy of myself and this my work:

*Exegi monumentum ære perennius
Regalique situ pyramidum altius.*

- - -  - - -

*Non omnis moriar, istaque pars mei
Vitabit libitinam* - - -

- - -
- - -

- - - *Sume superbiam
Quæsitam me, itis, et mihi delphica
Lauro cinge volens, Melpomene, comam.*

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THE
PILLARS
OF
PRIESTCRAFT
AND
ORTHODOXY
SHAKEN.

As for the rending of the church, we have many reasons to think it is not that which ye labour to prevent, so much as the rending of your pontifical sleeves: That schism would be the forest schism to you.
MILTON.

Neither can religion receive any wound by disgrace thrown upon the prelates, since religion and they surely were never in such amity. They rather are the men who have wounded religion, and their stripes must heal her.
IDEM.

V O L. II.

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(iii)

TO

Mr. *John Barton,*

OF

L O N D O N.

S I R,

AS this Volume consists of very instructive treatises, I inscribe it to you; both as a public acknowledgement of your favours to the Editor, and also that I may have an opportunity of exhorting you to zeal and ardour in asserting the principles of liberty.

You will here see, that the *christian* religion which contains every motive to goodness personal and social, and the

design of which was to bless all nations, and to make men universally good and happy, hath been so perverted and abused, as to become the instrument of oppression and tyranny, and productive of those very evils that it was intended to prevent or remedy.

You will perceive that all these mischiefs have arisen from investing its ministers with worldly power and dominion, contrary to the design of its author, and to the precepts and pattern of his gospel.

You will find, that these men so degenerated from their first institution, as to set up for ruling, instead of instructing; and though they pretended a zeal for souls, yet their behaviour plainly shewed, that they cared not what became of souls if they could but obtain power and wealth,

the

the constant objects of their pursuit : that for many ages they manifested either the grossest ignorance of the nature and design of christianity, or the most wilful and wicked opposition to it; and that they so blinded and deluded the people, that temporal ideas were constantly annexed to a religion that is spiritual; and *Christ's* kingdom, which is not of this world, was made a worldly kingdom indeed!

You will see that what they called the *Church*, was a mighty *Babel*, built upon the ruins of reason, righteousness, truth, goodness and mercy, all that is dear and sacred to men! You will observe, that notwithstanding it was the design of their holy office to lead men to all happiness, they have been the greatest foes to the ease and comfort of men, preferring at all times their own pride and grandeur to the peace and welfare of nations: That

for this end, they have promoted and encouraged superstition in the people, oppression and tyranny in princes; have soothed and flattered wicked kings in all their violent and ruinous measures; have preached doctrines of slavery, justified all despotic and arbitrary encroachments; have taught that obedience to the will of the prince was the indispensable duty of the people, and that where the latter could not in conscience comply with the demands of the former, they must not however resist, but be *passive* where they could not be *active*: and that by these selfish and lying doctrines, they have brought this nation to the very brink of ruin and perdition.

It will here be manifest to you, that they were the men that bred all the discord betwixt King *Charles I.* and his parliament; that such firebrands as *Laud*,
Manwaring,

Manwaring, and others (the *Sacheverels* of that day) advised and promoted all the cruel and pernicious *High-Commission* and *Star-Chamber* courts, and hurried on that prince to those illegal practices, which afterwards justly brought him to the block: for it is evident that he deserved it, and that the people were under a necessity either of cutting him off, or of being slaves themselves without redemption.

Hence you will learn, that it must be the extremest stupidity and infatuation, the effect either of the greatest ignorance or the greatest malice, to countenance or support any power in priests; and that it is the duty of all men to oppose and break their power by all possible means: that it is poison and destruction both to religion and civil government, to give the ministers of religion any power, except that of reason and persuasion; this being all the power which consists with the nature

nature of christianity (a free and rational religion) and with the peace and happiness of human society: for that wherever priests had more power, they always employed it to the worst purposes, to blind, deceive, and enslave the world.

You will learn also from hence, not to be abused and imposed upon by words and sounds, and particularly by the word *Church*, the most senseless sound of all others, which has no meaning but a wicked one; for the priests never use it but either for fond superstition or terrible dominion: and when they damn a man in their creeds, worry him in their diabolical courts, and throw him into prison, and call this the *Power of the Church*, they can mean nothing by that phrase but their *own power*; these things being as contrary to christianity, as they are to all reason and natural justice. And indeed, if the *christian* religion gave the least countenance to such practices,

practices, no miracles could support its divine pretensions, at least it could never proceed from a righteous and good being. You will hence reject with scorn the great argument urged by priests in support of their oppressive doings, viz. that they have *the laws on their side*; which will justify *Popery*, the *Inquisition*, the *Bastile*, and every tyranny under heaven. You will be amazed, that in such an age as this, an age boasting of light and knowledge, there should be so many absurd doctrines and such iniquitous practices in the *established* religion: witness the *Athanasian* creed, &c. and witness the confiscation of men's goods, and the imprisonment of their persons for non-payment of tythe, &c. And finally, you will hence plainly see, that those men are the greatest friends to society, and worthy of all support and encouragement, who are for stripping priests of all their power: that to vilify
and

and abuse such men, is monstrous folly and a sort of high treason to the commonwealth; since the public can have no security for its liberty and happiness, whilst priests are rampant and mighty; and they and their trumpery will flourish eternally, if no man shall dare to contradict and oppose them.

These, Sir, are reflections, which a man of your understanding will naturally make on a perusal of the following tracts, which being of great worth and value, on very interesting and important subjects, are here collected and preserved: and I persuade myself, that they will have a place in every library, among other defences of liberty and the rights of mankind, against all invaders and oppressors thereof.

I only add, that it will give me a singular pleasure to find that this dedication contributes to your firm establishment in
the

the principles of liberty, and that I am with
the most hearty wishes for your welfare
and happiness,

SIR,

Your most obedient,

And humble servant,

Richard Baron.

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A
SHORT VIEW
OF THE
CONDUCT
OF THE
ENGLISH CLERGY,
So far as relates to
CIVIL AFFAIRS,
FROM THE
CONQUEST to the REVOLUTION.

By Sir EDMUND THOMAS, Baronet,
and Member of Parliament.

*But tract of time, and long prosperity
(That nurse of vice, this of insolency)
Lulled the shepherds in such security,
That, not content with loyal obeysance,
Some 'gan to gape at greedy governance,
And match themselves with mighty potentates,
Lovers of lordships, and troublers of states.*

SPENCER.

First printed in the Year 1737.

VOL. II.

B

A

SHORT VIEW.

THE behaviour of the clergy having seemed to be very extraordinary on some late occasions, I was led by my reflections on that head to make some further enquiry, than I had hitherto done, what the conduct of that set of men had been from the more early times of our government down to the present, and what had been the opinions of the wisest of our ancestors about it.

I thought it was far from improper at this time to know not only what restrictions to the power and wealth of the church, the legislature had formerly deemed requisite, but also whether the clergy had not by their behaviour made those restrictions absolutely necessary. From thence we may better know what to think of their clamours of late, upon any attempt to put the least limits to their property, or restrictions to their power, in such cases, where it might be made use of to oppress any of their fellow-subjects.

For though the reasonableness of laws to prevent the abuse of power, or an exorbitant increase of property in any set of men, where there is only a probability of either, is itself sufficient to recommend the enacting them, even though we had not already been sensible of such abuses; yet the necessity of such laws is still further enforced, when founded on examples and experience, and confirmed by the opinions of our wise predecessors.

It is for this reason, I trouble the public with the following sheets, that by laying before them in as short and compendious a manner, as I am able, an historical account of the conduct of the clergy of this nation, as far as it any way affected civil affairs since the time of *William I.* they may form a judgment from matters of fact, how far necessary all precautions in the laity against the designs of the clergy are, according as they see this conduct of theirs has promoted the public good or otherwise.

Whoever looks into our antient histories, will find the clergy have been always guided by a distinct interest of their own, most frequently contrary to that of the nation: instead of asserting the liberty of the people, they
have

have been most instrumental in all attempts to destroy it; instead of propagating generous notions of freedom, they have constantly endeavoured to instil into the minds of men the most slavish maxims, and taught lessons of the most blind and abject submission.

Their opposition to power, whenever they have made any, has generally been factious and selfish, not grounded on motives of regard for the good of the commonwealth, but occasioned by some attempt upon their temporal interest or privileges, which was often no other than a just intention of retrenching their encroachments upon the crown, and people.

Accordingly we may observe, that the most dangerous designs against the public have been formed by such of our princes, who began with securing the clergy to their interest by great condescensions to them; for we seldom find the clergy to have failed returning the compliment by a concurrence in promoting the most arbitrary attempts by their doctrine and actions.

The use the clergy have made of what power they have acquired under such princes,

6 *The Pillars of* PRIESTCRAFT

has always been most insupportable to the laity, especially to such as have opposed it.

I will not detain the reader any longer from forming his own judgment on this subject, but hasten to my relation of facts, by which only I desire he may be determined, as he shall find them agreeable to truth, to which I have endeavoured to have the strictest regard.

The battle of *Hastings*, gained by the duke of *Normandy*, would have been very far from determining the fate of this country, had the *English* sufficiently united in its defence. He was in possession of but one castle in the kingdom, that of *Dover*. The earls *Morcar* and *Edwin*, who had distinguished themselves already in the defence of their country, had shut themselves up in *London* with the remains of the army defeated at *Hastings*. *William* could not without evident danger march into the heart of the kingdom, and leave that city behind him in possession of his enemies; nor could he lay siege to a place, that would cost him much time, and employ the greatest part of his army, which was no large one, without leaving all the remote counties in *England* at liberty to take proper measures for their security, and to raise several

Several armies, which might have been greatly superior to his own.

Whilst he was in this perplexed situation, the *English* had no reason to despair; and indeed the two earls just mentioned used all their efforts to animate the *Londoners*.

To unite them the more, it was proposed to declare young *Edgar* king. In this generous design it was reasonable to think, the clergy would have unanimously concurred. One would expect to find that body of men making use of all their influence over the people to inspire them with a sense of the duty, they owed their country, and the obligations they were under to venture their lives in defending it from an army of rapacious adventurers: that they would have employed their intercession with heaven (which they would willingly have thought to be so efficacious) to avert the impending slavery, and by it have promoted a confident zeal in their countrymen to exert themselves with intrepidity in so glorious a cause.

But how little was the public good any motive of their conduct! they could not think of continuing a war, which exposed the lands of the church to rapine and desolation, when

8 *The Pillars of* PRIESTCRAFT

by a timely sacrifice of the liberty of their fellow-subjects, they had it in their power to make their own terms: they could not help being partial in favour of one, who had undertaken his enterprize with the countenance of the pope: and they thought the church might make an acquisition of wealth and power under a prince, that had the character of being religious, and who could not but think himself under the greatest obligations to them, should the people by their means be prevailed on to receive him for their King.

With these views they opposed the designs of the people, who had now come to a resolution of placing young * *Edgar* on the throne; but by the bishops declaring for *William*, the citizens were by their example at last prevail'd on to open their gates, and receive him.

Thus by the interested cabals of the clergy were the *English* dissuaded from uniting in defence of their country; and the desirable state of liberty, founded on and secured by prudent and wholesome laws, which they had enjoyed under the race of *Saxon* kings, was changed for the oppressive government of a *Norman* invader.

* *Cæteri proceres Edgarum eligerent, si episcopos assertores haberent. Malmsb. fol. 57.*

Nor was it long before the c'ergy themselves found, how ill grounded their selfish policy had been, notwithstanding the monasteries had a share in the distribution of king *Harold's* treasure; but what opposition any of them made to the invasion of their own rights, when they had given up those of their country, served only as a pretext for a more rigorous treatment.

During the life of *William Rufus*, the clergy felt so great a share in the general oppression of that reign, and were always so disregarded by him, that they had very little opportunity of furnishing any circumstances by their conduct worth relating here. It may not however be amiss to observe, that the promoter and instrument of all this oppression and violence, was *Ranulph Flambert*, bishop of *Durham**.

Henry I. had not been long on the throne, before the encroaching spirit of the church discovered itself in the person of *Anselm*, archbishop of *Canterbury*. That haughty prelate resolved to wrest from the king his right of investiture of bishops and abbots; a prerogative his predecessors had enjoyed without disturbance, and with great reason; for other-

* *M. Paris.*

wife the clergy might have made it one of their pretences for denying, they owed the foundation of their authority to the civil power. In pursuance of this design, upon the king's shewing some resolution at first to maintain his right, *Anselm*, attended by several prelates who had resigned their bishopricks, insolently carried his complaints to *Rome*, and desired the pope by his sole authority to re-instate them in their sees. We may infer from * *M. Paris*, the good archbishop judged it no simony in so righteous a cause, to make use of the rhetorick of gold with his holiness, who failed not to grant his request. In this manner did the ambition of that prelate not only invade the just rights of the king, but introduced a precedent, through the want of resolution in *Henry*, tending to render both him and his successors slaves to the papal authority, which never failed by its interposition in all affairs of this kind to improve them to its own advantage.

Upon the death of *Henry*, we are furnished with a most lively instance of the regard, the clergy paid to the most solemn oaths taken in

* *Tunc sedes clementissima, quæ nulli deesse consuevit (dummodo a bi aliquid vel rubei intercedat) p̄ scriptos pontifices & abbates, ad pristinas dignitates in ser. corditer revocavit.* *M. Paris*, p. 49.

the most public manner. Before the departure of the late king to *Normandy*, he called an * assembly of the great men, in which the bishops were the first, that swore to acknowledge his daughter the empress *Matilda* for their sovereign, in case *Henry* died without issue male. The right of birth undoubtedly pleaded in her behalf, and her descent by her mother's side from the race of *Saxon* kings, was a circumstance, which could not but greatly recommend her to the *English*. However, *Henry's* death, which fell out in a short time after, was no sooner known, than the clergy declared in favour of *Stephen*, and by their example, not only countenanced part of the nobility in the violation of the oath solemnly taken to *Matilda*, but by their superior power in the kingdom deterred others from opposing their designs. The archbishop of *Canterbury*, the bishops of *Winchester*, and *Salisbury*, were three of the richest subjects in *England*: the last owed his rise, from nothing as it were, to the late king, whose will he was ungratefully now going to subvert. I will just mention what *Rapin* says on this occasion, who entirely attributes *Stephen's* advancement to the clergy. "It was (says he) a great advantage to *Stephen* to have for him three

* *Malmsb. fol. 99.*

“ prelates, whose interest secured him the suf-
 “ frages of the clergy. This body was then
 “ so powerful, that the lay-lords who were
 “ not in the plot, did not think themselves
 “ able to oppose the design, which they saw
 “ was entirely formed, of placing *Stephen* on
 “ the throne; since all the bishops declared in
 “ his favour, not one attempted to speak for
 “ *Matilda*, so great an influence had the ex-
 “ ample and authority of the clergy over the
 “ minds of the nobles and people.” How
 false the assertions ~~were~~, on which the bishops
 grounded the evasion of their oaths, appears
 from the opinion of *Malmsbury*. That histo-
 rian mentioning the reason, which the bishop
 of *Salisbury* alledged in his hearing, concludes
 with saying, that he * does not mention it
 there as giving any credit to those words of a
 man, who could so well accommodate himself
 to all times, as fortune shifted the scene, but
 in order to discharge his duty as an historian.
 Let us now see how they behaved to that *Ste-*
phen, whom they had placed on the throne.
 They were not long before they shewed the
 use, they intended to make of the advancement
 of a king, who was indebted solely to them-
 selves for it. They supposed, he would not
 think it his interest to disturb them in the

* *Malmsb. fol. 99.*

design they had formed, of embracing the present opportunity to render themselves formidable, and become independent of him and his successors for the future. In order to accomplish this project, they not only fortified such castles, as they had already in their hands, but erected several new ones. They outvied all the nobility in the magnificence of their houses and retinue, and affected to appear so numerously attended on all occasions, that they looked much more like military chiefs at the head of so many little armies, than the meek and peaceable pastors of Christ's flock.

It cannot be wondered at, that a behaviour of this kind alarmed the king, and almost necessitated him to take those steps towards depriving some of them of their castles, which afterwards involved him in so much trouble. It was not only his own private sentiments, which determined him in that point, but the advice of most of the nobles concurred with his own opinion, that some stop should be put to the formidable power of the bishops *, which increased so fast. But however desirable this might be, it was now not to be effected: the clergy had so great an influence over the lower people, that the nation was in

* *Malmsb. fol.* 102.

a flame at the king's seizing the bishop's castles. Religion itself was looked upon as invaded, which, as *Rapin* says, was now thought to consist in upholding the church in whatever privileges and immunities she herself was pleased to assume. The bishops openly talked of opposing the king by arms, and became so strong, that great numbers of the lay lords thought it safest to go over to their side. *Stephen* had indeed some time before given the people in general too much cause to alter the good opinion they had once entertained of him; and we find several barons had then taken up arms against him in defence of their liberty: but that affair had at this time been made up, and, as I before observed, it was now the sentiments of most of the lay-lords, that the power of the bishops required a stop to be put to it: though when the attempt had embroiled the king in these troubles, but few of those lords had recovered their esteem for him so far, as to assert his cause with the zeal, they would otherwise have done, and draw upon themselves the fury of a body of men at that time more formidable than their own.

But that the ground of this quarrel was no national cause, appears further from hence. Had the point in dispute concerned the public liberty, the king must have answered for his

conduct only before the great council of the kingdom; whereas in this case he was cited before a synod at *Winchester* *, convened by the bishop of that place as legate: which not only shews the dispute to be particular with the bishops, but was itself a greater insult offered the community, than ever *Stephen* had been guilty of.

During this dispute, *Matilda* thought it a favourable juncture to land in *England*, and claim her right to the crown. She no sooner arrived, than the clergy were forward to declare for her: but the bishop of *Winchester*, who had hitherto chiefly excited and promoted the troubles of the king his brother, began now to see his error in raising the storm so high, and that his own ruin would be inseparable from that of his brother. With this consideration, he, at first, did him some service; but no sooner had the chance of war declared itself in favour of *Matilda* by *Stephen's* being taken prisoner, than he again threw up his brother's cause, and won by a promise, that he should dispose of all ecclesiastical preferments, undertook to procure *Matilda* the suffrages of the clergy to elect her queen. In order to this he convened a synod by his legatine authority, the day before the opening of

* *Malm'sb.*

which he conferred in private first with the bishops, then with the abbots, and lastly with the arch-deacons. When the time appointed for their meeting was come, after he had made a speech, in which he publickly asserted * the principal right of chusing a prince belonged to the clergy, the synod declared *Matilda* queen. It was thus with an unheard-of, and unprecedented insolence the clergy alone pretended to give the nation a sovereign without consulting the barons, nay contrary to the sentiments of many of them, who had at this time sent their deputies with those of the city of *London* to demand *Stephen's* liberty. But this message had no other effect than to draw an excommunication upon the king and his adherents.

However monstrous this conduct appears to be, the measure of their insolent and treacherous proceedings was not yet compleated: for in a very short time afterwards the bishop of *Winchester* having been disobliged by *Matilda*, he once more deserted her cause; and assembling another synod at *Westminster* † he found his brethren nothing loath in undoing, what they had so lately done at *Winchester*. *Stephen*, who was now at liberty, having been

* *Malmsb. fol. 106.* † *Ibid. fol. 108.*

exchanged for the duke of *Gloucester*, was again acknowledged by them as king, and *Matilda* in her turn excommunicated with her adherents. This change soon rendered her affairs so desperate, that she was obliged to quit this kingdom, and leave *Stephen* in possession of a crown, which he first obtained, afterwards lost, and again recovered by the intrigues and power of the ecclesiasticks.

The power the church assumed to itself in the next reign, and the entire independence on the state, that it laid claim to, evidently appears in the contest between *Henry II.* and *Becket*. The laity were reduced to a kind of slavery by the clergy: whatever outrages they suffered from them, they durst not repel for fear of excommunication (the effects of which were at that time so terrible) nor could they expect any redress from the laws, since the ecclesiasticks claimed a privilege of being tried only in their own courts; there every thing was carried on with the most open partiality; the ecclesiasticks were only liable to slight corrections, and for the most heinous crimes punished no further than with degradation, short suspension, or short confinement.

It was proved *, there had been above a hundred murders committed by churchmen since the king's accession to the throne, of whom not one had been punished so much as by degradation.

For attempting to redress such an unparalleled enormity, the king and the whole body of peers in parliament, were treated by this haughty prelate with that insolence, and open contempt of their authority, as fills every reader of this part of our history with the utmost indignation.

Of such consequence is it at all times to prevent every step, which may insensibly tend to procure such wealth and power in the clergy, or any other set of men, as may create an independency in them; since we see a prince of so much spirit, as *Henry II.* is allowed to be, for endeavouring to retrench that part of ecclesiastical usurpation, which protected criminals from justice, forced to atone for this so unchristian and wicked attempt, by the most abject condescension and submission; though his design had the good wishes and concurrence of all the nobility in the king-

* *Rapin*, vol. 1. 226. *Tind. transl.*

dom, who at this time groaned under the ecclesiastical yoke.

Richard I's was a reign, in which we find very little said of ecclesiastical affairs or persons. That prince was but a few months in *England* after he came to the crown. The accounts of that time chiefly concern that romantic expedition of his to the *Holy-land*, so expensive to his country, and fatal to himself in being made prisoner by the emperor.

The tyrannical government of king *John* made the opposition, which he met with from his barons, an indispensable duty, they owed themselves, their country, and posterity. The temper of this monarch was such a mixture of folly, pride, and meanness, that it was impossible, but he should embroil himself with all sets of men, however different and opposite their interests might be. Therefore though the clergy seem to have a great share in the events of this reign, we should however carefully distinguish the motives of their conduct, as well as consequences of it, from that of the barons. The first troubles of importance in this reign were merely ecclesiastical. The pope's nominating cardinal *Langton* to the see of *Canterbury*, plunged the kingdom into very
great

great difficulties and misery: The king's refusal to admit him as archbishop, brought an interdict on the kingdom; and the clergy were so far from being displeas'd at this usurpation in the pope, that those few of them, who would willingly have lessened the general confusion occasioned by the interdict, by continuing to perform the duties of their office, such as reading prayer, burying the dead, and the like, met with continual insults from the zealots*. This drew upon the ecclesiasticks the king's utmost severity, who seized on their lands, imprisoned their persons, and committed all manner of outrages on them. The interdict was soon after followed by an excommunication of the king, and the people were absolved by the pope from their oath of allegiance.

The nation in general had been so much oppressed, that the barons took this occasion to throw off all obedience to king *John*. Had he been a prince in the esteem of his subjects, no doubt they would have greatly resent'd this insult to their sovereign. But the consequence was, the king to support himself against the lords, found himself oblig'd to submit to the holy see, whose reconciliation was to be purchas'd on no other terms than a

* *Rapin, vol. 1. p. 269.*

renunciation of his crown after the most ignominious manner to the pope, in the person of his legate; which he was to receive back, and hold ever after as his vassal, and as such to pay a yearly tribute. The general defection of the barons, which followed, though they made a political use of these troubles, yet was a thing quite distinct from them, and founded wholly on principles of liberty. And as the grounds were different, so were the consequences: the first rendered the kingdom tributary to the see of Rome, the latter procured the signing of *Magna Charta*, that basis of the liberty of England ever since.

It will perhaps be said, that after the reconciliation of *John* to the pope, from which time he condemned the barons opposition, and sent a legate to reconcile the king to the clergy, yet they still refused to comply with the terms proposed, and several of them adhered firmly to the cause of the barons.

But we may with great reason conclude the consideration of their own particular interest was what influenced them chiefly on that occasion; for the reparations settled by the * pope for the damages, the clergy had sustained from

* *M. Paris.*

the king during the interdict*, fell infinitely short of their real losses: for which reason they were entirely dissatisfied at the legate's determination.

Nor can we well imagine, that archbishop *Langton*, who, for his own private advancement, could suffer himself to be made the cause of so much misery to the kingdom, and of the most ignominious prostitution of the honour of the *English* crown and nation, could afterwards act in defence of its liberty, from the generous and disinterested motives of public spirit.

Nothing could be worse concerted than the design *Henry III.* formed of freeing himself from the restraint he thought the lords had laid on his father by *Magna Charta*. Instead of gaining the clergy to his interest, and thereby making them subservient to his designs, he not only made them partake of the general oppression of his reign, but suffered them to be devoured by the insatiable extortion of the pope's legates. The king vainly thought all he had to do, was to keep fair with the holy see; the pope knew how to make the proper use of this temper in the king; and since

* *Rapin, vol. I. p. 274.*

John's resignation seemed to consider *England* as a tributary country, which he might plunder at discretion. He had now no occasion for the assistance of the clergy, who, whilst they found their account in it, promoted all his designs, and exalted his usurped power. But as the case now stood, they found a blind complaisance for the orders of the pope, and his demands of money, would only serve to ruin them. They had nothing to hope from the king, who kept no measures with them: they beheld with grief all vacant benefices bestowed on foreigners, insomuch, that at one time no less than three hundred ecclesiasticks were sent over. Whosoever looks into *M. Paris*, will find him every where full of instances of the pope's extortion and oppression towards the *English* clergy, in which the king went hand in hand with him. The clergy were not so blind to their own interest, as not to be sensible it was now their business to join with the people in condemning *Henry's* proceedings: accordingly we find through this reign they always shewed great backwardness in complying with the exactions of the king and pope, and sometimes they had the resolution to give them a down-right refusal, and openly to declare they would no longer submit to such oppressions.

But that their regard for the interest of the laity was no greater than at other times, plainly appears from the open attempts they themselves made towards subverting the laws, which my lord *Coke* mentions in his preface to the *articuli cleri* *. “ in the forty-second year of “ *Henry III. Boniface* archbishop of *Canter-* “ *bury*, made diverse and many canons and “ constitutions provincial, directly against the “ laws of the realm, and tending to usurp and “ encroach upon many matters which appa- “ rently belonged to the common law; but “ notwithstanding the greatness of *Boniface*, “ and that diverse of the judges of the realm “ were of the clergy, and all the great officers “ of the realm, as chancellor, treasurer, privy “ seal, &c. were prelates, yet the judges pro- “ ceeded according to the laws of the realm, “ and still kept, though with great difficulty, “ the ecclesiastical courts within their just and “ proper limits.” We may reasonably con- clude, had the king taken the method, some of his more politic successors have done, of attaching the clergy to his interest, by shewing a zeal for their pretended rights, and a readiness in contributing to the advancement of their riches and power, and had himself

* *Second vol. of Inst.*

only plundered and harassed his other subjects; he would have met with their full concurrence in his designs: and all precautions in the laity for the security of their liberty, would have been censured as unwarrantable, and rebellious. For what could not be expected from a set of men, whose power and wealth were become so dangerous to liberty, and their endeavours to encrease them so strenuous, that, as the great man just quoted says, it was with great difficulty the laws of the land were rescued from their all-engrossing ambition?

In this and the following reign, we may observe, how difficult it was by the wisest provisions and restrictions of the law to prevent the clergy from evading such statutes as set any bounds to their wealth or power. At the time of signing *Magna Charta* by *Henry*, the barons were so sensible of the dangerous consequence of the immense riches, the church was every day acquiring, that they inserted a clause to prevent the further disposition of lands to religious houses. But the clergy found so many ways to creep out of that statute, and their possessions continued still to encrease so fast, that in the seventh of *Edward I.* the statute of mortmain was enacted to the general joy of the people. The words intended to provide against their devices are so strong, that I will

insert them here: “ * *Quod nullus religiosus*
 “ *aut alius quicunque terras aut tenementa*
 “ *aliqua emere vel vendere sub colore dona-*
 “ *tionis aut termini,*” (and to prevent all
 other inventions and evasions, these general
 words were added) “ *aut ratione alterius ti-*
 “ *tuli terras aut tenementa ab aliquo recipere,*
 “ *aut alio quovis modo, arte vel ingenio, sibi*
 “ *appropriare præsumat, sub forisfactura eorun-*
 “ *dorum.*”

A man would have thought, says my lord *Coke*, that this should have prevented all new devices; but they soon found out an evasion for this statute also.

In the progress of this reign we see the grounds of their opposition in the former fully made out by the willingness, the clergy shewed, in making use of the pope's authority, whenever it chimed with their own interest: they now made a bull of *Boniface VIII.* † a pretence to exempt them from the payment of any taxes to secular princes, without the consent of the holy see; and by so doing, openly put themselves upon a foot of independence on the rest of the kingdom; and even assumed

* See lord *Coke's magna charta*, ch. 36.

† *M. West.* 405. *Walsing.* p. 68.

superiority, by declaring they were not obliged to join with them in contributing to the public expences.

In the close of this reign, the bishops give us a further more convincing proof of what I have before said, that hitherto whenever they shewed a disapprobation of any innovations or oppressions, it was merely because they had no share in the profits. *Edward*, notwithstanding the encomiums of some historians, had no less fondness for arbitrary power than his predecessors, though his superior understanding made him sensible, how necessary it was to conceal it; of which he was convinced by the resolute behaviour of some of the barons. However, towards the decline of his life, he began to act with less reserve in that respect; and having procured from *Rome* a dispensation of his oath, in regard to the two charters, he by virtue of a grant from thence levied the tenth of all ecclesiastical revenues for two years; in consideration of which, the pope reserved to himself the first-fruits of all the benefices. Here one would imagine, that the chief men of the clergy were concerned in the greatest degree to prevent any innovation of this kind, which so particularly affected their own body; but in this care was taken, that the bishops should

have a fellow-feeling, and therefore they quietly submitted to it: for * *M. of Westminster* tells us, the pope was induced to this through the covetousness of the bishops, who submitted to this innovation, on condition that they might enjoy one year's profits of all vacant benefices in their gift. At the same time the parliament † shewed a more disinterested regard for the clergy, than their own heads had done, by prohibiting the collectors to gather the tax, though the power of the king made their prohibitions useless.

Never was the parliament more sensible of the ecclesiastical yoke, or more ready to come to resolutions of putting a stop to the papal oppressions, than under *Edward II.* But the weakness of that king, and the circumstances he was in, made all their endeavours ineffectual. The clergy were so satisfied of his weakness; and so intoxicated with their own pride and power, that they committed the most unparalleled insult and violence to public justice, the laws of the realm, and therein to the whole nation. *Adam Orleton* ‡, bishop of *Hereford*, having been indicted of high-treason, for being concerned with *Mortimer* earl of *March* in his open rebellion; the arch-

* *Mat. Westm.* 457. † *Rapin.* ‡ *Walsing.* p. 119.

bishops of *Canterbury, York, and Dublin*, with several of their suffragans, came to the bar, and by force took him away, threatening to excommunicate all that should oppose them, and proceed against him: and this they did under pretext of the canons * of the church, though the benefit of the clergy, however they had found means of late to extend it, was never allowed to reach to high-treason against the king. And all this was done in defence of a man the most abandoned by every virtue, and of whose character nothing can convey a more perfect idea, than his own order afterwards to the keepers of the unhappy *Edward*: "*Edwardum occidere nolite timere bonum est.*"

Under *Edward III.* (most eminently the best and greatest of our princes, who undeniably deserves those encomiums given him by historians, which flattery, or want of discernment, made them too apt to bestow on others) more vigorous methods were taken by the king and parliament, to deliver the nation from the so long complained of papal oppressions. With that intent the statutes of provisors and præmunire were enacted: the first to prevent the court of *Rome* from dis-

* See lord Coke's 2d Inst. p. 634, and 635.

posing of ecclesiastical benefices contrary to the right of the king, or any other person; the second to prevent the subjects of *England* carrying causes to any foreign or other court, the cognizance of which belonged to the king's courts. However, notwithstanding these precautions, we find the grievances still continued, and the pope exacted as a tax from ecclesiastical dignities, "five * times as much as the tax of all the profits that appertained to the king by the year of this whole realm." Accordingly we find hardly any meeting of parliament in this reign, in which these grievances are not complained of, notwithstanding the statutes made, and so frequently confirmed for preventing them.

Now when we consider the unanimous and constant opinion of both king and parliament on this head, and the vigorous resolutions, they so often came to; can we reasonably account, why the measures taken by them should prove ineffectual any other way than from the timidity or connivance of the clergy themselves? Both of which I think appear pretty plain. The parliament expressly mention the first, in saying "† the whole clergy

* *Cotton's Parl. Roll.* 50 Ed. III.

† *Parl. Roll.* 50 Ed. III.

“ were so obedient to the pope’s collector, that
 “ they did not dare displease him.” And that
 they did more than barely connive at appeals
 from the king’s courts, contrary to the statute
 of præmunire, appears, in that they themselves
 presumed to take cognizance of appeals from
 those courts in their own ecclesiastical courts.
 “ And to reverse judgment given in the king’s
 “ courts, to the prejudice and disherison of the
 “ king and commonalty:” as the parliament
 of the twenty-first of *Edward III.* recite in their
 complaint.

That the parliaments in this reign were no
 less apprehensive of the power and encroach-
 ments of the clergy at home, than of the see
 of *Rome*, appears from the several parliamentary
 petitions * and resolutions on that head. At
 one time we find them praying the king,
 that remedy might be had against the oppres-
 sion of ordinaries, and their officers. At an-
 other time they made their request to the
 king, that “ no † ordinance might be made at
 “ the petition of the clergy without consent
 “ of parliament, and that no man might be
 “ bound by any their constitutions made for
 “ their advantage.”

* *Parl. Roll.* 25 *Ed. III.*

† *Parl. Roll.* 51 *Ed. III.*

The clergy had for some time past intruded themselves into all the great places of trust, power, and profit in the state, the civil courts, and king's household *. The lords and commons therefore represented to the king, that the realm had long been governed by churchmen, to the great prejudice of the crown; and therefore required, that for the future the great officers of the king's courts might be only laymen.

The justness of these complaints, and of the precautions of the parliament, is fully confirmed by the conduct of the clergy in the following reign. *Richard II.* had not been long on the throne, before they took the advantage of the youth and weakness of that prince to procure his consent to an ordinance for the imprisoning of such, as they should think fit to declare heretics: and this entirely without consent of parliament, a most notorious outrage, if ever there was any, upon the established constitution of this kingdom. But what measures would they not take to destroy a growing sect, such as the *Wicliffites*, who propagated principles of so damnable a nature, as tended to destroy the temporal grandeur

* *Walsing.* p. 186. & *Parl. Roll.*

and power of the church? A doctrine that in all ages will never fail being censured by most of them, as highly heretical. But the house of commons were so sensible of this heinous encroachment upon the rights of the people, that the ordinance was repealed by the king next parliament; and the declaration of the commons on this occasion had so much becoming resolution and spirit in it, that it may not be amiss to set down their own words, "that * it was never their meaning to be justified, and bind themselves and successors to the prelates, no more than their ancestors had done before them." A resolution ever worthy to be remembered and followed by all succeeding parliaments.

I took notice in the last reign, that the continued oppressions of the pope, notwithstanding the repeated resolutions of the king and parliament against them, must have been owing to the connivance of the clergy: the following instance under *Richard*, is a further and full confirmation of their backwardness to retrench any of the pretended prerogatives of the see of *Rome*. "The † archbishops of *Canterbury* and *York* for themselves,

* *Parl. Roll. 6 Rich. II.*

† *Parl. Roll. 13 Rich. II.*

“ and the whole clergy of their province,
 “ make their solemn protestation in open par-
 “ liament, that they in no wise meant or
 “ would assent to any statute or law made
 “ in restraint of the pope’s authority, but
 “ utterly withstood the same.”

The following prostitution of the clergy, (an expression aptly made use of) and their superior talents in doing with a better grace the very same profligate and slavish jobs, in which the laity have at any time equally concurred, is worth observing from a passage in an historian that treats of that reign. When *Richard II.* had at last by corruption, or putting out such returning officers, whose complaisance for his designs he suspected, got a parliament chiefly packed up of such persons, as he knew would be at his devotion, (the first, if I mistake not, that was openly procured in that manner;) after the session was opened by a time-serving speech of the bishop of *Exeter*, it was proposed by the king’s ministers, that the acts of grace passed nine years before in favour of certain lords, who had opposed the king in his attempts upon the public * liberty, should be repealed. The prelates without any hesitation not only gave

* *Walsing.* p. 354.

their assent, but, by the expression of the historian, seemed to have used arguments to shew those acts to be revocable: upon which, says he, the temporal lords seeing the clergy approved of it, gave also their assent, more induced to it through fear of the king, than any conviction of their minds. Now though their concurrence is absolutely inexcusable; yet the reader, I believe, will agree with me in observing a manifest difference in their behaviour. For the clergy, no reason is assigned by the historian, but their forwardness in the affair seems abandoned like that of men hackney'd in prostitution; the other have the example of the clergy, and the fear of the king mentioned as determining them. And that I may not be thought to have exaggerated this matter, I will give the reader *Walsingham's* own words.

“ *Hi importunis clamoribus petierunt*
 “ *chartæ perdonationum in primis revocaren-*
 “ *tur & annullarentur, super quibus requisiti*
 “ *prælati de facile indicarunt tales chartas*
 “ *fore revocabiles, non attendentes quod hu-*
 “ *jus gratiæ revocatio personæ regis maxime*
 “ *repugnabat; cum misericordia sit solii re-*
 “ *galis confirmatio, & qui tollit misericordi-*
 “ *am, tollit solii regalis firmamentum: Con-*
 “ *sequenter domini temporales videntes assen-*

“ *sum cleri, censuerunt & ipsi hujus chartas
 “ annullandas, magis timore regis dicti, quam
 “ mentium ratione.*”

Glorious pre-eminence of the clergy, even in a parliament composed of men culled out from amongst the whole people for servility and corruption !

Henry IV. a haughty designing prince, who though he owed his crown purely to a parliamentary right, yet ever affected to build his claim on other foundations, not only weak, but absolutely false, was sensible, that he had against him a powerful faction in the kingdom, and that his conduct was such, as could not fail adding to the number of his enemies.

His policy in taking all methods, and being most vigilant to secure the possession of his crown, was the most distinguishing qualification of his genius: and he had too much discernment not to see, how necessary it was for carrying on his ends to have the clergy firmly in his interest. That body was now become more than ever wealthy, powerful, and insolent. Accordingly, *Henry* made it a maxim, to do nothing, which might disoblige them, but to take every opportunity of testifying

fyng a regard for their interest. He knew by that means, however ill he used his other subjects, he should still preserve the reputation of a pious prince, zealous for the cause and honour of God, which could not but greatly contribute to baffle any opposition to his measures. The clergy had all along so connived at the pretensions of the court of *Rome*, that the endeavours of former parliaments to put à stop to that abuse, proved ineffectual. The people groaned for a reformation; therefore, though the king was obliged at first in compliance with his parliament to revive the statutes of præmunire, yet never was the breach of them more winked at, than in this reign. To give the ecclesiasticks a more public instance of his zeal, *Henry* at their petition procured the bloody act to pass in parliament for the burning such as they should declare heretics. Immediately the poor *Lollards*, who had incurred their unrelenting displeasure for broaching doctrines repugnant to their temporal grandeur, are without mercy delivered to the flames; and the churches sound with the encomiums of a king, who had given such unquestionable proof of his piety and zeal.

But a parliament, that met some time after, had not the same complaisance for the clergy.

This

This was that which by way of reproach, they have called the illiterate parliament, representing them as a set of men chosen according to the king's private letters, merely on account of their ignorance; an error most people since, and amongst the rest a very eminent man in our law †, has been led into. But these letters were in reality writs of summons, in which there were directions, in pursuance of a statute made in *Edward III*'s time, excluding all sheriffs and practising lawyers from being elected: the reason of which was, that such procured themselves to be elected merely to serve views of their own, and did not faithfully discharge their duty to their country. Instead therefore of looking upon this parliament in the light, in which it has been represented, we are to consider it as composed of honest, disinterested country gentlemen, who having no private views to serve, came up fraught with the sentiments of those they represented, who impatiently wished to see themselves freed from the ecclesiastical yoke.

Accordingly, when the king, laying his necessities before them, demanded an aid, they remonstrated the hardship of burthening his subjects with further taxes, when at the same

† *Bryn's pref. to parl. roll.*

time the clergy contributed nothing to the necessities of the state, though possessed of the third part of all the lands in the kingdom; wallowing, to the neglect of their duty, in luxury and idleness: that therefore it was their desire that his wants should be supplied out of the ecclesiastical revenues, as not only just, and agreeable to the sentiments of the people, but in the main of real service to the church itself.

We may easily imagine, what treatment a proposition of this kind met with from the clergy. The † archbishop of *Camterbury*, who was present, could not forbear treating the commons in the most arrogant and insolent manner: he even told them in a menacing way, no attempt of that sort should be offered the church without impunity, and that it should be at their peril if they seized any of its revenues; that for his part he would sooner lose his life than see it deprived of them.

The king, in pursuance of the maxim he had laid down, to keep well with the clergy, took this opportunity to assure the archbishop of his resolution to maintain the church in

† *Walting. p. 371.*

its full possessions, and of his desire rather to increase than diminish its splendor. The commons, not intimidated by the threats of any dignified church-man, went on and prepared a bill for supplying the king's necessities out of the revenues of the church; but when the bill came to the lords, they refused their concurrence, through the cabals of the bishops, who had gained a considerable party in that house, for having opposed the commons not long before in a laudable design they had of supplying the king's wants, by a revocation of several lands alienated from the crown by grants in the late reign, and squandered upon favourites, to the great impoverishing of the crown, and burthening the people; which revocation would greatly have affected several peers, who at that time were in possession of such lands. Here we see the bishops, opposers in general of every step taken for the ease of the subject, and treating the representative body of the whole people in parliament with insolence, ill language, and threats for the attempt.

Though the commons were disappointed this time in their design, yet the grievance was too generally felt, and a redress too much desired by the people for them to sit down dismayed at this repulse. In a parliament assembled

bled some time after they renewed their former instances in regard to the clergy's revenues; the consequences also of the statute against the *Lollards* obtained by influence and cabal were now known to be so terrible, that they likewise desired a repeal of it; at least an amendment. As to their first instances, they set forth, that the king might easily seize out of the revenues of the ecclesiasticks, what would be sufficient to provide in a most ample manner for fifteen earls, fifteen hundred knights, six thousand two hundred esquires, and a hundred hospitals. But they had the mortification to have their remonstrances meet with no better success with the king, who was now more than ever confirmed in his resolution of being well with the church. Therefore he not only refused his assent, but did it in a most arbitrary manner, forbidding them for the future to presume to meddle with such affairs*; and as for the statutes against the *Lollards*, he was so far from allowing any mitigation, that he said he could wish they were made more rigorous. To please the ecclesiasticks still further with an open affront upon the commons, he affected at that time to sign a warrant for the burning of a poor *Lollard*, who suffered death with great resolution.

* *Walsing.* p. 379.

If the parliament (as *Rapin* says) that first moved the lessening the clergy's revenues was stiled unlearned, it may well be supposed this met with no better treatment. The names of *Lollard* and *Heretic* were plentifully bestowed: they were set forth as a set of men who were for the destruction of religion itself. They were however so sensible of their ill usage, that upon the king's demanding a power to levy a subsidy during life, though the parliament should not sit, they boldly refused it him. The commons would also have denied him a supply for his present occasions, since he had not thought proper to receive it by the methods they proposed, had not the king forced them to a compliance by the same arbitrary manner, which he had succeeded in once before; that was, by keeping them sitting, till the inconvenience of not being dismissed, obliged them to consent to his demands: a most remarkable abuse of prerogative, and tending to destroy all freedom in their resolutions! But notwithstanding this, he had done enough in this meeting to be looked upon as the champion of religion, and darling of its priests. We find him cried up by them as a prince endued with mildness, piety, and every virtue; though whoever will carefully look into that reign, will find his conduct perfectly tyrannical, and

most

most ungrateful in a prince, who had no other title to his crown than the good-will of the people, and free gift of parliament, whose rights he ever tried to subvert. To conclude therefore with Mr. *Rapin's* observations on this reign: "When I consider (says he) the excessive commendations bestowed on that prince, I cannot help suspecting, that the glory of being the first burner of heretics, and of protecting the clergy against the attempts of the house of commons, were the main springs of all their encroachments. It is well known, the ecclesiastics are as zealous in praising their benefactors, as in blackening their opposers."

No sooner was *Henry IV.* dead, than the clergy determined to secure themselves for the future against all attempts to lessen their revenues, by taking advantage of the complaisance, that is usually met with from young princes in the beginning of their reigns. They did not doubt, but such attempts had been greatly promoted by the doctrine of the *Lollards*. Therefore as those principles were countenanced by several men of the greatest rank, and highest esteem of any in the kingdom, they resolved to lay the ax to the root of the tree, and by boldly attacking the patrons of the sect, deter all others from presuming to advance

vance any propositions, which they should disapprove of, that might render them liable to be suspected of *Wickliffite* principles. In pursuance of this resolution, the archbishop of *Canterbury* waited on the king, and represented to him the great growth of heresy, which could not fail drawing down the wrath of heaven on the kingdom; and the glory it would be to a young monarch to begin his reign with engaging in the cause of God, by defending the church from heretics, for which heaven would certainly crown all his undertakings with success. Thus said *Nestorius* once to the younger *Theodosius*; "Give me, O emperor, the earth weeded from heretics, and I in my turn will give you heaven; destroy with me the heretic, and I will destroy the *Persian* with you." The archbishop then informed him, that Sir *John Oldcastle*, baron of *Cobham*, a domestic of his own, was the most open abetter of the doctrine of the *Lollards* *; and therefore he desired, he might be allowed to proceed against him with the utmost severity and rigour.

The king answered him in such a manner, as shewed, he was far from approving of force for reclaiming people from errors in religion;

* *Walsing.* p. 383.

but however told him, that if he could not by talking to Sir *John Oldcastle* restore him to the right way, he would then give leave for a process against him.

This lord was a man the most esteemed of any in the kingdom, and particularly dear to the king, as *Walsingham* the monk owns, for his consummate probity. Notwithstanding, the king finding him unmoveable as to his opinions, no longer opposed the clergy's request, and he was accordingly condemned to be burnt, though for some time he avoided suffering the sentence by an escape out of prison.

The king in his discourse with the archbishop had discovered too much moderation in his opinions, for the clergy to be able to have their full desire upon their enemies, especially as he did not seem very solicitous to have *Oldcastle* retaken. It was their interest (says *Rapin*) that the king should have other sentiments more agreeable to the barbarous zeal, with which ecclesiasticks are generally animated. In order thereto they represented the *Lollards* as men, that not only sought the destruction of the established church and religion, but even of the king's person and state itself. To confirm him in such a belief, they fathered upon them a more absurd and senseless

less plot, than ever was invented by the most profligate dilatores employed by the ^{most} cruellest of the *Roman* emperors for such purposes. The poor *Lollards*, since a * proclamation the king had made to suppress their assemblies, had continued their meeting with great secrecy in woods, and other unfrequented places in the country for the worship of God in their own manner. Upon these occasions some of them chose *St. Giles's fields* near *London* where they thought to be concealed by bushes, and shrubs, that grew there: but being discovered by the clergy, the king was immediately told, that *Oldcastle* at the head of twenty thousand *Lollards* were in the fields, with a design to kill the king and his brothers, and all the lords spiritual and temporal, who were not their friends. Alarmed at this information, *Henry*, who was at *Eltham*, immediately marched to *London* to attack this powerful body of conspirators. He arrived about midnight, and finding about fourscore persons, fell upon them, and killed about twenty, and took most of the rest prisoners. The poor wretches, knowing how liable they were to the insults of their persecutors, had unfortunately brought arms with them, which probably served as a pretence to convince the

* *Rapin, vol. 1. p. 507.*

king of the design; and that their accusation might have the greater weight, means were found by threats or promises to prevail with some to confess the fact, though the absurdity was unsurmountable to every considering man. For instead of twenty thousand to execute so great a design, there were only a few mean people, with none of great rank; and as for *Oldcastle* himself, he was not present. But it seems the clergy gained a great point by it, in rendering the *Lollards* odious to the king, and obtaining a vast price to be set on *Oldcastle's* head, who was soon after taken, and fell a sacrifice to their malice and cruelty. The whole behaviour of *Henry* towards this great man gives us no advantageous idea of the integrity of that prince, since he acted intirely in opposition to his own declared sentiments, and sacrificed a man, he had the greatest esteem for; to which he could have no other motive than to gain the clergy to his interest, and to prevent from them any interruption in the ambitious projects, he was probably at that time meditating. As to the pretended conspiracy, he had too much sense really to credit it, the absurdity of which, if not at first, yet he certainly soon after must have been convinced of, though he had never the ingenuity to own it, or act accordingly. Sir *Robert Cotton*, in his abridgment of the parliament-rolls, speaking of the parlia-

parliament that met at this time, in which the *Lollards* were so persecuted, makes this remark. “The clergy, at this their own parliament, cease not to rage and roar after christian blood. *tanquam leones rugientes*; and whosoever did the fault, they put *John Porter* in the stocks, and cried, *crucify Christ, and deliver us Barrabas*; for now all horrible mischiefs whatsoever were imputed to the poor *Lollards*.”

Bishop * *Burnet*, in his history of the reformation, tells us, the disingenuous and inhuman way, the clergy had, of dealing with the *Lollards*: “which was in their proceedings against them always to mix some capital errors, which all christians rejected, with those, for which they accused them: and some particulars being proved, they gave it out, that they were guilty of them all, to represent them the more odious,” of which he gives us some examples.

It was not the *Lollards* alone that in this reign were convinced of the necessity of lessening the revenues of the church: for a parliament, that agreed to the severest statutes against those miserable people, shewed the greatest ear-

* *Hist. of the reformat. vol. 1. p. 29.*

restness for reducing the clergy within proper bounds.

It was an artifice of the clergy at that time to confound every body, that opposed their temporal grandeur, under the general name of *Lollards*, and to render them and their designs odious, they represented them as acting from heretical principles; in the same manner as in a latter reign every man, that discovered any zeal for liberty against the arbitrary designs of the court and church, was branded with the name of puritan. And in this I have the concurrence of the learned author last mentioned, who tells us, that “ when * the clergy had
“ their authority fortified with such severe
“ laws, they became more cruel and insolent
“ than ever. And if any man denied them
“ any part of that respect, or of those advantages, to which they pretended, he was presently brought under the suspicion of heresy,
“ and vexed with imprisonments, and articles
“ were brought against him.”

But the parliament I just now spoke of, were so apprehensive of this artifice, that they agreed to every proposal of the clergy for the extirpation of what was then called heresy;

* Hist. of the reformation. vol. 1. p. 27.

so that all the pulpits in the kingdom sounded their praises. Therefore, when the commons presented an address for seizing their revenues, they were thunder-struck. There was no having recourse to their usual method of representing as *Lollards*, whomsoever they disliked; so that they had no way of diverting the impending danger, but by animating the young king to a war with *France*, and in order to carry it on, to compound for the resignation of the alien priories. Though of all the numerous and bloody wars, the clergy have engaged the world in, they may be said to have the best excuse for this; yet I cannot think the archbishop's speech on the occasion quite agreeable with the peace making character of a christian divine, howsoever it might have appeared from the mouth of an enterprising statesman.

From this time to that of *Henry VIII.* the kingdom was so much engaged in other * matters, that we have few or no accounts of the proceedings of ecclesiasticks worth taking up the reader's time. It is probable they would have made great advantages from the weakness of *Henry VI.* had not so many troubles at court, the war with *France*, and the misfor-

* *Rapin.*

tunes of this reign, prevented any attention to church-affairs. The same reasons for the most part subsisted in the following reigns, which were also taken up with domestick troubles. As for *Henry VII.* his whole thoughts were so employed in maintaining a quiet possession of the crown, of which he was beyond measure jealous, and on hoarding up money, that he avoided all occasions of such disputes, which might have given disturbance to either.

During the first eighteen years of his reign, king *Henry VIII.* was a most faithful son of the see of *Rome*, as the learned author of the history of the reformation tells us, except in one matter only, which seemed to lessen the greatness of the clergy. As this one affair was of very great importance, and will serve fully to set forth the temper of the clergy at this time, and also furnishes us with a most flagrant instance of the power they had assumed, and their most pernicious and insolent abuse of that power; I will give the reader as short an account of it, as possible, from bishop *Burnet*, especially, as during the course of this affair a scene of cruelties came to light towards a person, who had offended the ecclesiasticks, which were nothing inferior to those of the most inhuman tyrants.

In the fourth * year of this reign it was enacted in parliament, that all murderers and robbers should be denied the benefit of clergy. Though the reasonableness of this law, one would have thought, was sufficient to make it pass, yet to take off all objections there was added, that all such as were within the holy orders of bishop, priest, or deacon, should be excepted; and it was also continued in force only till the next parliament. Though this gave the greatest satisfaction to the people, the clergy were so offended, that the most inferior persons, who were any ways related to the church, should be proceeded against by the laity, that the act by their opposition was suffered to determine next parliament. But see the effects of an ill-judged compliance with whatsoever that body of men shall at any time be pleased to call their privileges: they were not satisfied, that it was suffered to expire, but with great audaciousness resolved to fix a public censure on this act of the legislature. Accordingly, the abbot of *Winchelcomb* openly preached against it at *St. Paul's cross*.

As this could not fail of making a noise, the temporal lords and house of commons con-

* Hist. of the reformation. vol. 1. p. 13.

curring in petitioning the king to suppress the growing insolence of the clergy. Upon this a hearing was appointed before the king with all the judges and his temporal council. It will be too tedious to insert here the particulars of the dispute, which are to be seen in the history of the reformation: but in short, Dr. *Standish*, who was ecclesiastical council for the king, maintained his arguments against the immunities of the church with so much reason, and so clearly confuted the assertions of the abbot, that all the laity present were so confirmed in their former opinions, that the bishops were moved to order the abbot to make a recantation of his sermon in the place, where he had preached it; but they all flatly refused to do it, and openly justified the assertions of the abbot in every point. As this was followed by very great heats in parliament, an affair, that fell out just after, made the matter to be prosecuted still more warmly the *Michaelmas* term following.

One *Richard Hunne*, a merchant-taylor in *London*, was sued in the ecclesiastical court by a *Middlesex* clerk for refusing a mortuary, which the clerk pretended was due to him on account of a child of *Hunne's* that had died five weeks old. As this spiritual court sat by the legate's authority, therefore was a

foreign court, *Hunne* was advised to sue the clerk in a *præmunire*. The clergy were touched to the quick at this, and used all their arts to fasten heresy on *Hunne*; and having found *Wickliff's* bible in his custody, he was taken up, and put in the *Lollards* tower at *St. Paul's*, and had several articles of heresy objected to him by the bishop of *London*. On his examination he denied them in the manner charged upon him; but owned he had said some things, which might seem to tend that way; for which he was sorry, and asked God's pardon, and submitted to the bishop's correction. For this, says our author, he should have been enjoined penance, and set at liberty. But as he still continued his suit in the king's court, he was used in a barbarous manner; for soon after he was found hanged in the chamber, where he was prisoner. This was given out to be done by himself; but when the coroner held his inquest on the body, so many circumstances appeared, that made it undeniably evident, he was murdered; upon which the dead body was acquitted, and the murder charged upon the officers of the prison: and by other proofs, they found the *sumner* and *bell-ringer* guilty of it; and by the deposition of the *sumner* himself it appeared, that *Dr. Horsey*, the bishop *London's*

don's chancellor, and he, and the bell-ringer did murder him, and then hang him up.

At the same time the bishop began a new process against *Hunne* for heresy; of which being found guilty, he was delivered over to the secular power to be burnt, which was accordingly done in *Smithfield*. When judgment was given, the bishops of *Durham* and *Lincoln*, with many doctors both of divinity and canon-law sat with the bishop of *London*; so that this (says our Author) was looked on as an act of the whole clergy, and done by common consent. The intent of this was to stifle all enquiry about the murder; for it was supposed that when once the deceased had been declared a heretic, no man would be so bold as to appear for him. But it fell out quite otherwise. The city of *London* was enraged to the greatest degree at the cruelty of the clergy, and made it a common cause. That a poor fellow for suing a clerk according to law, should be long imprisoned, and at last murdered, and the reproach of it cast upon himself to defame him, and ruin his family; and then to burn the dead body that had been so used, was thought such a complication of cruelties, as few *Barbarians* had ever been guilty of.

So that notwithstanding the very great pains taken to stop the proceedings, and the endeavours of the cardinal to forbid their going on, the thing was so foul and evident, that they were ineffectual: and the trial went on, and the chancellor and sumner were indicted as principals in the murder. *Hunne's* children were also restored in parliament.

The convocation, which was now sitting, finding all this stir made, resolved to call Dr. *Standish* to an account; whose arguments in the affair before mentioned they thought greatly to have contributed in raising this flame. When he was first summoned, some articles were objected to him by word of mouth concerning the judging of clerks in civil courts; but the next day a bill was delivered to him in writing, to which a day was appointed for his answer.

Standish finding they were determined to oppress him, begged the king's protection for what he had done only in discharge of his duty, as his counsel: but the clergy pretended to the king, that it was for something he had said in his lectures, which he had read at *St. Paul's* and therefore begged him to maintain the rights of the church. On the other hand, the temporal lords and house of commons addressed

addressed the king to maintain the temporal jurisdiction, and protect *Standish* from the malice of his enemies. Upon this the king appointed the matter to be argued at *Black-friars*, where he ordered his council spiritual and temporal, all the judges, and some of both houses to be present. I shall not relate the arguments on both sides here; but after the debate all the judges gave their opinion, that all those of the convocation, who did award the citation against *Standish*, were guilty of a præmunire. The court then broke up. But at another meeting soon after, the king having express'd his opinion in favour of *Standish*, and that he was resolv'd to maintain the rights of the crown and temporal jurisdiction; the archbishop of *Canterbury* begged the matter might be so long respited, till they could get an answer from the court of *Rome*, and they would then conform themselves to the laws of the land in whatever was consistent with the law of God. To this the king made no answer then, but upon his command *Standish* was soon after dismiss'd out of the court of convocation. And the king, not willing to break off with the clergy about *Hunne's* affair, came to this expedient, that Dr. *Horsev*, who had absconded in the archbishop's house, (tho' it was pretended he was prisoner there) since warrants had been out to apprehend him, should

render himself prisoner in the king's bench; where, upon his pleading not guilty, the attorney-general should acknowledge it, and withdraw the indictment; the king thinking he had maintained his prerogative, by bringing him to the bar.

Thus ended this great affair, which though far from giving the people in general satisfaction, as they thought justice had not been done against the criminals; yet it made the pretensions of church-men appear very weak, and gave all men such a detestation of their conduct, as disposed the public to be well pleased with the alterations, that followed in this reign, and every attempt towards reducing their power.

It cannot be supposed, that a clergy with this disposition would countenance any reformation, which at all lessened their riches or power; accordingly this, which followed in the present reign, was entirely against the will of the greatest part of them. It has been justly observed, there was never any reformation, but the clergy was against. Indeed what was done in this reign was more properly a few steps towards a reformation, than the thing itself; and though outwardly most of them paid a submission to the king's will in the alterations

tions then made, yet at the same time we find them using all their artifices to prevent their being carried on to such a length, as should render the breach with *Rome* irreparable. With those views, when they had brought themselves to own the supremacy, yet they still endeavoured to cherish in the king a regard for the most absurd doctrines of the *Roman* church. And lest the few steps the king had taken towards a reformation, might encourage the followers of *Luther* to be more open in promulging their opinions, the greatest arts were used to make the king discourage them; and therefore we find persecution never raged with greater violence and injustice, than under this reforming monarch.

For the same reason, and in order to make the clergy less sensible of the absurdity of several doctrines of the church, and of the implicit and servile obedience claimed by it, they endeavoured to suppress the translation of the bible in this reign; for it was their maxim, to use the laity, as *Herodotus* tells us, the *Scythians* did their slaves, which was to deprive them of their eyes, that they might churn their master's milk with more attention.

Therefore, whatever merit there was in accomplishing the reformation, the clergy have

no pretence to any part of it; and the few of them, that really and with sincerity laboured to bring it about, of whom bishop *Cranmer* was at the head, were a very inconsiderable number in respect to that whole body.

And since I have mentioned that great man, upon whose character such encomiums have been made, I must here own my opinion, that if we consider with attention his whole conduct, we shall find some parts of it, which cannot fail very much to lessen those ideas, we are at first apt to conceive of him.

It is far from my intention to derogate from the merit of a man so much celebrated, by making no allowances for the frailties of human nature, from which it would be unreasonable to expect, that he or any man whatever should be exempt by the sanctity of his profession: and as such, I am very willing to consider his recantation in the latter part of his life; and whatever other slips he might have been guilty of, which may be allowed to be consequences of human frailty, are readily to be excused, provided they are mere frailties: but we cannot consider in that light some of his actions. The protestation, he made at his consecration*, when he took his oath to

* *Hist of the refor.* vol. 1. p. 129.

the pope, was a deliberate act; and however agreeable it might have been to the maxims of canonists † and casuists at that time, was very unfuitable to the integrity of his character.

The taking of oaths with reserved meanings and particular explications, can have no other tendency than to destroy all faith amongst men. And it was formerly observable, that the clergy in general too much countenanced the taking of oaths with mental reservations; though in justice to the present clergy, surely it must be owned, they never allow of any private explications in what they subscribe as necessary to qualify them for their holy function, or on any other occasion.

His compliance, as well as that of the whole convocation, with the king's will, in annulling

* In how different a light were oaths considered by the ancient heathens, when at *Athens*, one of their greatest tragedians brought upon himself the highest indignation of his audience, by putting into the mouth of a worthy character, a sentiment agreeable to the behaviour of this great and pious divine.

Ἡ γλῶσσ' ὀμωμοχ', ἡ δὲ φρήν ἀνώμοτος.

My tongue has sworn, but not my mind.

Euripid. Hippol. l. 612.

the marriage with *Anne of Cleves*, is extremely unjustifiable, and not to be excused by the fear of incurring the king's displeasure; which, if allowed, will equally justify the worst actions committed at the commands of the most unjust tyrants. The author of the history of the reformation says, " this * was
 " the greatest piece of compliance that ever
 " the king had from his clergy: for as they
 " all knew there was nothing of weight in
 " that pre-contract, so they laid down a most
 " pernicious precedent for invalidating all pub-
 " lic treaties and agreements; since if one
 " of the parties being unwilling to it, so that
 " his consent was not inward, he was not
 " bound by it, there was no safety among
 " men more."

And again, " for that argument, that was
 " taken from the want of consummation,
 " they had forgotten what was pleaded on the
 " king's behalf ten years before, that con-
 " sent without consummation made a mar-
 " riage compleat.—But as the king was re-
 " solved on any terms to get rid of the queen,
 " so the clergy were also resolved not to in-
 " cur his displeasure; in which they rather
 " fought for reasons to give some colour to
 " their sentence, than passed their judgment
 " upon the strength of them."

* Vol. 1. p. 281.

But what alone is sufficient to destroy the great veneration for *Cranmer*, is the treatment some Anabaptists met with in the succeeding reign. As that young prince *Edward VI.* was entirely under the direction of protestant bishops, we might expect to see religion put on a much more amiable face, when its chief reformers were now no longer obstructed by that great restraint and submission, to which they were subjected, by the imperious will of the late king. We might expect to see the clergy recommending the protestant religion by the reasonableness of its doctrines, by gentleness, moderation, and disinterestedness in its teachers, and by the reverse of a behaviour so much complained of in the popish church. But alas! we shall soon find ourselves mistaken in those pleasing hopes. The sword of persecution had only changed hands, and, an implicit compliance with the present clergy, was likely to be as much claimed, as ever it had been by the church of *Rome*. The young king, in whose disposition good-nature was as prevalent as his good sense, was shocked at this unexpected behaviour in the protestant clergy; and being pressed to sign a warrant for the burning a poor frantic Anabaptist woman, could not at first be prevailed with to do

do it, “ but * thought it a cruelty too like that
 “ they had condemned in papists, to burn any
 “ for their consciences.” And when at last,
 by the sophistical arguments of good bishop
Cranmer, he was rather silenced in his ob-
 jections, than satisfied in his compliance, “ he
 “ set his hand to the warrant with tears in
 “ his eyes, saying to *Cranmer*, that if he
 “ did wrong, since it was in submission to
 “ his authority, he should answer for it
 “ before God.”

It is plain from hence, that persecution for opinions in religion was never disliked by our clergy, and we might probably have seen it at as great a height in this, as in the succeeding reign, had it not been extremely impolitic to furnish the vast number of enemies the reformation then had in the kingdom, with the power of retorting the same objection against the protestant religion, that had been so successfully urged against popery. Indeed it is pretty extraordinary, their policy should suffer the clergy to give those open proofs of their disposition which they then did: but it is at the same time a very powerful argument of that disposition, since neither policy, which generally much governs ecclesiastics, nor the

* Hist. of the refor. vol. 2. p. 112.

consideration of what they themselves had so lately felt, could prevail on them entirely to suppress it, even in those early days of their power. And though the legislature has wisely thought fit to pare their talons since; yet in some later reigns, when any of our princes have through weakness or ill designs countenanced their usurped power, we find it employed with no less severity than formerly against all, that seemed to disapprove of it; and though they could not extend it against the lives of such, yet they have done it to the greatest degree against the liberty of their persons, their characters, and fortunes.

The succeeding reign of queen *Mary*, in which the church of *Rome* was again uppermost, is an instance of the miseries of a state governed by a woman, over whose passions bigotry, and a false zeal for religion, had the whole ascendant. She delivered herself up to her confessor, “and * was as much addicted to the humours and interests of the clergy, as they could wish.” The interest of the state was entirely neglected, *Calais*, which had been for ages maintained, and was the last monument of our former victories in *France*, acquired at the expence of so much

* *Burnet.*

blood and treasure, was now lost: and as this properly may be considered as a reign of priests, we never find one more mean and contemptible.

The reformation, which was re-established under queen *Elizabeth*, met with the same opposition from the majority of the clergy, that it had formerly. It would be foreign to the design of these few sheets, to enter into an account of the particular steps taken in that affair; but it was observable, the clergy for the most part made it a maxim to give what opposition they could to the reformation: but as soon as any steps towards it were settled by parliamentary authority, they chose to reconcile them to their consciences, notwithstanding * the disapprobation they had expressed, rather than quit their preferments. But though the reformed religion may from this reign be said to be perfectly settled in the kingdom, we shall be very much deceived, if we expect to find any great amendment in its clergy. We shall soon perceive much of the old leaven still remaining. The same pursuit of wealth, power, and independency was still resolved upon: but as all changes in government produce the same in politics, so their schemes

* Hist of the refor.

for the accomplishment of their designs were to be a little altered; and this like subtle politicians they did not fail to do.

It now became more necessary than formerly for the clergy to pay their court to temporal princes. In order thereto, we shall find them devising new doctrines pernicious to the happiness and liberty of mankind, and from being the janizaries of the papacy, as they are aptly stiled by a great author, become those of arbitrary power, as we shall fully see them in the following reign. And the event has proved the prophecy, in a letter imputed to the famous *Machiavel*, but too true, where speaking of the miseries brought upon mankind, and the corruption of religion by the ecclesiastics, which called for a thorough reformation, we find these words: “ * I would not be understood
 “ to dissuade any from honouring true aposto-
 “ lical teachers, when they shall be established
 “ amongst us, and from allowing them (even
 “ of right, and not of alms or courtesy) such
 “ emoluments, as may enable them chearful-
 “ ly to perform the duties of their charge, to
 “ provide for their children, and even to use
 “ hospitality, as they are commanded by St.
 “ *Paul*. But this I will prophesy, that if

* *Mac's, English* tran. p. 541.

“ princes shall perform this business (meaning
 “ a reformation) by halves, and leave any
 “ root of this clergy or priestcraft, as it now
 “ is amongst us; or if that famous reformer
 “ fled some years since out of *Picardy* to *Gene-*
 “ *va*, who is of so great renown for learning
 “ and parts, shall not in his model wholly ex-
 “ tirpate this sort of men; then, I say, I must
 “ foretel, that as well the magistrate, as this
 “ workman, will find themselves deceived in
 “ their expectation, and that the least fibra of
 “ this plant will over-run again the whole
 “ vineyard of the Lord, and turn to a diffusive
 “ papacy in every diocese, perhaps in every
 “ parish.”

Whoever impartially considers the reign of
James I. cannot but discover, that the arbi-
 trary notions which that weak and self-suffi-
 cient prince had got into his head, were
 greatly promoted by the discourses and exces-
 sive flattery of the clergy: and it was from
 those principles, all the miseries this kingdom
 soon afterwards felt, have entirely proceeded.

The doctrine of unlimited passive obedience
 to princes is a plant purely of protestant
 growth; I mean, of protestant priest-craft:
 or at least if it had ever a being before in
 the brain of any enthusiastical or interested
 priest,

priest, the clergy of the reformed church of *England* may claim the sole honour of having cherished, and brought it to perfection. How much soever the clergy had hitherto contributed towards the oppressions of the people, yet we never find they had the impudence to maintain it was a part of religion and their duty to submit to them, till these times I am speaking of.

The first use they made of this disposition in king *James I.* was to render the puritans more obnoxious to him; towards whom already he was far from being well inclined, though he had formerly declared quite the contrary in *Scotland*. Their different opinions in regard to the hierarchy rendered them extremely odious to the bishops, and they dreaded the growth of their opinions more than those of popery itself, as appears by their conduct throughout this reign. The bishops therefore represented the puritans as men, whose principles were destructive to monarchy, no less than to the government of the church by bishops; a charge, that could not fail confirming a prince of his sentiments in his aversion towards them.

In a conference * appointed at this time for form's sake between the bishops and puritan

* *Rapin*, vol. 2. p. 162.

ministers, the archbishop of *Canterbury* (a moderate man reckoned, as times went) did not scruple to make use of an expression of flattery to the king so high-strained, as to be almost blasphemous; for, upon the king's replying himself to the objections of the ministers, he cried out he verily believed it was by the spirit of God, the king spoke what he then did.

But it was not by words alone, that the bishops flattered the king, and shewed their approbation of his arbitrary principles. Archbishop *Bancroft*, like a true high-flying churchman, was resolved to lead the way in an attempt to make the laws depend on the sole will of the king. He * therefore in the name of all the clergy exhibited to the king in council articles containing twenty-five pretended grievances, which he desired might be reformed in granting prohibitions from the civil courts. The archbishop could not but know, that in such cases the judges acted according to the fixed laws of the land; and that if there was any hardship in their proceedings, they could not be reformed but by authority of parliament. But the archbishop's drift in this conduct was to point out a method to others of applying immediately to the

* See *Coke's articuli cleri*, 2d inst.

king, without regarding the parliament, in things, that were undeniably within their jurisdiction; which opportunity, he imagined, king *James* would readily have embraced, by which also the clergy would have gained a point, they could not have expected from the justice and wisdom of the whole legislature. It is not improbable, but the king might have been gained to their cause, had it not been for the unanimous and strenuous opposition of the judges, who represented the illegality of the archbishop's request, and the dangerous consequences, that might happen from it.

Soon afterwards two books were publicly licensed; the one wrote by Dr. *Cowel*, professor of civil law at *Cambridge*, and vicar-general to archbishop *Bancroft*; the other by one Dr. *Blackwood*, a clergyman, in which were passages in favour of the most extravagant maxims of arbitrary * power. The first laid down these three principles.

1st, That the king was not bound by laws, or his coronation-oath.

* *R pin*, vol. 2. p. 176.

2dly, That the king was not obliged to call a parliament to make laws, but might do it alone by his absolute power.

3dly, That it was a great favour to admit the consent of the subjects in giving subsidies.

These principles were so gross, that even the king found himself obliged to forbid the reading those books, by proclamation, in order to prevent the justice of parliament upon the authors.

The successor of the archbishop just mentioned, indeed proved a man of more moderation in his principles, than is usually met with in church-men: but as such a temper made him unfit for promoting the designs of his brethren, we find him always hated and branded by them. He could not approve of the rigour used to dissenting protestants, at the same time that the *Roman* catholics were openly tolerated by the king, and winked at by the clergy, contrary to the declared laws of the realm: his * letter to the king on this occasion, and the freedom he uses in condemning the dispensing by proclamation with the

* *Rush.* vol. 8. p. 85.

established laws, will ever redound to his honour; notwithstanding the persecution and ill usage he met with from his brethren, who strove to represent him as a puritan; a name at this time indiscriminately made use of, not only towards the presbyterians, but likewise towards all such, who did not approve of the notions countenanced by the king, and propagated by the clergy, nay even towards those, who expressed any dislike of the libertinism, or fashionable vices of the age.

As the fruit of the seeds sown in this reign came to their full maturity in the following one, I will dwell no longer on this than just to observe, that if the reader pleases to see a specimen of true priestly panegyrick carried on to the most ridiculous and fulsome extravagance, he may meet with it in an extract of the sermon preached at king *James's* funeral, printed in † *Rushworth*.

Under *Charles I.* the spirit of our churchmen displayed itself without reserve in its most lively colours, and stript of all disguise whatsoever. By their means *England* was on the brink of being enslaved by the king, and clergy at the same time. The views the church had,

† Vol. I. p. 160.

manifestly appeared as early as the coronation of the king. The form of that ceremony was compiled chiefly by bishop *Laud*, who officiated as dean of *Westminster* in the room of bishop *Williams* lately fallen into displeasure, and therefore suspended from that office. I will not trouble the reader with several superstitious innovations introduced into the ceremony, which could not but give offence; but will set down one passage, which sufficiently shews the schemes the church had formed.

After the coronation was performed, and the king conducted by the nobility to the throne, this remarkable, and unprecedented passage was read to him.

“ Stand † and hold fast from henceforth the
 “ place, to which you have been heir by the
 “ succession of your fore-fathers, being now
 “ delivered to you by authority of almighty
 “ God, and by the hands of us, and all the
 “ bishops and servants of God: and as you
 “ see the clergy to come nearer the altar than
 “ others, so remember that (in all places con-
 “ venient) you give them greater honour,
 “ that the mediator between God and man

† *Ruth.* vol. 1. p. 200.

“ may establish you in the kingly throne to
“ be a mediator between the clergy and laity,
“ and that you may reign for ever with Jesus
“ Christ, the king of kings, and lord of
“ lords.”

As the drift of this speech is obvious to every one, who reads it, I shall only observe what a prospect there was of the clergy's extending their power to the height of their wishes, whenever they should have a prelate at their head (which soon after happened) that asserted their superiority on so public, and solemn an occasion.

Since *Laud* afterwards made so considerable a figure in this reign, especially in the direction of all ecclesiastical affairs, it may not be improper to mention the account given of him, and his first appearance in the world in the late reign by archbishop *Abbot* his predecessor.

“ This man (says † he) is the only in-
“ ward counsellor with *Buckingham*, sitting
“ with him sometimes whole hours, and
“ feeding his humour with malice and
“ spite.

† *Russw.* vol. 1. p. 440.

“ His life in *Oxford* was to pick quarrels
 “ in the lectures of the public readers, and
 “ to advertise them to the then bishop of
 “ *Durham*, that he might fill the ears of king
 “ *James* with discontent against the honest
 “ men, that took pains in their places, and
 “ settled the truth (which he called purita-
 “ nism) in their auditors.

“ He made it his work to see what books
 “ were in the press, and to look over epistles
 “ dedicatory, and prefaces to the reader, to
 “ see what faults might be found in them.

“ It was an observation, what a sweet man
 “ this was like to be, that the first observable
 “ act, that he did, was the marrying the earl
 “ of *D.* to the lady *R.* when it was notorious
 “ to the world, she had another husband, the
 “ same a nobleman, who had diverse children
 “ then living by her.”

We shall soon see the clergy did not fail
 prosecuting their designs with vigour, of which
 they had made so early a discovery. The
 university of *Cambridge*, in the beginning of this
 reign, in order to make their court to his ma-
 jesty, took a public occasion to offer a noto-
 rious affront to the representative body of the
 whole

whole people, the commons in parliament, by chusing the duke of *Buckingham*, at that time under an impeachment, for their chancellor. Accordingly we find the commons entertained the highest sense of this indignity offered them, as appears in their answer to a message of the king's † on this occasion: though his majesty's espousing the part of the university prevented their proceeding in a manner, they were otherwise inclined to do.

This parliament was no sooner dissolved, which happened in a short time, and the king determined to furnish himself with money by loan, and other illegal and oppressive methods, but the pulpits sounded with the doctrine of passive obedience, and compliance with the king's commands, without any examination of their lawfulness. Parliaments were now said to be only usurpations upon the unlimited power of sacred majesty, which alone was sufficient to impose laws or taxes on the subject by its own authority. Amongst the several discourses on that head, those of Dr. *Sibthorp* and Dr. *Manwaring* were particularly remarkable. The one preached at the lent assizes at *Northampton* a sermon entitled apostolical obedience; in which he set forth,

* *Rush.* vol. 1. p. 373.

“ that * the prince who is head, and makes
 “ his court and council, it is his duty to di-
 “ rect and make laws, *Eccles. viii. 3.* he doth
 “ *whatsoever pleases him. Where the word*
 “ *of a king is, there is power, and who may*
 “ *say unto him, what doest thou? —*

“ If princes command any thing, which
 “ subjects may not perform, because it is
 “ against the laws of God, or of nature, or
 “ impossible; yet subjects are bound to un-
 “ dergo the punishment without resistance,
 “ railing, or reviling, and so yield a passive
 “ obedience, where they cannot exhibit an
 “ active one.

“ I know no other case, but one of those
 “ three, wherein a subject may excuse himself
 “ with passive obedience, but in all other he
 “ is bound to active obedience.”

Dr. *Manwaring* promoted the same business
 in two sermons preached before the king at
Whitehall, where he delivered for doctrine to
 this purpose, “ that the king is not bound to
 “ observe the laws of the realm concerning
 “ the subjects rights and liberties, but that his
 “ royal will and command in imposing loans

* *Rushw.* vol. 1. p. 423.

“ and taxes without common consent in parliament doth oblige the subject’s conscience
 “ on pain of eternal damnation.

“ That those, who refused to pay this loan,
 “ offended against the law of God, and the
 “ king’s supreme authority, and became guilty
 “ of impiety, disloyalty, and rebellion. And
 “ that the authority of parliament is not necessary
 “ for the raising of aids and subsidies,
 “ and that the slow proceedings of such great
 “ assemblies were not fitted for the supply of
 “ the state’s urgent necessities, but would rather
 “ produce sundry impediments to the
 “ just designs of princes.

For refusing to license the first of these sermons, that archbishop (*Abbot*) was suspended. The sermon was afterwards licensed by the bishop of *London*. As for the preachers themselves, they were soon rewarded with considerable benefices, and *Manwaring* was even promoted to a bishopric, though he had been sentenced by the house of lords to pay a large fine, to make a public submission, and declared incapable of holding any dignity.

It was not discourses of this kind only, that were publickly preached, and afterwards encouraged and licensed by the bishops; but

we find by a petition of the booksellers and printers to the * parliament in the fourth year of this reign, that books wrote against the fundamentals of the reformed religion, and in favour of popery were licenced by *Laud*, at this time advanced to the see of *London*; while books wrote in defence of the established religion were restrained, and of these several instances were produced.

Every one, who is at all versed in the history of these times, cannot but have observed, that in order to carry church-power as high as possible, the bishops then affected to make the religion of this country approach as near popery, as they could, without actually declaring for it, or allowing the pope's supremacy. As bishop *Laud* was the chief promoter of the independent power, they were striving for, and had himself the direction of all ecclesiastical affairs, it would not have been for his interest to have established any other supremacy, especially after he became archbishop of *Canterbury*; for he then was in a manner himself pope, and even affected to be called his holiness, and most holy father, as he was stiled by the university of *Oxford* † in many of their letters and addresses.

* *Rush-w.* vol. 1. p. 655.

† *Heylin's Life of Laud*, p. 297.

Besides the licensing of the books, which I have taken notice of, the many superstitious innovations introduced at that time into divine service are notable proofs of the affectation of popery, the clergy then discovered; of which the consecration of *St. Catherine's* church, is a very remarkable instance. The reader may see the full account of it in *Rushworth* or *Rapin*. The least opposition to any of these things was an unpardonable crime; which we see by the process formed against *Henry Sherfield*, recorder of *Sarum*, for only removing by consent of the vestry some pieces of glass from the church-window, in which there was a ridiculous representation of God painted in the form of an old man, with a pair of compasses: for which high offence the poor * man was fined, committed to the Fleet, and removed from his recordership, and bound to his good behaviour.

The bishops were become so intoxicated with their darling scheme of church power, which they did not doubt to accomplish, that they set up for inquisitors in their several dioceses, by obliging the church-wardens to turn informers concerning the lives and actions

* *Rushw.* vol. 1. p. 153.

of their parishioners, to which the bishop of *Winchester* obliged them by oath * in his primary visitation, and thereby committed an outrage on the laws of the land, and jurisdiction of parliament, which alone has power to prescribe oaths to the subjects.

Nor can these attempts of the clergy in this reign be said to be only the actions of particular men, and therefore not chargeable upon the whole; the contrary to this appears in that, after the parliament of 1640 was dissolved, the convocation, in which the whole clergy were represented, continued to sit notwithstanding contrary to the usual method; and by their own authority took upon them to make canons, and enjoin an oath, which all graduates and clergymen in the universities should be obliged to take; they also granted the king a subsidy, a most public and avowed encroachment on the jurisdiction of parliament.

These proceedings were so notorious, that my lord *Clarendon* cannot help condemning them, though he does it with his usual tenderness for the cause in which he wrote. “ † The
“ convocation (says he) the regular and legal

* *Rushaw.* vol. 1. p. 186. † Vol. 1. p. 116.

“ assembly of the clergy, customarily begin-
 “ ning and ending with parliaments, was af-
 “ ter the determination of the last, by a new
 “ writ continued, and sat for the space of
 “ above a month under the proper title of a
 “ synod: made canons, which it was thought
 “ it might do, and gave subsidies out of par-
 “ liament, and enjoined oaths, which certainly
 “ it might not do. In a word, did many
 “ things, which in the best of times might
 “ have been questioned, and were sure to be
 “ condemned in the worst.” But as impudent
 as this conduct seems to be, it was not at all
 surprizing, since the bishops had some time
 before that scrupled publicly to declare their
 independency on the state in defiance of the
 laws of the land, and the principles, thereby
 established at the reformation, and in violation
 of their oath of supremacy. And this was
 done, as *Whitlock* informs us, in the high-
 commission court, at the time that *Bastwick*
 appeared there, and was so severely punished
 for writing a book in answer to one *Short*, a
 papist, who had maintained the pope’s supre-
 macy. The author just mentioned, relates it
 thus: “ * In the censure of *Bastwick*, all the
 “ bishops then present denied openly, that
 “ they had their jurisdiction, as bishops, from

* *Whitl. Mem.* p. 22.

“ the king, for which they might have been
 “ censured themselves in king *Henry II.* and
 “ king *Edward III.*’s times.

“ But they affirmed, that they had their ju-
 “ risdiction from God alone; which denial of
 “ the supremacy of the king under God, king
 “ *Henry VIII.* would have taken very ill, and
 “ it may be, would have corrected them by
 “ his kingly arguments, and *regia manu.* But
 “ these bishops publickly disavowed their de-
 “ pendance on the king. And the archbishop
 “ maintained the book of *Chowney* (who had
 “ wrote a book at this time in defence of the
 “ church of *Rome*) and that the *Romish*
 “ church was a true church, and erred not in
 “ fundamentals.”

The court of high-commission was now become an unsupportable grievance to the subject, not only by a tyrannical exercise of power in ecclesiastical affairs, but by assuming to itself an universal jurisdiction, by trampling on the laws and the rights of all the civil courts; so that the subject deprived of his refuge, had no shelter to fly to from injustice and oppression: and for this I chuse to quote lord *Clarendon*’s own words, as I am certain, he cannot be thought to have misrepresented the matter in disfavour of the clergy.

“ Of

“ * Of late (speaking of the high-commission
“ court) it cannot be denied, that by the great
“ power of some bishops at court, it had
“ much over-flowed the banks, which should
“ have contained it ; not only in meddling with
“ things that in truth were not within its con-
“ nufance, but extending their sentences and
“ judgments in matters triable before them
“ beyond that degree, that was justifiable : and
“ grew to have so great a contempt of the
“ common law, and professors of it (which
“ was a fatal unskilfulness in the bishops, who
“ could never have suffered whilst the com-
“ mon law had been preserved) that prohibi-
“ tions from the supreme court, which have,
“ and must have the super-intendancy over
“ all inferior courts, were not only neglect-
“ ed, but the judges reprehended for granting
“ them (which without perjury they could
“ not deny) and the lawyers discountenanced
“ for moving them (which they were ob-
“ liged in duty to do) so that thereby the
“ clergy made almost a whole profession, if
“ not their enemies, yet very undevoted to
“ them.

“ Then it was grown from an ecclesiastical
“ court for the reformation of manners to a

“ court of revenue, and imposed great fines
 “ upon those, who were culpable before them,
 “ sometimes above the degree of the offence,
 “ had the jurisdiction of fining been unques-
 “ tionable, which it was not. Which course of
 “ fining was much more frequent, and the
 “ fines heavier after the king had granted all
 “ that revenue (whatsoever it should prove to
 “ be) to be employed for the reparation of *St.*
 “ *Paul’s* church; which though it were a glo-
 “ rious work, and worthy the piety of those,
 “ that advanced it; and the greatness of his
 “ mind, who principally intended it, made the
 “ grievance the heavier.”

In another place the same noble historian
 speaking of the animosities between the law-
 yers and churchmen, attributes the hatred
 on the part of the latter to their opinion,
 that their not enjoying so many of the great
 posts in the civil government as formerly, was
 owing to the opposition of the lawyers. A
 true instance of the ambition of priests, which
 rather than not gratify, they were ready to
 destroy the laws themselves. “ It * cannot
 “ be denied (says lord *Clarendon*) that the
 “ peevish spirits of some clergymen have ta-
 “ ken great pains to alienate that profession

* Vol. 1. p. 241.

“ (meaning the lawyers) from them: and
“ others as unskilfully (finding that in former
“ times, when the religion of the state was a
“ vital part of its policy, many churchmen
“ were employed eminently in the civil govern-
“ ment of the kingdom) imputed their want-
“ ing those ornaments, their predecessors wore,
“ to the power and prevalency of the lawyers,
“ of whom some principal men in all times,
“ they could not but observe to have been
“ their avowed enemies: and so believed the
“ straitning and confining the profession of
“ the common law must naturally extend
“ and enlarge the jurisdiction of the church.
“ Thence arose their bold and unwarrantable
“ opposing, and protesting against prohibitions
“ and other proceedings at law, on the behalf
“ of the ecclesiastical courts; and the procu-
“ ring some orders and privileges from the
“ king on behalf of the civil law, as the arch-
“ bishop of *Cantebury* prevailed with the king
“ to direct, that half the masters of chancery
“ should be always civil lawyers, and to de-
“ clare, that no others of what condition
“ whatsoever should serve him as masters of
“ request.”

It is well known that archbishop *Laud*, the principal promoter of all the doctrines advanced in this reign, and of the grievances, which

which flowed from them, is even at this day the darling of the clergy, and looked upon as the champion of their rights, and a martyr for the cause of religion. The greatest encomiums have been bestowed on his memory. And my lord *Clarendon* in his history sets him forth, as a man of the highest probity, learning, and sense, and seems willing to attribute no other fault to him than a little hastiness in his temper for accomplishing his designs, occasioned by the fervency of his zeal for promoting the cause of religion, and glory of his prince. But in forming a just idea of his character, we need be determined by nothing but the share he had in the transactions of those times; and I will venture to affirm, that my lord *Clarendon* himself does in some particular passages say enough of *Laud* to prove, he was far from deserving that amiable and good character, he seems studious to make his reader entertain of him. Whoever reads an historian in the proper manner, that is, with a view of searching out truth, must form his judgment of things from the matters of fact set down, and not be so led away by what the author says concerning them, and his reflections upon them, as blindly to adopt his sentiments and opinions. And I am confident, that to any reader, who will attend without prejudice to the words of that noble historian

just

just mentioned, *Laud* must appear of a weak and over-bearing temper, apt to be transported with the highest and most indecent passion at mere trifles, unforgiving towards those, who had formerly offended him, constantly introducing innovations in order to establish an independent power in the church, and not scrupulous of using any methods to increase the king's revenues under pretence of promoting the service of his sovereign. The first, and last particulars of this charge are so very obvious, that I cannot help setting down both passages relating to them at length. “ * The sharpness of his language and expressions was so natural to him, that he could not debate any thing without commotion, when the argument was not of moment, nor bear contradiction in debate even in council, where all men are equally free, with that patience and temper, that was necessary; of which they, who wished him not well, would take advantage, and would therefore contradict him, that he might be transported with some indecent passion: which upon a short reflection he was always sorry for, and most readily and heartily would make acknowledgment.”

* Vol. i. p. 75.

As to the last particular, his conduct, when in the management of the treasury upon the death of lord *Portland*, is related thus: “ Being * obliged to it now by his trust, he entered upon it with his natural earnestness and warmth, making it his principal care to advance and improve the king’s revenue by all the ways, which were offered, and so hearkened to all informations and propositions of that kind; and having not had experience of that kind of people, who deal in that traffick, (a confident, senseless, and, for the most part, a naughty people) he was sometimes misled by them to think better of some projects, than they deserved: but then he was so entirely devoted, to what would be beneficial to the king, that all propositions and designs, which were for the profit (only or principally) of particular persons, how great soever, were opposed, and stifled in their birth by his power and authority; which created him enemies enough in the court, and many of ability to do mischief, who knew well how to recompense discourtesies, which they always called injuries.

* Vol. 1. p. 75.

“ The revenue of too many of the court
 “ consisted principally in inclosures, and im-
 “ provements of that nature, which he still
 “ opposed passionately, except they were
 “ founded upon law; and then if it would
 “ bring profit to the king, how old and ob-
 “ solete soever the law was, he thought he
 “ might justly advise the prosecution: and so
 “ he did a little too much countenance the
 “ commission concerning depopulation, which
 “ brought much charge and trouble upon the
 “ people, and was likewise cast upon his
 “ account.”

We have a remarkable instance in this reign,
 how excellent casuists the clergy are, and
 what a notable knack they have of distinguish-
 ing in cases of conscience suitably to the shape
 and conveniency of the times. When king
Charles, being pressed to pass the bill for attaint-
 ing the earl of *Strafford*, discovered great un-
 willingness to give his consent to what, he said,
 his conscience told him was so unjust; he
 was desired by his council to confer with his
 bishops on that point. Accordingly “ * the
 “ archbishop of *York*, who was at hand, to
 “ his argument of conscience, told him there

* *Clarend. hist. of reb. vol. 1. p. 202.*

“ was a public, and a private conscience :
 “ that his public conscience, as a king, might
 “ not only dispense with, but oblige him to
 “ do that, which was against his private con-
 “ science, as a man.”

Were I to give a full account, and all the particular instances of the mischievous conduct and behaviour of the clergy in these times, it would be taking upon me to write a history of the reign, which is very foreign from my design: for in short, all the troubles in this reign are in the greatest measure to be set down to their account. All the innovations in church and state, all the attempts to erect an independency in the first, and a tyranny in the latter, were countenanced by their doctrine, and promoted by their actions. And in this I am confirmed by the testimony of a great man, whose authority in this point cannot be questioned, since his zeal for the established church, and his attachment to his prince were so great, that he lost his life in their defence. This is the lord *Falkland*, with part of whose speech in the house of commons, upon the bill for the exclusion of the bishops from the house of lords, I shall conclude my account of this reign.

“ Mr. * Speaker, he is a great stranger in
“ *Israel*, who knows not, that this kingdom
“ hath long laboured under many and great
“ oppressions both in religion and liberty;
“ and his acquaintance here is not great, or his
“ ingenuity less, who does not know and ac-
“ knowledge, that a great, if not a principal
“ cause of both these hath been some bishops,
“ and their adherents.

“ Mr. Speaker, a little search will serve to
“ find them to have been the destruction of
“ unity under the pretence of uniformity, to
“ have brought in superstition and scandal
“ under the titles of reverence and decency,
“ to have defiled our church by adorning our
“ church, to have slackened the strictness of
“ that union, which was formerly betwixt us
“ and those of our religion beyond the sea, an
“ action as impolitic as ungodly.

“ As Sir *Thomas More* says of the casuists,
“ their business was not to keep men from
“ sinning, but to inform them, *quam trope ad*
“ *peccatum sine peccato licet accedere*: so it
“ seemed their work was to try, how much of
“ a papist might be brought in without po-
“ pery, and to destroy as much as they could

* *Ruslow*. vol. 4. p. 184.

“ of the gospel without bringing themselves
 “ in danger of being destroyed by law.

“ Mr. Speaker, to go yet further, some of
 “ them have so industriously laboured to de-
 “ duce themselves from *Rome*, that they have
 “ given great suspicion, that in gratitude they
 “ desire to return thither, or at least to meet
 “ it half way. Some have evidently laboured
 “ to bring in an *English*, though not a *Roman*
 “ popery; I mean not the outside of it only,
 “ and dress of it, but equally absolute, a blind
 “ obedience of the people upon the clergy,
 “ and of the clergy upon themselves; and have
 “ opposed papacy beyond the sea, that they
 “ might fettle one beyond the water: nay,
 “ common fame is more than ordinarily false,
 “ if none of them have found a way to recon-
 “ cile the opinions of *Rome* to the prefer-
 “ ments of *England*, and to be so absolutely,
 “ directly, and cordially papists, that it is all,
 “ fifteen hundred pounds *per annum*, can do,
 “ to keep them from confessing it.”

I would not be understood from any thing
 I have said of the protestant clergy to infi-
 nue, that their conduct had any necessary
 connection with the principles of our esta-
 blished religion: but my design is only to shew
 the ill consequence of throwing so great a share
 of

of power and property into the hands of any set of men, as shall naturally occasion them to have a distinct interest from that of the community. And therefore I must observe, the presbyterian ministers discovered no less fondness for power than those of the church of *England*, or less inclination to oppress all, who thought differently from them, during that short time, in which they vainly imagined every thing was to be carried on according to those whimsies, they had formed in their heads.*

It is surprizing to consider how little effect the consideration of the miseries, this kingdom so lately felt, had upon the minds of the clergy after the restoration of *Charles II.* It was to be expected, they would have shunned with horror those steps, which had been found by experience to have exposed their country to ruin, and have blushed at the bare mention of those doctrines, by which they themselves had been so eminently accessory thereto.

But compassion for the sufferings of their country, and a regard for the rest of their fellow subjects, weighed very little with them, when put in the ballance with the hopes of preferment

* A very good reason this, against establishing any priests whatever, or giving them any power at all.

preferment under a new king, and an irreconcilable hatred to the presbyterians. They fell into all the maxims and designs of an abandoned, licentious and corrupt court, and extolled the justness and wisdom of its measures.

Nor did they shew any greater regard for the religious than civil rights of the kingdom, though the disposition of those, who were nearest the king, claimed no small circumspection from them * in that point. And though they could not but be sensible of the dangers, which so evidently threatned religion from a popish successor, yet they were the most violent exclaimers against the bill of exclusion †; and when it came into the house of lords, most of the bishops present, if not all, voted against it: and with such zeal did they run into the humour of the court at that time, that it was observed, they fully verified the proverb in the gospel, “where the carcase is, the eagles will be gathered together.”

Nor was the zeal of the clergy for the designs of the court the overflowings only of an incontinent joy at the king's restoration, which might have engaged their whole attention in such a manner, as to prevent so early

* *Raⁱin.*† *Burnet*, p. 482.

a discernment of the wrong measures then taken; but when the mask was quite thrown off, and the king, having quarrelled with his last parliament, discovered his resolution never to be cramped with one for the future, “ * the clergy particularly distinguished themselves by shewing their attachment to the principles and maxims of the court, and seemed to make it their business to surrender to the king all the liberties and privileges of the subjects, and to leave them only an unlimited obedience. According to the principles publicly preached, no eastern monarch was more absolute than the king of *England*.” The conduct of the late parliaments was arraigned, as seditious and treasonable: and, at the archbishop of *Canterbury*’s own † motion, the clergy were made the heralds for publishing the reasons, the king in his declaration pretended he had, for dissolving the parliament, which was to be read in all churches throughout *England*.

It is strange, how prevalent the most absurd and destructive opinions are over the minds of good and wise men, when propagated as the general sentiments of that body,

* *Rapin*, vol. 2. p. 725. † *Burnet*, p. 502.

of which they are members. And of this we have an extraordinary instance in a great man, whose name I cannot mention on this occasion without reluctance: I mean, the famous archbishop *Tillotson*, who from his letter to my lord *Ruffel*, when under condemnation in *Newgate*, the latter end of this reign, appears to have held the doctrine of unlimited passive obedience, in the strictest sense of the words; though afterwards experience of the fatal consequences, that flowed from such doctrine, it is to be presumed, made him act upon principles very different from those, into which he had been before misled; and no one appeared a more strenuous well-wisher to the revolution, that followed in the next reign.

Since then the prevalency of general opinions may have that force in misleading more discerning and maturer judgments, with what detestation must we look on the behaviour of those, who having the education of a great part of the youth of the nation, and those too of highest distinction, committed to their care, should, in order to recommend themselves to a prince, endeavour to corrupt the raw and uninformed minds of such youth with the most ungenerous and slavish doctrines? This was what the university of *Oxford* did; who,
not

not content with * giving the king a manifest proof, by a solemn decree, of their own mean and prostitute compliance with all his designs, whatsoever they should be; infamously ordered, by the same decree, all tutors to instruct those under their care in the same servile notions, that they themselves had therein expressed. What treatment did not these betrayers of the most important charge, their country could intrust them with, deserve from it? Who, instead of forming the minds of their pupils, by an early acquaintance with the celebrated authors of antiquity, to an imitation of *Greek* and *Roman* virtues, and of animating them by the noblest examples with

* Amongst other doctrines, these following were condemned as damnable, and destructive to all society, *viz.*

All civil authority is derived originally from the people.

There is a mutual compact, tacit or express, between a prince and his subjects; and that if he perform not his duty, they are discharged from theirs.

That if governors become tyrants, or govern otherwise, than by the laws of God and man they ought to do, they forfeit the right they had unto their government.

There lies no obligation on christians to passive obedience; and the primitive christians chose rather to die than resist, because christianity was not settled by the laws of the empire.

Vide *Rapin*, vol. 2. p. 730.

the love of virtue, freedom, and their country; who, instead of fortifying their minds with a generous courage, and contempt of death, if ever the public service should require it, taught them to become submissive slaves of oppression, fit only to execute the will and commands of tyrants.

After the death of *Charles II.* the duke of *York* succeeded to the crown with the general appearance of approbation and joy in the clergy, though the principles of his religion had been sufficiently known; and there was great reason to believe, that the wrong steps, and violent measures taken in the latter end of his brother's reign, were greatly pushed forward by the natural earnestness of the duke's temper and councils. These considerations, one would have thought, should have more particularly obliged the clergy to the greatest circumspection and caution in all they said or did, to avoid giving the least countenance to any opinions, which they were sensible must hurry a prince of *James's* complexion of mind more precipitately into such designs, as his religious, and other principles of course inclined him to; and in which they could not but discern, he would have no other check than the appearance of difficulty and opposition, he might meet with in the accomplishment of them.

But

But so far were they from using any precaution of this kind, that after king *James* came to the crown, unlimited obedience was trumpeted, if possible, with more industry than ever in the pulpit, and all other places. And how necessary, and inseparable a part they thought it of the christian religion, as established here, is manifest from the insulting importunity (for surely it can be called no other) with which the unfortunate * duke of *Mn-mouth* was pressed to acknowledge it on the scaffold by those appointed to attend him, who were the bishops of *Ely*, and of *Bath* and *Wells*; together with Dr. *Tenison* and Dr. *Hooper*. Nay, so careful were some of the clergy, that the regal power should not seem liable to any restraints or limitations, that lest the king's own gracious promises, which he had made at his coming to the crown, might be thought to bind him down to the performance of them, Dr. *Cartwright*, afterwards bishop of *Chester* †, asserted in a sermon, “ that the king's promises were free donatives, “ and ought not to be too strictly examined or “ urged, and that they must leave his majesty “ to explain his own meaning in them.”

* See Dr. *Sachev.* tryal, p. 169.

† *Rapin*, vol. 2. p. 754.

After a view of such principles and conduct hitherto, it may seem something strange to find on a sudden, that the career of this king's illegal proceedings, met with one of the first stops from some of the clergy; this was in their refusal to read the king's declaration for liberty of conscience, on account of which, seven of the bishops were committed to the *Tower*. But in this non-compliance with the court (unusual as it was) they swerved not from their usual maxims of policy. They plainly now began to see, that their own interest, and the designs of the king were no longer compatible. A *Roman*, not an *English*, popery, as in *Charles I's* time, was now to be established here. The affair of *Magdalen college* in *Oxford* had opened their eyes to a sense of the danger they run, in being further tools to his designs, and that they were likely to hold their ecclesiastical possessions by the uncertain tenure of the king's will. In such a case it was impossible not to foresee, that their preferments would be soon given from them to such men, who having had their education in the church of *Rome*, would be more relied on by a bigotted king, and who indeed would be more proper to execute the work, he was in such a hurry to accomplish, than an *English* clergy, who if they could be disposed to embrace

brace his religion, yet could with a very ill grace and success be supposed to propagate it amongst the people. What was then to be expected, but to see large bands of foreign ecclesiastics pouring in upon the nation, as in the times of *Henry III.* and the plentiful harvest, which the king flattered himself was now ripe, gathered in by the hands of *French* and *Italian* priests? Was it not therefore the cause of the church alone, not that of public liberty, nor a regard for the interest of the people, that wrought this sudden alteration in the clergy? The attempts upon civil liberty had remained uncensured, and unopposed, nay were enforced by them on pain of damnation; and none of these very bishops had scrupled, or thought it even indecent to publish in their pulpits the late king's abusive declaration against the conduct of his parliament, insomuch that this same archbishop, who was now one of the seven, was the person, that proposed it in council, as has been mentioned above. So used had king *James* been to hear an absolute obedience to his commands preached up by the clergy, and to meet with a full compliance with them in other matters, that on this opposition he very naturally said, "I * did not expect this from the church of *England*, especially from some of you."

* *Rapin*, vol. 2. p. 763.

Behold now the clergy all at once running counter to those doctrines of their own broaching, which they had with so much vehemence maintained, and becoming guilty of what they themselves had so very lately denounced the heaviest censures and damnations against, both in their particular sermons and discourses, and in their more solemn and public decrees ! This is their so much boasted stand for the liberty of the people ! This, their ever-memorable conduct !

When soon afterwards the nation was under a necessity of calling in the prince of *Orange* for the preservation of their rights, though the clergy thought proper to swim with the stream, yet we see how awkwardly most of those shifting motley politicians came into what they were conscious was entirely contradictory to those maxims they had so avowedly inculcated : nor had king *William* been long on the throne, before a disappointment in those preferments, many of them expected, or a relapse into those doctrines, over which they could no longer bear to wear the mask, made them return, like the dog to the vomit ; giving great reason to suspect, that too many amongst them would gladly have seen the nation again exposed to its former perils by a restoration,

restoration,

restoration, with the aggravation of having taken the oaths of allegiance to king *William*, and abjuration of *James*.

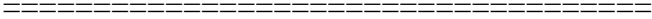
With this remarkable period in our history I shall close the present account, as the behaviour of the clergy since that time is so known, and fresh in the memory of every one, that it will be needless for me to say any thing of it here.

And as I have had no other inducement in laying this before the public, than a sincere zeal for the liberty of all my fellow subjects against every oppression of what kind soever; so if in this attempt any mistake has been committed (though I am not conscious of any at present) I shall always be ready ingenuously to acknowledge it.

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A N
A N S W E R
T O T H E

Country Parson's Plea

A G A I N S T T H E
Q U A K E R S Tythe-Bill.

I N A

Letter to the Right Reverend Author.

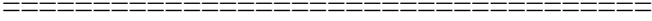
By a Member of the House of Commons.
The real Author Lord HERVEY.

From the second Edition corrected, printed 1736.

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A N

A N S W E R

T O T H E

Country PARSON'S PLEA, &c.

Very Reverend,

A Pamphlet hath been delivered at the doors of both houses of parliament, and sent under the franks of diverse of my lords the B——ps to the parochial clergy, entitled, PAPERS RELATING TO THE QUAKERS TYTHE-BILL, *viz.*

1. *Extracts from the yearly epistles of meeting of Quakers held in London, in relation to Tythes.*
2. *Remarks upon a Bill now depending in parliament, to enlarge, amend, and render more effectual the laws now in being, for the more easy recovery of tythes, church-rates, oblations, and other ecclesiastical*

fiastical dues, from the people called Quakers; *And also, remarks upon a printed paper, entituled, The case of the people called Quakers.*

3. THE COUNTRY PARSON'S PLEA AGAINST THE QUAKERS TYTHE-BILL, *humbly addressed to the commons of Great Britain assembled in parliament.*

4. *The case of the people called Quakers.*

The method of bundling up these papers is particularly to be noted,

For that,

The BILL, though much inveighed against, is not regularly *opened* in them; and

The CASE, which is the ground of the debate, is printed *at the end* of the papers designed to confute it, which seemeth, as if the compiler intended to prejudice the reader against both the *bill* and the *case*, before he should read either.

So very unfair a procedure deserves animadversion; and,

This answer is directed to the author of the *country parson's plea*, and not to either of his

his colleagues, because I would not be charged with designing to expose the *nakedness* of a *father*, or with deriding the dotage of a *mother* in the church ;

I would not be charged with directing my answer either to the *lightest*, or the *heaviest* of the triumvirate, whilst there is *one* to be animadverted upon, whose parts and capacity have raised him above contempt, even in spite of his *sowsing* * prostitution — of whom the cause of liberty and virtue might fear as much mischief, as he is known to bear malignity to it, were not his *abilities* so happily qualified by his *reputation*, that the most impotent cannot be more harmless.

This *country parson's plea* addresses itself to the commons of *Great Britain*, in a manner seemingly humble, modest, and fair.

1. ' It is presumed, *says the author*, that
' it can be no offence for the meanest to offer
' reasons to the greatest ;

2. ' Nor a reproach to any man to have
' a reasonable concern for his own property.

* A phrase used by lord *Bolinbroke* in his character of a certain prelate : *Vid. Dissertation on parties.*

3. 'Trusting to these presumptions, I
'make bold, &c.'

This specious preamble might induce us to believe,

That this country parson is humbly submitting his case to an house of commons better informed :

And not that it is the fact in this, as in every instance where a bill for the reformation of the church is brought into parliament, that one or two *venerable sages* draw up an invective against the bill before it hath had a second reading, and send it *franked* by the post to the clergy through the kingdom, to raise a clamour from their pulpits against the proceedings of parliament.

This invasion of the rights of the *house of commons* hath been so amply practised by their *spiritual L——ps*, that circular letters to the clergy of the several dioceses and of the two universities have been issued, under covers inscribed with R. R. *Names*, on the bringing in of bills in three several years, *viz.* First, the *Tythe-Bill*, 1731, next, the *ecclesiastical*
courts

court Bill, 1733, and lastly, the *Quakers tythe*-bill now depending.

With insolence still more alarming, the persons who issued those letters have as openly *menaced the members* who brought in those bills; threatening to oppose them in subsequent elections with the weight of church influence, which that it hath intimidated the *worthy members* I presume not to believe, I am sure it shall never intimidate me; but if the fact be enquired into, there are not wanting those who will make it fully appear.

Not that any one laments to have heard these menaces so frankly poured out against the *members*, because if that *venerable body* oppose their interest in the lands of *England* against the rights of an *house of commons*, it will speedily move the wisdom of parliament to check the exorbitance of that power which is so bold with their liberties.

Whatever shall threaten the representatives of the people in the free exercise of their noblest prerogative, the *redress of grievances*, must strike at the life of their authority and reputation: and most infamously treats them as a body of men called together for the business
of

of *taxing*, and not at all for the *easing* of the subject :

As if the commons of *Great Britain* were in duty bound to grant money, for building of *churches* and repairing of *abbies*, but were without a competent jurisdiction to examine abuses committed by the clergy in their suits for *tythes* and *dues*, and for *more than their due*.

This, absurd as it is, will be found to run through the *plea* before us, as a principle on which the establishment of church and state is founded, and without which the clergy can have no maintenance.

‘ It is, says the *plea*, a reproach to no man to have a reasonable concern for his own *property*.’

And the whole argument treats the bill as a violation of the *parson's* property, because it directs in what manner he shall sue the layman for *tythe*.

This is contrived to enflame the clergy against the house of commons, as robbing churchmen of their *property*.

But I think the word *property* was never less warrantably used, than it hath been on this occasion.

The tythes of the clergy, are the wages, which, as servants of the public, they receive from the bounty of the laws; and their right in those tythes arising purely from the *grace*, their remedy in suing for them must depend wholly on the *will* of the legislative power.

A layman's freehold accrues to him by inheritance from his father: a churchman's freehold accrues to him by the gift of the public, on such conditions, as are or shall be declared to qualify the tenure of the possession, or the recovery of any rights incident to it.

By non-compliance with these conditions, as declared in a single act of parliament, *i. e.* the last *uniformity-act*, thousands have been deprived in a year, not only of their tythes, but their churches, with the high approbation of all zealous churchmen.

And I must say, for the reputation of the sufferers in that case, that as sensible as they were of their hardships, they had greater modesty

deity than to call that a *property* which they knew to be only a *trust*:

Nor would it have been endured ; and much less, that, knowing their possessions to be held of this *public donation*, they should have had the insolence to treat any interest incident to their possession, as a matter of *property*, not belonging to the disposition of parliament.

Every private interest, even rights of inheritance, must be governed by the consideration of public interest. *Salus populi, suprema lex.*

And, nothing can be more insolent or incongruous, than to challenge the donations of the public, as a property not to be reformed for the convenience of the public.

No free state, no wise people, ever suffered such a doctrine to pass unproved. The *Agrarian* laws of the ancient republics in direct contradiction to it, ordained the equal distribution of lands, and reformed the grievance of *excessive property*, by limiting and restraining the possessions of their subjects.

The laws of *England* are not without the strongest declarations of the same wisdom in our legislators ; the *reformers of our church*, to their

their honour be it ever remembered, were the men who avowed this power of retrenching enormous property to be the prerogative of parliament.

The act concerning *Peter Pence* and dispensations, 25 *Hen. VIII. cap. 15.* hath this remarkable preface.

‘ W H E R E A S, It standeth with natural
‘ equity and good reason, that in all and
‘ every laws human, made within this realm,
‘ or induced into this realm by sufferance,
‘ consent, and custom ——— your royal ma-
‘ jesty, and your lords spiritual and temporal,
‘ and commons, representing the whole state
‘ of your realm, in this your most high court
‘ of parliament, H A V E full power and au-
‘ thority, not only to dispense, but also to au-
‘ thorise some elect person or persons, to dis-
‘ pense with these and all other human laws in
‘ this your realm, and with every one of them,
‘ as the quality of the persons and manner shall
‘ require; and also the said laws and every one
‘ of them to abrogate, amplify, or diminish,
‘ as it shall be seen unto your majesty, and
‘ the nobles and commons of your realm, pre-
‘ sent in your parliament, meet and conve-
‘ nient for the wealth of your realm.

‘ And

‘ And because that it is now in these days
 ‘ present seen, that the state, dignity, superio-
 ‘ rity, reputation, and authority of the impe-
 ‘ rial crown of this realm, by the long suffe-
 ‘ rance of *unreasonable and uncharitable usurpa-*
 ‘ *tions and exactions*, practised in the times of
 ‘ your most noble progenitors, is much and fore
 ‘ decayed and diminished, and the people of
 ‘ this realm thereby impoverished, and so or
 ‘ worse be like to continue, if remedy be not
 ‘ therefore shortly provided :

‘ It may therefore please your most *noble*
 ‘ *majesty*, &c. (to take away *Peter Pence* and
 ‘ payments to the see of *Rome*.)’

This act provided against the claims of fo-
 reigners; we shall in the next instance see how
 our ancestors dealt with the claims and *pretend-*
ed properties of churchmen WHO WERE
 NATIVES.

The act for suppressing of monasteries,
 which had not lands above 200*l.* by the year
 (27 *Hen. VIII. cap. 28.*)

DECLARES,

‘ The lords and commons by a great
 ‘ deliberation finally be resolved, that it is and
 ‘ shall

shall be much more to the pleasure of almighty God, and for the honour of this realm, that the possessions of such religious houses now being *spent, spoiled, and wasted for increase and maintenance of sin*, should be used and committed to better uses; and the *unthrifty* religious so spending the same, to be compelled to reform their lives; and thereupon most humbly desire the king's highness, it may be enacted (*to suppress them.*)

To this act *for suppressing the lesser ecclesiastical foundations*, succeeded soon afterwards the general surrender and dissolution of all the monasteries in the kingdom, when so many *impropriations of tythe* became *lay-fees*, and were alienated from the church by authority of parliament.

Whoever reads these acts, will find, 1. That the regulation of ecclesiastical property is so far from contradicting, that nothing can be more natural to the genius of this free kingdom;

2. That such regulation of property in the church, is the only means by which any people can obtain a reformation of religion.

3. That the parliament of this kingdom, in divesting the church of those *impropriations*

6 of

of *tythe*, did not allow churchmen to have any *property in tythe*;

And, 4. That if the legislature now in being, proceeding in the same course as our *first reformers*, should think it expedient to abolish *all tythes* remaining in the church, or to convert it into lay-fees, they could not want a full and proper warrant from the acts of their predecessors, so long as the acts for non-payment of *Peter Pence*, and for suppressing of *monasteries* shall remain in the statute-books.

But we are not debating the question, whether tythes ought to be continued: the quakers (as a people who think them to be abolished by the gospel of Christ, and not lawful by the principles of religion *for them* to pay) desire the authority of parliament to be in such manner interposed, that so long as they are *levied* upon them, it may be in the least oppressive course, and by the most summary process.

The *house of commons*, in compassion to their grievances, with the most unanimous, chearful, and ready consent, ordered a BILL to be brought in, *to enlarge, amend, and render more effectual the laws now in being, for the more easy recovery of tythes, church-rates and oblations,*
and

and other ecclesiastical dues from the people called Quakers.

The bill, by their command, hath been printed.

It recites :

‘ That by an act, 7 & 8 of *W. III.* a remedy is provided for the recovery of tythes and church-rates, not exceeding the value of *ten pounds*, where Quakers refuse to pay them ;

‘ That by another act, 1 *Geo. I.* the said remedy is extended as well to tythes as to all other rights, dues, or payments from any Quakers belonging to any church, chapel, or the minister or curate thereof :

And it further recites,

‘ That it may be convenient to extend this provision to a further sum.

It therefore enacts,

‘ That where any Quakers shall refuse to pay or compound, any two or more justices of the peace (other than such justice as is pa-
VOL. II. G ‘ tron

' tron of the church, or interested in the tythes)
 ' upon complaint of the parson, or proprietor,
 ' or collector, shall summon such Quaker to
 ' appear before them, and either upon appear-
 ' ance or default of appearance (such summons
 ' being duly proved upon oath) shall proceed
 ' to hear the complaint, and to state what is
 ' due, and by order under their hands and
 ' seals to direct the payment thereof, so that
 ' the sum ordered do not exceed (a sum to
 ' be limited by this bill;) and shall order
 ' reasonable costs not exceeding (a sum to
 ' be limited by this bill;) and upon the re-
 ' fusal of such Quakers to pay according to
 ' such order, it shall be lawful for the said
 ' justices by warrant, to levy the money by dis-
 ' tress and sale of the goods of such Quakers, ren-
 ' dering the overplus (the necessary charge of
 ' distress being thereout first deducted.) And
 ' any person finding himself aggrieved by this
 ' judgment may appeal to the next general
 ' quarter sessions, and the justices there pre-
 ' sent shall proceed finally to hear and deter-
 ' mine the matter, and to reverse or affirm
 ' the said judgment; and if they continue
 ' the judgment, they shall give such costs a-
 ' gainst the appellant as they shall think rea-
 ' sonable; and no *certiorari* or writ from
 ' any court shall remove or supersede their
 ' proceedings.

It is further enacted, ‘ That if the annual
 ‘ value of such tythes or dues doth not ex-
 ‘ ceed the sum (to be limited by this act) no
 ‘ Quaker shall be sued in any other court or
 ‘ manner, unless the title of such tythes shall
 ‘ be in question ;

‘ And that if the person against whom
 ‘ such judgment shall be had, shall remove out
 ‘ of the county, division, or corporation, after
 ‘ such judgment, the justices who made the
 ‘ order shall certify it to any justice of such
 ‘ place to which the said person shall be re-
 ‘ moved, which justice is authorized to order
 ‘ such sum to be levied on the goods and chat-
 ‘ tels of such person, in the same manner as
 ‘ the other justices might, if such person had
 ‘ not been removed.

‘ Provided always, that no distress shall
 ‘ be excessive or unreasonable, but proportion-
 ‘ ed, as near as may be, to the value of the
 ‘ sum.

‘ Provided also, That where any Quaker
 ‘ complained of, for subtracting, with-hold-
 ‘ ing, or not paying, or compounding for such
 ‘ tythes or dues, shall insist upon any pre-
 ‘ scription, composition, or *modus decimandi*,

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‘ exemption, discharge, agreement, or title,
‘ whereby he ought to be freed from the pay-
‘ ment in question, and shall deliver the same
‘ in writing to the said justices, that then they
‘ shall give no judgment in the matter, but
‘ that the persons complaining shall be at li-
‘ berty to prosecute in any other court, as if
‘ this act had not been made.

‘ And it is enacted, That so much of the
‘ before recited act as relates only to the reco-
‘ very of tythes or dues shall be repealed ;

‘ And that any person sued for any thing
‘ done pursuant to this act, may plead the ge-
‘ neral issue, and on that, or any other, give
‘ this act and the special matter in evidence ;
‘ and if a verdict or judgment shall be for the
‘ defendant, or if the plaintiff be nonsuit, or
‘ discontinue the action, the defendant shall re-
‘ cover [treble] costs ; and no suit shall be
‘ commenced for any thing done pursuant to this
‘ act, unless it be brought within a limited time
‘ after such cause of action arises.

‘ And lastly, This act is declared to be a
‘ public act.

This is the tenor of the bill :

A bill, which by a peculiar fate, no sooner
was brought into parliament, than it united cer-
tain

tain right reverend prelates in the closest combination against it; and *they*, whose reciprocal hatred was as fierce as the rivalship for power which occasioned it was unchristian and scandalous, at once laid aside their animosities to oppose this most reasonable bill; dreadfully collecting the force of their abilities in a formidable pamphlet, after having in their *feuds for supremacy* been hardly prevailed on to support the provocation of each other's company.

From this unexpected alliance, hath arisen the clamour of the *country parson* against this bill; a clamour indefatigably promoted, but by nothing more successfully than by the words of the plea, *viz.*

‘As I am a subject of *Great Britain*, as well as a minister of the gospel, I have a birth-right in the law, and in having all questions relating to my property determined in the methods of justice used in this kingdom, and not referred to an arbitrary decision. *Nulli negabimus justitiam*, is the language of *magna charta*.’

This is a suggestion, that the bill deprives the clergy of their birth-right in the law, that it subjects them to a determination of property not used in this kingdom, that it refers them to

an arbitrary decision, and denies them the justice which is promised by *magna charta*.

Some of these complaints appear upon examination to have no meaning, and others to have no force; that is, they might be objections, did not they want the foundation of truth.

The allegation of the clergy's *birth-right in the law*, as applicable to the affair of tythes, would make a stranger imagine, that either they were born with the *indelible* character upon them, or that every priest had institution and induction of a benefice, even *in his mother's womb*.

If the tythes, if the dues, if the maintenance which is now paid to the clergy, were entirely taken away, they would lose no birth-right which they have in the law; they might lose the benevolence which they receive from the law, and which the legislature have the same right to resume, as ever they had to establish, if the same reason which induced the grant should require the resumption; if *public good* should call upon them to reverse what their ancestors consented to from no other consideration.

But the bill hath not proposed the taking away of their maintenance. It gives them such methods of suing for it, as may be least vexatious in the proceeding, and least oppressive in the end: a method of recovering their maintenance, which may not consume the substance of those whose labour maintains them.

This recovery being given by the judgment of two justices of the peace in the county where the complaint arises, or, upon appeal by the general quarter-sessions of the county — by what colour or pretence can such accusations be brought against it?

The words of the great charter, *nulli negabimus justitiam*, are spoken by the king, who is supposed (says the lord *Coke*) to be present in his courts of justice, declaring, *we will deny justice to no man*.

The words intended, that the subject shall have resort to a certain court wherein he shall be determined; and not that he shall sue in every court according to his fancy:

Otherwise, he might sue in the high court of parliament for the sum of *six* and *eight pence*; for, doubtless, the king is present as

well there as in any inferior court, and is speaking the same words, *nulli negabimus justitiam.*

The words then give no man a right to be heard in what court he pleases, but in such as shall be appointed him ;

And this is the *only* birth-right, which either clergy or laity can pretend to have in determinations of questions relating to their property.

If the court of chancery by injunctions shall stay proceedings in the courts of common law ; if the courts of common law by prohibitions shall stay the proceedings of ecclesiastical courts, is the justice promised by *magna charta* denied to the party who may not prosecute in those courts ?

——— No: for, he is not to have the advantage of *law* contrary to good *conscience* ; nor is any man to sue in an improper court, nor any court to have cognizance of an improper cause.

And if the courts of common law comprehend, within their jurisdiction, the full view and superintendancy of the ecclesiastical courts ;

if

if the courts of equity have the same compass in reviewing and superintending the courts of common law, with power to abridge and restrain their proceedings as justice may require ;

Hath not the legislative power, the parliament of the kingdom, *supreme cognizance* of all courts and methods of recovery, with like power to restrain suits, as they shall see cause ?

By *magna charta* the king is sworn to *deny no man justice, to delay no man justice, &c.* that is, he is sworn to *execute* the laws.

But is the parliament bound not to alter the laws, or not to amend, explain, and repeal them, as the good of the kingdom shall require ?

The king, as *chief magistrate*, is under this restraint ; in this capacity he cannot have cognizance of public convenience : but the king, lords and commons, as *legislators* cannot be restrained. They must provide for *public convenience*, as superior to all other considerations : so that to limit *parliamentary power*, as if it were *regal* power, is incongruous with legislation, and not to be charged on the words of the *great charter*.

If therefore the *country parson* is enabled by parliament to sue in any *certain court*, and may receive a determination according to the usage thereof; justice is *not denied him*.

The words of *the plea*, in setting forth the hardships which the *parson* must suffer from this bill, suggest, that the power of justices of the peace to determine questions of property without appeal, is a method of justice not used in this kingdom :

A suggestion so false, and so fully to be disproved by every day's usage, grounded on the laws of the kingdom made under many kings, that, I will charitably hope, the author of the *plea* rather forgot than concealed the facts which confute him.

It is a method of justice used in questions of property between the king and the subject, where the public revenue and the trade of the kingdom are concerned, and where the value of the property in question must, beyond all comparative proportion, exceed the value of the whole tythe of the kingdom.

Thus the statute 12 *Car. II. cap. 24.* gives the general quarter sessions of the county power

to adjudge, to levy, mitigate, compound, or lessen the forfeitures and penalties of persons offending against the laws of excise.

And no *certiorari* shall supersede their proceedings, or any of their orders relating to excise.

By the 14 *Car. II. cap. 11.* any justice may commit persons hindering officers of the customs in the execution of their offices; and the justices at the quarter sessions may inflict the penalty of 100 *l.* upon them.

By 1 *Jac. II. cap. 19.* the justices of the quarter sessions are yearly, at *Easter* and *Michaelmas*, to ascertain the market-price of corn or grain imported.

As by 5 & 6 *W. & M. cap. 7.* they are to settle the price of salt and rock-salt.

And by the statute 8 *Annæ, cap. 18.* two justices may settle the assize of bread, from whom there may be an appeal to the general quarter sessions only.

Also by the statute 12 *Annæ, Parl. 2. sess. 1. cap. 18.* three justices have power to adjust the charge of salving stranded goods.

And further, justices of the peace have power given them,

By the 20 & 32 *Car. II.* to convict persons who offend against the acts prohibiting the importation of great cattle, &c. whom they may imprison for three months.

By the 1 *Annæ, cap. 21.* they have power to convict persons knowingly receiving, or buying goods clandestinely run or imported, whom they may (for want of distress) imprison for three months.

By the 2 & 3 *Annæ, cap. 14.* they have power to convict persons who do not pay the penalty of 20 *s. per bushel* for salt brought from *Scotland*, whom they may imprison six months.

Power is likewise given by the 10 & 11 *W. III. cap. 22.* that the justices of the peace at their general quarter sessions shall hear and determine matters relating to the duties on salt, upon any appeal by the persons grieved by the judgment of two justices; and the determination of such general quarter sessions shall be final.

And by the act 1 *Geo. I. cap. 10.* one justice of the peace may convict persons offending in the fish-trade and levy the penalty of twenty pounds by distress, or, for want of it, commit the offenders to twelve months imprisonment.

And by the acts 6 *Geo. I. cap. 21,* and 8 *Geo. I. cap. 18.* two justices residing near the place where seizures of brandy or vessels of the burthen of fifteen tuns shall be made, by virtue of any acts relating to the customs, for carrying uncustomed prohibited goods from ships inwards; or for relanding certificate or debenture goods from ships outwards; and where seizures of horses, or other cattle or carriages shall be made, for being used in the removing and conveyance of such goods:

SHALL examine into, hear and determine all such seizures, and their judgment shall be final, and not liable to any appeal (*even in the quarter sessions*) nor to any writ of *certiorari*.

And that the justices of the peace may be enabled to hear and determine questions of property, is enacted by

The act 7 & 8 *W. III. cap. 30.* that persons refusing, when summoned by such justices

to appear and give evidence on any information before such justices, for offences against the laws of excise, shall forfeit ten pounds.

It will now be incumbent on the clergy, or their advocate *this pleading parson*, to shew why the clergy's property in tythe should not for the ease of the subjects of *England*, and for the attainment of speedy justice, be heard and determined by the same methods, which the treasure of the crown, and the property of merchants and persons interested in all branches of trade, must submit to *without appeal*.

These laws affect not only the liberty and property of private dealers, not only the revenue which supports the civil government, but the interest and estates of that vast body the national creditors, who have trusted their properties to the faith and honour of parliaments; nor do these laws affect the funds on which the current services of the year, and the safety of the king and kingdom must at all times greatly depend.

These laws as they were enacted to determine questions of property, in cases of this transcendent value and importance, have been always esteemed, laws of rigorous advantage in favour of the property which they are to recover and maintain.

They

They are laws which by those *persons who are sued* in consequence of them, and according to the methods prescribed in them, have ever been conceived less indulgent or eligible than any other laws upon which suits or prosecutions may be grounded.

And the extension of these laws to other branches of trade, as it was lately proposed, occasioned the greatest uneasiness amongst those who are *liable to be sued* in these methods, that ever was known in our times.

Yet this severe and rigorous method of justice have the people called *Quakers* desired, of the legislative power for the recovery of *tytbes against them*, rather than continue liable to the multiplicity of suits, the protractions of causes, and excessive costs of suit, which are not less grievous to themselves, than odious to the laws, and repugnant to natural justice.

They wish not to be sued in this method, because it is indulgent; they and all mankind know it to be a method sufficiently severe upon those *who are sued*: but they pray it from a reasonable view, that they may not be ruined by suits in all shapes carried on without end.

They know it to be a *sure method* of recovering tythe, and are only solicitous for it, because it is short and speedy.

This may be the *country parson's* real objection to the method. For, he may desire to persecute the *Quaker* as an obstinate *Non-conformist*; he may gratify unchristian revenge against them; and may for this equitable reason complain, that any restraint of such suits denies him the *methods of justice* used in this kingdom.

It appears, from the statutes already cited, to be a method of justice ordained by law in cases of the most general, important, and valuable concern.

But while this *reverend* order oppose it, as a method of justice not used in this kingdom, and therefore not fit to be used in determining questions which relate to *their* property:

Can it be thought credible, that the clergy incited, pursued, and established it themselves, as a method of justice in punishing the *Quakers*, and all other protestant dissenters, *for the worship of God* according to their consciences, inflict-

inflicting upon them fines, imprisonment, and banishment from their country by the same *arbitrary* decision; which as zealously as it was sought for in taking away the estates of nonconformists, is so grievously complained of as taking away the birth-right of the clergy in the law, and depriving them of their maintenance?

If we look back into the act made in the fourteenth year of *Charles the second*, entitled, *An act to prevent mischiefs and dangers arising by the people called Quakers*;

There it will appear, that justices of the peace, at the quarter sessions, had power to convict by *notorious evidence of the fact*, and to fine, punish, and transport Quakers, on conviction of their holding that persuasion.

Strange! that the clergy should think the *arbitrary* decision of a quarter sessions competent to take away the fortunes of this people, and to banish them from their country; yet incompetent to determine suits brought against them for tythes!

With regard to protestant dissenters of all denominations, the *same method* of prosecution was established by the influence of the clergy.

The *Oxford five mile act*, so called, because it restrained *dissenting teachers*, from coming within *five miles* of any corporation, 17 Car. II. cap. 2.

Enacted, that two *justices* might commit offenders of their own convicting to no less than *six months imprisonment*.

And by the acts to suppress *sedition* *conventicles*, viz.

1. The statute 16 Car. II. cap. 4.

Two justices were authorized for the first offence to fine the party five pounds, or to imprison without bail for three months, and their certificate was to be a record of conviction.

2. For the second offence they were to inflict a fine of ten pounds, or six months imprisonment :

3. And, for the third offence they might transport the offender for seven years, unless he paid one hundred pounds before the end of the sessions.

II. The statute 22 *Car. II. cap. 1.*

The convictions were to be by two justices of the peace, and the fines to be levied by their warrants of distress, though in some cases to the value of *twenty* pounds.

2. The appeal of the party aggrieved was to be to the *quarter sessions*, and no court was to intermeddle with any causes of appeal upon this act, but they were to be finally determined by the *quarter sessions only*.

3. And a justice of the peace in one county, was to certify to the justices in any other of the flight of the offender.

These laws which were obtained before the *happy revolution*, and which were dispensed with afterwards by the *Toleration-act*, in favour of the protestant dissenters in general, and by the *Affirmation-act* in favour of the Quakers in particular,

SHEW the *decision of justices* to be a method in great repute and estimation with the clergy before the revolution.

And though they now suggest it to be a method of justice *not used in the kingdom*; yet
the

the clergy themselves, after the revolution, inserted the clauses in the *Affirmation-act*, which gave justices of peace the *first cognizance of quakers tythes*.

They inserted them in a law which had no relation to tythe, and they would not agree that the Quakers affirmation should be taken instead of an oath, unless justices of peace might be trusted with this *arbitrary* decision of their tythes.

A decision which they think reasonable to conclude the Quaker, but not the parson, in questions relating to tythe.

Thus the power of *justices of peace* is a good and wholesome provision, when given for the benefit of the clergy: but an unjust and *arbitrary* method when used for the *ease* of the Quaker.

Thus it is right to shut the Quaker out of all the king's courts, when the parson holds it expedient to recover tythe in the country; but it is denying the parson the *justice of the great charter*, if contrary to his option he is referred to a decision in the country.

Thus the Quaker shall have no option of courts of justice to defend the property which the law hath given him in *nine-tenths* of his substance.

But the parson shall claim liberty to prosecute in town and country, in *Westminster-hall*, the *ecclesiastical court*, and the *quarter sessions*, without restraint, for the single tythe in which he hath an interest, or he will complain that the justice of *magna charta* is denied him :

And, the Quaker shall have suffered prosecution at the Quarter sessions for forty years together ;

Yet the *country parson* shall tell us, that this decision by *justices of the peace*, takes away the clergy's birth-right in the law, and is a method of justice not used in this kingdom.

The country parson, *I say*, suggests it ;

For, I can hardly believe, that any man above that *low character*, would be so scandalously weak, as to suggest a *fact*, which the poorest *country plowman*, from daily experience, must know to be false.

And were it possible, that one of *greater Eminence* could so far be wanting in his duty to truth, to his GOD, and his reputation, it would shew him to be confirmed in that *unblushing prostitution*, which takes delight in the want of honest fame, though enemies rejoice, and friends are confounded at his infamy.

A person of this habit only, could be capable of adding to the number of unjust complaints, the clamour against the determination of justices in their quarter sessions, *as an arbitrary decision!*

As if it were *more* arbitrary than a decision of a *court of equity*, where a clergyman must sue for his tythes if he is dissatisfied with *common law*.

Or, as if it were *more* arbitrary than the decision of a *court of delegates*, where he must have his last resort, if he sues by *ecclesiastical* process.

It might be thought, from this complaint of an *arbitrary decision*, that the clergy were remarkably fond of trials by juries, where the verdict is in the judgment of *twelve* men specially impanelled at every assize: and that
they

they oppose a decision by *one* or *two* only, and dislike a dernier resort to a *standing set* of justices.

Yet strange as it may seem, it is certainly true, that of 1153 suits for tythe against the Quakers, 1094 of the number sought either for the *arbitrary* decision of courts of equity, where the last resort is to the house of lords, or for the *more arbitrary* decision of ecclesiastical courts, where the last resort is to a court of delegates.

And, the country parson is not contending that judgments should be *less arbitrary*, than the bill allows: but that suits should be *more unlimited*; he approves this method of justice; but would not be confined to it; he would tie the *Quaker* down, but thinks it most unequal and unjust that the *parson* should be compelled to abide by it himself.

‘ The acts of king *William* (says he) took
 ‘ no remedy from me; they provided an easy
 ‘ remedy for the recovery of Quakers tythes
 ‘ and small tythes; they did not shut up the
 ‘ king’s courts against me, but left me at
 ‘ liberty to take the new method, or if it
 ‘ was necessary, to resort to the old ones.

‘ For this I had reason to be thankful, and
 ‘ have always chosen the new method for my
 ‘ own sake and my neighbour’s sake.

After such an acknowledgment that the remedy is easy, that the parson had reason to be thankful for it, and always had chosen it; would any man believe that since those acts have taken place, the clergy have carried on in the most oppressive methods no less than 1153 prosecutions?

The reason of which rigorous suits seems to be, that the more gentle do not answer the parson’s *intention in suing*.

This intention is best to be understood from the words of the *country parson’s plea*, which asserts, that the law was designed to *punish* the Quaker with-holding tythe from the parson.

So that the recovery of tythe is not sufficient to the parson, unless he can *punish* by the method in which he *recovers*.

The parson, as a principle of his religion, holds tythe to be of *divine right*.

The *Quaker*, as a principle of his religion, holds tythe to be abolished by the institution of the *christian* church.

The law gives the parson tythe as a *temporal* interest; and the parson goes to law not only to recover tythe, but to avenge the *divine right* of his order upon the *poor Quaker*, who calls it *antichristian*.

He knows the *Quaker* cannot yield that tythe, which all of his sect hold to be against conscience.

He can by law recover it in any court; and if the proceedings of some courts are more expensive than others, he will sue in those courts, that he may *punish* the *Quaker* in the method of *recovering* tythe.

This may agree with the boundless ambition, and causeless cruelty, of *selfish* ecclesiasticks, but it would be reproachful to the justice of a legislative power, that should allow one part of the subjects to take advantage of the unhappiness, the infirmity, or religious prejudice of another part, for the ends of vexation and oppression.

Yet this is the case, whilst the parson may worry Quakers for tythe in every court at his will.

If the parson sues in the exchequer, or prosecutes in the ecclesiastical courts, he can oppress the *Quaker* with heavier costs; and perhaps, by litigiousness, may for the benefit of his church, add the tenth part of a farthing to the rate of his tythe.

Will the parson then be so charitable as to sue before the justices, who can only levy his tythe, but not oppress the *Quaker* with costs?

No; for the law, *says the country parson*, was made to PUNISH the *Quaker* for defrauding me of my tythes.

Therefore,

To make ecclesiastical power terrible amongst nonconformists, to subdue their opposition to the pride, the insolence, and usurpation of unconscionable churchmen, to make severe examples of those who oppose *divine right*, and to indulge a litigious insatiably-covetous temper;

The parson will sue for tythe, not where he *may* easily recover it, but where he *can* with greater advantage at once *recover* and *oppress*.

This is called a foul charge on the clergy, and their advocates want a specification of suits, that they may be able to vindicate their conduct.

The suits shall be specified in the proper course of enquiry ——— In this place it is enough to observe, that as foul as the charge can be, it is a practice which every clergyman hath at his option ; and whether it be fitting that the clergy should be trusted with *power to oppress*, is a question of so easy a discussion, that they have not a friend in the world, who, as to his own particular, would chuse *to live at their mercy*.

It is taking away his power to oppress, which occasions so great an alarm.

The *country parson*, zealous for his power, pretends that the want of it will expose him to injury.

‘ The Quaker, *says he*, knowing that I
‘ have no resort to the law, but must be con-
‘ cluded by the justices in the country, will not

‘ only keep all my tythe from me, but will use
 ‘ all his art and application to reduce the value
 ‘ by the judgment in the country.

‘ The justices in the country will be under
 ‘ a temptation, to use this power to cultivate
 ‘ an election-interest.

‘ Many Quakers are freeholders ; and as
 ‘ they are great traders, have influence over
 ‘ many others, and will act as one man in
 ‘ opposition to the parson.

‘ I have but *one vote* for the county, and *no*
 ‘ *interest.*’

This objection is grounded altogether on a supposition,

That the Quakers, one of the lesser bodies of dissenters, are stronger in property and interest, than all the clergy of the *church of England*, the two universities included ;

Consequently, that the Quakers weight in trade will bear down the clergy’s weight in land ; and,

That country gentlemen will court an election-interest rather among the Quakers than
 the

the clergy; whereas in fact, two thirds of the counties of *England* are governed in their county elections by church interest :

And, in such counties will the Quaker or the parson be most likely to prevail, by the partiality of country gentlemen ?

This parson says *he hath but one vote*, which is hard upon him; because, to my knowledge, he hath *more than one benefice*.

He says *he hath no interest*, which I am equally sorry for; because, if it is true, it is owing to his *very bad character*.

But can this allegation be general? Can a beneficed clergyman have no interest, where he hath such a property as *tythe*, and where every farmer must submit to his will, to avoid oppressive prosecutions ?

This power of maintaining a multitude of suits is the most formidable power of the crown. And, if an *officer of excise* can in some degree influence votes in elections by his power to oppress (which many statutes provided to restrain such influences have declared) can a clergyman, having power to prosecute, be without the same influence over the

votes of the people? And, is there not the same reason to restrain it?

Every clergyman by his interest with the more devout and yielding sex, by his intercourses with the sick, by his knowledge of all the family-affairs in his parish, and by reconciling even the quarrels which he foments, may procure to himself the highest influence over the votes of his people.

When the weight of his property in their lands is added to his interposition in their private affairs; when fear co-operates with kindness, and he can awe those into submission whom he cannot persuade to love him:

What parishioner, having a vote in elections, can refuse it to the request of his parson?

I was ever of opinion, that a clergyman must have the worst judgment of any man in his neighbourhood, if he hath not the best interest.

And, the pretence, that trials of tythe by justices of peace will become subservient to an election-interest, might naturally make a Quaker fear to abide this trial, where the bias of the court must by so great a probability be in favour of the clergy.

But this is the difference between the parson and the Quaker ;

The justices, if ever so much biassed, can only by a speedy decision levy the tythe ; and, this will not aggrieve the Quaker :

Whereas the parson covets a protracted suit in an expensive court, which may not only recover his tythe, but gratify his revenge.

With this view he magnifies the Quakers dealings in trade, and interests in elections ;

As if these could transcend that interest in land, and power in elections which the tythe of the clergy, the endowments of chapters, colleges, and universities, and the episcopal revenues of the kingdom, have established in favour of the church :

A power, that every man sees to be daily increasing from the capacities of that corporation, which is enabled to purchase all the lands of *England in mortmain.*

A power that will, in the course of time, if it be unchecked in its progress, extend its sway over all the property of the kingdom,

though contrary to the genius, and tending to the destruction of this free government !

With the view of supporting this exorbitant power, the *country parson* takes the infamous liberty of taxing the justice of all mankind.

It is his grievance, that,

1. ‘ By this bill he must be tied down, for the value of his tythes, by the judgment of two justices, out of whose lands the tythe arises, and whose tenants pay it.

2. ‘ The two justices who gave the sentence will be on the bench at the quarter sessions, or if they are not, it may happen that their brother justices may think it more expedient that a parson should lose forty or fifty shillings (a great part of the demand) than that two worthy gentlemen justices of the peace should be suspected of partiality.

3. ‘ The established ministry will be left without a maintenance, by the iniquity and partiality of witnesses, who are generally farmers and countrymen, and undervalue the tythes, though by evidence upon their oaths.’

This is the decent and charitable manner in which the *country parson* expresses himself of the whole people of *England*, from the country gentleman down to the country farmer :

As if the gentlemen in the commission of the peace for the several counties of *England*, had not as a fair a reputation for justice, and as few temptations to be partial, as the judges of an ecclesiastical court, who, though the creatures of the clergy, sit there to decide the properties of laymen : or,

As if it were a foul charge on any man who wears a cassock, to suppose, that he will be oppressive in his suits, or enormous in his exactions, though manifestly for the enriching of his family, and impoverishing his adversary ;

Yet a modest and fair accusation, that none of the gentlemen of *England* are sufficiently impartial, to render justice between clergymen and Quakers.

The first allegation,

‘ That the parson will be tied down for the value of his tythes to the judgment of two

‘ gentlemen, out of whose lands the tythe
 ‘ arises, or whose tenants pay it,

Is absolutely false :

Because, 1. The bill excepts such justices
 as are *any ways interested in the tythes* ;

2. The parson who may complain to *any
 two justices*, never will complain to *any one*, out
 of whose land the tythe arises, or whose tenant
 pays it ; but

He will have the whole commission of the
peace to pick two justices out of, and will cer-
 tainly apply where he hath most expectation of
 partiality to his order.

The next allegation,

‘ That when two justices of the peace
 ‘ have given sentence, *the gentlemen of the county*
 ‘ may think it more expedient that the parson
 ‘ should lose forty or fifty shillings (a great
 ‘ part of his demand) than that two of their
 ‘ brethren should be suspected of partiality ;’

Is absurd, malicious, false, and scandalous.

It not only reflects on the honour of the gentlemen of *England*; but supposes, that two justices cannot err in their judgment without suspicion of partiality: and,

It supposes, that all the gentlemen of a country will be partial and unjust, rather than that two of their brethren should be accounted erroneous in any particular judgment.

Did the *country parson* learn to think *thus* of judicial proceedings from those in *ecclesiastical courts*? Is the *chancellor* of the diocese, partial in favour of the clergy, lest the church suffer scandal from the supposition that a clergyman, who loses his cause is unjust in his suit? Or,

Is the *dean of the arches* accustomed to think it more expedient, that the appellant in his court should lose his suit, rather than that a *brother doctor* (the chancellor against whose judgment the appeal is brought) should be suspected of partiality in his decision?

What have the landed gentlemen of this kingdom done to offend *this parson*, that they, who of all others are most interested in the public happiness, should be treated as least of all qualified to administer public justice?

Or, that they should be treated as a band of raparees, combined to support each other in acts of injustice ;

And, less to be suspected of deciding suits *impartially*, than that wooden implement of church power, who judges by commission from the clergy, who owes them partiality in requital for his promotion, and is tempted to encourage a multitude of suits to encrease his own fees of office ?

I hope the gentlemen of the county wherein this *candid parson* resides, will make him the most public acknowledgments of these indiscriminate reflections, which so remarkably distinguish his humanity as a gentleman, his politeness as a scholar, his meekness as a clergyman, and his charity as a christian.

But I hope at the same time, that he will never be admitted to sit amongst them ; because a man, who can think of them as such a partial *set of miscreants*, may probably be an example to justify his own reflections.

And as to the charge on the farmers and countrymen, who are represented in every part of *the plea*, as robbing the clergy of their maintenance

tenance by their *iniquity* and *perjury*, in undervaluing the tythes, it will be a sufficient answer in general, that if there was less avarice and injustice in the clergy, they would be less forward in accusing the country of iniquity and perjury.

It is fact, that the *farmers* in general never gave the *parson* so high a rate for his tythe, but he looked on it as below his due, and were they to give him *nine-tenths* of their substance, it would not satisfy the ravenous spirit of some clergymen, so long as the farmers retain *one part in ten* to themselves.

Is this severely spoken of the clergy? Let any man judge, whether it can be more severe than warrantable, when provoked by a *clergyman*, who is capable of defaming all the *gentlemen* of *England* as partial and unjust judges, and the whole *yeomanry* of *England* as knaves in their dealings, and *perjured villains* in courts of justice.

Persuading myself, that so much as hath been said on this subject will vindicate the honour of *English* gentlemen, and their competency for the jurisdiction which is given them by this bill;

I proceed to examine the rest of the pretences, that it must injure the parson's property:

Of

Of which none can be more enflaming, than the complaint in the 16th page,

‘ No Quaker, *says the parson*, will, after such a law shall be made, set out his tythes, but will retain them to his own use; and I shall be debarred of having them *in kind*, how necessary soever they be to my own, and my family’s subsistence.

‘ By law the parson cannot set out his own tythe, and carry it away, but the occupier of the land must set it out; and if the parson intermeddle with the corn before the occupier hath set out the tythe, he is liable to an action.

‘ The Quaker’s conscience will not permit him to set out the tythe: so that with the law on one side, and the Quaker’s conscience on the other, no tythe can ever be set out in this case.’

Would any man imagine, after this grievous complaint of the law on one side, and the Quaker’s conscience on the other, that the bill actually gives the parson a better remedy than ever to receive his tythes in kind? And, that if they are really necessary to his own, or his family’s

family's subsistence, he may have them in kind of the Quakers by the aid of this bill ?

He says the Quaker's conscience will not permit him to set out the tythe ;

But then, *the bill says*, the justices warrant shall immediately levy these tythes.

So that the distress may be made upon the tythable matter, and the parson may have it in kind, with better measure than if the Quaker had set out his tythes ;

And the Quaker shall pay the costs.

This is easy justice.

But the parson hath alledged, ' That by the laws in being, he may recover *treble damages* of every Quaker not setting out his tythe.'

This is the parson's real objection against the bill ; and a most *conscientious* objection it will appear to be ; for

The parson, knowing the Quaker to be restrained *by scruple of conscience* from setting out his tythe, looks upon the penalty of *treble damages*

damages to be a sure interest, which he hath at present in every Quaker's property; and whereas he hath but *one tythe* of any other man, he takes *three* of every Quaker, or *six shillings in the pound* from the produce of the land, beside destroying great part of the remainder, by loading him with costs of suits.

Can you think then, that the *parson* will consent to a law which may pin him down to his *tythe only*, and not allow him to recover *treble tythes* of every Quaker in his parish?

Can you think that, whilst the Quaker's default of *setting out tythe* is so profitable to the parson, he will ever consent that a *justice* of the peace should *set them out for the Quaker*, and save the poor man from the penalty of a default?

This is *reason* with a parson against the provision of this bill, but can never be a reason with any other man. It may be an interest of precious concern to the clergy, but it would be a reproach to public justice, were they suffered to demand *three times the value* of their tythes in the king's courts, on pretence of their *not being set out*, when any two *justices* of the peace in the neighbourhood may grant their warrants to take them

them in the field, in the barn, or wherever they may be found.

If this does not satisfy the parson, there is an expedient, which, as I have heard and believe the Quakers will not oppose, and which must silence the parson's objections.

The two justices of the peace, who have power by their warrant to levy the value of the tythes, when they are withheld, may by their warrant authorize a fit person to set them out, when they ought to be paid in kind.

The law, in this case, will not impose it on the Quaker to set out tythes contrary to his conscience, nor will the Quaker be subject to pay three tythes for not having set out one: but an officer will be appointed to set out the tythe, which the Quaker, from his scruple of conscience, is disabled to set out himself. And the parson will not then have the plea of necessity, to justify his going to law for his tythes, nor the scandalous temptation of suing the Quaker for three times the value of them.

The parson may answer, that this will be a provision for the recovery of great tythes, as *corn, hay, &c.* But how shall he take his small tythes? 'Must I, *says he*, in the 27th page,

‘ page, watch when a cow falls into labour, or
 ‘ must I keep a register of all the calves and
 ‘ pigs that are born in my parish ?’

This leads us to the objections which he makes, in the next page, against this bill;

‘ As the law now stands, the parson can
 ‘ bring a bill of discovery in courts of equity ;
 ‘ in which case the farmer is obliged to set
 ‘ out his tytheable matter and the value, and is
 ‘ liable to prosecution for perjury, if he is guilty
 ‘ of it. But is every justice in the kingdom to
 ‘ be erected into a chancellor ? If not, by what
 ‘ proceeding shall the parson make a discovery
 ‘ in these cases ?’

It is to be observed, that the parson first puts a case of a *bill of discovery* to be brought in the exchequer, after this law shall take place : yet in the next paragraph complains, that no such bill can be brought there. He first complains of the hardships which he shall suffer in bringing such a bill, and next sets it forth as his hardship that he cannot bring such a bill. This is extraordinary !

I know not, that the law proposed will take away the jurisdiction of courts of equity to retain *bills of discovery* ; I am not certain, that

that the proceeding by *bill in equity* is the most reasonable method to be used for such discovery. — But in answer to that arch question —
Is every justice to be erected into a chancellor? I must say, it seems as reasonable that there should be a chancellor in every court of quarter sessions, as in every court of the clergy: and, I think, if the law must compel a Quaker to discover the value of his tythes, that in this case, the cheapest method of discovery will be the best method; and that the justices at the quarter sessions, may examine him with as good effect (though not with so much cost) as the parson can interrogate him with, in the court of exchequer.

There is a slight objection in the same page worked up into a loud complaint, ‘that the justices cannot compel witnesses to attend them.’ But to remedy this, the same clause may be provided in this bill, as in relation to the excise, by the act 7 & 8 *W. III.* which inflicts the penalty of ten pounds on any one who shall not appear as a witness, on summons from a justice of the peace. And,

The Quaker must be equally solicitous for such a clause, as he must be equally affected by the want of means to compel the appearance of witnesses.

So that, in the manner of working up this objection, the *country parson* strains it beyond what truth can justify, and endeavours to make the clergy think, from this present want of power in justices, that this bill denies it, because it does not mention it; and that in the manner of drawing the bill, it seemeth intended to leave the property of tythe precarious.

Whereas a bill of this comprehensive nature can hardly be prepared, so full or so correct in the first drawing, as to want no additional clause or amendment; and the ordinary forms of parliament give ample opportunities for inserting them before it becomes a law.

It is next objected, that

‘ In the original cause before the justices,
 ‘ the parson is supposed to have just cause of
 ‘ complaint, and to recover in some shape or
 ‘ other, and to be entitled to costs.

And that

‘ It is probable he may ordinarily be the
 ‘ appellant to the quarter sessions, and costs
 ‘ may be against him.

‘ How

‘ How is it then, *says the parson*, that the
 ‘ bill limits the costs in the first instance,
 ‘ when the parson is to receive them, and
 ‘ leaves them *arbitrary* in the second, when
 ‘ the parson is to pay them ?’

There is nothing more in this objection, than that *two* justices are limited to give costs, and the *whole* bench, at their quarter sessions left to give costs according to discretion. And,

1. In the first instance of complaint, it may be reasonable to specify the costs, which shall not be exceeded ; to the end that the two justices, though ever so partial to the complaint, may not oppress the defendant with costs. But,

2. In the appeal, if the parson or Quaker appear to be litigious, it may be reasonable, that *all* the justices of the county should have power to give *exemplary* costs, though it might be less safe to leave it in the discretion of any two of them.

And now we come to the *grievous* objection against the bill ; (page 29) that

‘ If the parson bring an indictment or in-
 ‘ formation, against the Quaker or his wit-
 ‘ nesses

nesses for PERJURY, and shall fail to
 ' make a legal proof (as is suggested he easily
 ' may do) in that case, *the bill says*, the defen-
 ' dant shall recover *treble costs*.

Extremely hard! that a *false* accusation of perjury should be liable to TREBLE COSTS!

If the parson cannot prove *perjury*, why should he charge it? If the nature of the proof is difficult, does not justice impose this difficulty? Ought any man to be convicted of such a crime from slight appearances? From a covetous parson's suspicion; or from a disappointed parson's resentment? And if the parson wants the evidence which the law requires, should the law allow him, unpunished to publish so much infamy?

This is the manner of moving compassion for the clergy;

1. He represents the two justices, before whom he complains, as unjust judges.

2. He represents the whole bench of justices, before whom he brings his appeal, as *partial* to the injustice of their two brethren.

If he brings a bill of discovery in the exchequer,

3. He represents the Quaker, as perjuring himself to defraud the parson of his tythes.

Or, if an issue be directed by the exchequer for the value of tythe to be tried by the country,

4. He represents the verdict of the jury to be *very partial*; and,

5. The witnesses in every case and every court to be perjured and corrupt.

Such a combination is supposed to be in every country against the claim of tythe!

If the parson (holding all these *articles of faith as necessary to salvation*) cannot prove this INJUSTICE, PARTIALITY, PERJURY, and CORRUPTION;

What then?

Why then, he must pay *treble costs*!

Did ever the *christian* church suffer such persecution?

Yet, a layman would be set in the pillory, for a *tythe* of that defamation which this *parson* hath published against the justice of his country.

I confess, if I might judge of a man's conscience, who should publish so much slander against all ranks and degrees of men, I should take it to be of the blackest complexion. An honest man will repose a reasonable confidence in the honesty of other men, but *he* who would have no man thought to be just, seems to wish, that no man should be in a condition to do him justice.

However, since the opposition to this bill hath had its chief support from the clamour against the power of the justices, since the *gentlemen of England* have been charged with such corruption, partiality and injustice, it hath been proposed that the *judge of assize* should be appointed, instead of the court of *quarter sessions*, to hear and determine appeals; and, the Quakers have not objected to this proposition, because they desire no other than speedy justice, and will be glad of receiving it any where.

Nor can the parson object to this final decision by the judge of assize, who can have

no interest to cultivate in the country, who cannot have any undue regard to the justices, from whom the party appeals, and who will not be the same person at any two assizes in the same circuit.

There are, nevertheless, some objections against this alteration of the bill.

1. It is not yet known, that the judges are willing to be charged with this additional load on the business of the assize. And, it may not be reasonable to impose it upon them, if it can be other ways disposed of, because the late acts of parliament, especially those relating to the discharge of debtors, have already occasioned more business to come before them, than the usual time of assizes will allow them conveniently to determine.

And, 2. The next objection is of still greater weight. Such an alteration would countenance the scandalous objections against the *honour of the gentlemen of England.*

And therefore, I declare myself freely on the matter, I shall give my *negative* to it.

Every gentleman by this time hath formed his judgment whether the justices of peace de-

serve this trust; or whether the power with which this bill invests them, will be effectual to the ends for which it is proposed. And therefore I shall not examine any farther the *country parson's* objections, either to their qualifications for the cognizance of tythes, or to the sufficiency of their jurisdiction for the recovery of tythes. But,

The *general effect*, which their decisions will have, upon the interest of the clergy in tythe, as it is foretold by the *country parson*, deserves very particular notice.

‘ The quarter sessions price, *says he*, will be a standing rule for the value of tythes in every county. And

‘ The bill will probably, in process of time, introduce a general *modus decimandi* for the whole kingdom.’

To this I answer, that,

I cannot see the probability of any such consequences to flow from this bill: or, that when the justices have determined the value of tythe in one farm, it will be a rule for the value of tythe in any other.

For,

For, if the soil is seldom of equal goodness in any two men's lands, (and the produce must always be in value according to the goodness of the land ;)

Will it be sufficient for any farmer to say before the justices, *you have determined the value of another man's tythe at such a rate; you ought therefore to charge me no higher, though the land which I farm is of treble value, and produces a treble crop?*

Or, will it conclude the parson, with respect to any particular estate, that the justice determined the value at such a rate in any particular year? Will he not shew that the land hath been improved, the produce increased, and that the value of his tythe is greater than when it was last determined?

This infinite variety of cases, this frequent difference between one farmer's land and another's, nay, between the same land in different years, will make it impossible that the *quarter sessions price*, as declared on any occasion, can become the standing rule for the value of tythe in that county, or even in that parish where it ariseth.

But if a general *modus decimandi* for the whole kingdom were to ensue; if a *known determinate value* could be established for the tythe of every county, though I see no hope of attaining it, I think sincerely, that it would be a general good, as well to the clergy as the laity: For,

The clergy would be endowed with a better maintenance, though they were allowed a less rate, and the laity would be charged with a lighter burthen, though they paid a higher rate.

The *certainty of the modus* would save the expence of these unhappy controversies which impoverish the parson, who even raises the value of his tythe, and which beggar the farmer, though he brings it below the value.

The *title to the modus* would be simple, clear, and unperplexed; the recovery of it easy and short. There would be no occasion of racking the layman's conscience to discover on his oath against the bias of his interest. And there could not possibly be an opportunity of cheating the parson of his maintenance, as is now said to be practised, by *Perjury, Partiality, and Injustice*.

The advantages of this *certain* appointment for the maintenance of the clergy, are manifest in those parishes where it is levied, by a POUND RATE upon the inhabitants; nor will I deny the *reverend* order this justice, that, tenacious as they are of the *divine right of tythes*, they have never scrupled to prefer a *parliamentary right to a pound rate*, where ^{it} promised them a better revenue.

In general, it may be said with truth, there never was an imposition on mankind *more fruitful of law-suits*, than the claim of tythe, which never knows a certain value.

Nor, was there ever an imposition more grievous and oppressive than the claim of tythe, which takes a tenth from the produce of the poor man's labour, who manures the land, who employs his own stock to raise the tythe, and surrenders the choice of the harvest to the priest, who neither ploughs nor sows.

The improvement of the land is at least equal to the value of the land, and a tenth part of the produce free from all charges of raising it, is not a tythe, but a FIFTH part of every man's property; a standing LAND TAX OF FOUR SHILLINGS in the pound, upon all the subjects of *England*.

If it be considered with respect to *small tythes*, the grievance is heaviest upon the poorest of the people. Those who are rather objects of charity, and fit to receive alms, are the subjects of ecclesiastical oppression, and compelled to pay tythe.

If a poor widow, the labour of whose hands, and the produce of whose garden, are the only subsistence of herself and five or six children, hath an *apple-tree*, she must give the tenth of her fruit; if she keep a *hen*, she must give every tenth egg, or every tenth chicken; and if she hath a *bee-hive*, she must yield a tenth of her wax and her honey,

TO THE PARSON OF THE PARISH;

Who, if he is not satisfied with her contributions, will prosecute her in the ecclesiastical court, and make her depose upon oath, how many *pippins* grew upon her tree? How many *chicks* were hatched? How many *eggs* were addled? And what casualties happened in the management of her BEE-HIVE.

This was the complaint of *Chaucer's* plowman, against the priest of his times;

For the tything of a duck,
 Or an apple, or an eye,
 They make men swere upon a booke;
 Thus they foulen Christes faye.

Is it then unreasonable to complain of *this tythe* of the clergy, as the east-wind that withers the fruit, the caterpillar that destroys the harvest in the ear, the locust that preys upon the property of the rich, and eats up the bread of the poor? An harpy that carries law-suits in one claw, and famine in another? That devours what the public taxes spare, and is more inexorable than an excise?

This prodigious usurpation upon the property of mankind, makes the bill before us the more absolutely necessary, and moves all indignation against the parson, who suggests, ‘ That the bill will encourage the Quaker in setting up a right, upon the plea of conscience, to another man’s estate.’

I said to myself,

Doth not the *country parson* appeal to every man’s conscience, when he demands tythe of *divine right*?

When he claims it as a *duty to God*?

And, must he not so far allow the Quaker's *conscience* to decide?

But, *says the parson,*

' I wish the Quaker's conscience could be
' examined in this point. Is he a *land-owner*?
' Let him be asked, upon his conscience,
' whether he paid any consideration to the
' vender of the land, beyond the usual price,
' and upon a supposition that no tythes would
' be due from his land? Is he a farmer,
' Let him be asked, whether he pays more
' rent, than a *church man* used to give for the
' farm, and in consideration of his paying no
' tythe? If he cannot say that he either bought,
' or hired the tythe (and he can say neither)
' what title hath he to it?'

I must here observe, that

The *country parson* lays down a *law of property*, by this examination of the Quaker's conscience;

A proposition,

That

That if any burthen upon land shall continue, till it lessen the value of our lands, it then becomes a property in the usurpers, and the landed men shall never be discharged, because all subsequent purchases are made with the consideration of such an incumbrance upon the land.

There are three remarkable cases in our history, which will fall under this proposition;

I. The ancient *Romescot*, or *Peter-pence*, was a penny charged upon every house, by *Ina*, king of the *West-Saxons*, being at *Rome* in pilgrimage, *Anno 720*, and by *Offa*, king of the *Mercians*, *Anno 794*, to sustain the *English* school there. It amounted to three hundred marks and a noble yearly for the whole realm, and was paid to the see of *Rome* on the feast of *St. Peter ad Vincula*, being the first day of *August*, till it was abolished by parliament, 25 *Hen. VIII. Anno 1534*.

II. The ancient *Dane-gelt* was a tribute, of one shilling, and afterwards of two shillings, upon every hide of land; originally levied for clearing the seas of *Danish* pyrates, or for purchasing peace of them, as by *Ethelred*, who raised for this purpose, first 10,000 *l.* next

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16,000*l.* then 24,000*l.* then 36,000*l.* and lastly, 48,000*l.* Edward the confessor released this tax. It was levied again by the Conqueror; and by *W. Rufus*; but it was released by *Hen. I.* and finally by *K. Stephen.*

III. The ancient *disme*, or the *decimation* of all the subjects goods, was the usual subsidy given from time to time by parliament, and was levied, as is the tythe of the clergy, by the *tenth* of every thing *in kind.*

Thus in the parliament roll 13 *E. III. No. 6.* The lords grant to the king, *the tenth sheaf* of all the corn of their demesnes, except of their bound tenants; the *tenth fleece* of wool, and the *tenth lamb* of their own store, to be paid in two years; and pray that this grant turn not into a custom.

So, in the parliament roll of the next year, 14 *E. III. No. 5.* it is entered, *the prelates, barons, and all the commons of this realm,* grant to the king the ninth lamb, the ninth fleece, the ninth sheaf, and of cities and boroughs the very ninth part of all their goods and chattels, to be taken by two years to come. And with this, agrees the statute book, Anno 14 *E. III. Stat. I. cap. 18.*

But,

But, when the aid given was a *quin-disme*, or *fifteenth*, then, the king appointed *two* assessors in every county; and they appointed *twelve* in every hundred, who made a true valuation of every man's personal estate, and caused the *fifteenth* part to be levied.

This word *disme* or *decimæ* is equally used, as well for the revenues of the church, as for those of the crown; and the statute 2 and 3 E. VI. cap. 36. terms the *tenths of the clergy* (which were anciently paid to the *see of Rome*, and given by *pope Urban* to *Richard II.*) PERPETUAL DISMES

The first *quin-disme* was granted, by parliament, 18 E. I.

The *city of London* paid this year for the *fifteenth*, 2860 l. 13 s. 8 d. and the abbot of *St. Edmonds*, 666 l. 13 s. 4 d. which was by composition, and thereupon he had all his temporal goods, and the goods of his convent, discharged of the *fifteenth*.

Sometimes, the *disme* and *quin-disme* were granted both together, as in the 6 E. III. one *disme*, and one *quin-disme* were given to the

king, to be levied of the laity, in aid of his expedition against the Scots.

At other times, the *disme* or *tenth* was granted singly, as in the aforementioned instances, 13 *E. III.* by the lords of their own store; and 14 *E. III.* by the clergy, nobility, and commons for the whole realm.

And the *quin-disme* or *fifteenth* was likewise granted *separately*, of which the instances occurring in successive ages are scarcely to be numbered.

These methods of charging the subject were constantly made use of, till the reign of king *Charles I.* when the great demands of money, which the civil war occasioned, introduced our modern *excise* and *land-tax*.

Now in all these cases, *viz.*

1. In the case of the *Peter-pence*, which continued a rent charge upon houses for the space of eight hundred years;

2. In the case of *Danes-gelt*, which continued a rent charge for the space of three hundred years; and,

3. In the case of the *disme* and *quin-dismes*, which arose, within little more than the century after *Dane-gelt* expired, and levied the tenth or fifteenth of the subject's goods, from time to time, for the space of three hundred years :

The value of the lands of *England* became impaired, by reason of the charge, and every purchaser paid a less price, whilst such incumbrances continued upon them.

But, would our ancestors have suffered either the pope, or the crown, to examine the consciences of the people of *England* in the absurd manner of this *country parson*? Would it have been endured, either to set up a *right in conscience* to the perpetuity of *Peter-pence*, or *Dane-gelt*, because every modern purchaser had bought his house or land the cheaper, by reason of such burthens upon them?

Doubtless the same questions might have been asked, in the case of *Peter-pence*, and of *Dane-gelt*, as in the case of tythe, and the same answer must have been returned ; and,

When the ancient aids of *dismes* and *quin-dismes* had gained establishment by course of time, and the land was become cheaper, by reason

reason of these *tenths* and *fifteenths* granted continually to the king; would not the crown have had an estate of perpetuity in the *tenth* lamb, the *tenth* fleece, the *tenth* sheaf, and the *tenth* part of the goods of the subjects; or, in the *fifteenth*, according as these rates and impositions assessed the value of property? Would not the king have claimed his *tenth* or *fifteenth* by the same *rule of conscience*, as the clergy set up to establish their estate in *tythe*? And, because the continuance of the imposition had lowered the rent of all the lands, might not the king, with as much reason, have told the subjects, that the *tenth*, or *fifteenth* of their estates had been paid of so long continuance, as had extinguished the rights of the *first* owners? Might he not have urged, in behalf of such a rent charge, (as the clergy now urge for their *tythe*) that every man bought his land, and hired his farm, in expectation of being subject to such a charge; and, that the price of the land, and the rent of the farm, being less on this account, no man could have right ever to be eased, since no man could have property in that which he did not purchase?

This may very fully evince the unreasonableness of the *country parson's* plea:

But, for a shorter decision of the question,

‘ If you bought your lands and tenements with these incumbrances upon them, what right have you ever to be eased of them ?’

I answer, that I have,

The right of a free subject, to enjoy the produce of his own labour ;

The right of an *Englishman*, to enjoy his own possessions free and clear of all unreasonable incumbrances ;

And, my title to the incumbered part of my estate is so far good, as any other man’s title to it is bad.

If I buy an estate with a *rent-charge*, an *annuity*, or a *mortgage* upon it, and these incumbrances shall be considered in the purchase ; yet, if afterwards it appears that the persons claiming this *rent-charge*, this *annuity*, or this *mortgage*, never had any just right therein :

Am I bound to make their bad title good in law or conscience, because I bought the estate cheaper, on supposition that they had lawful incumbrances upon it ?

In the possession of land I am in the condition of the *prime occupant*: I am not bound to shew my title to any man; I am not bound to shew that I bought it, or inherit it. It is sufficient that I possess it, unless he can shew a prior or better right to it.

And, whether I bought my *freehold* cheaper or dearer, I am by law and conscience entitled to hold it as free and clear, as if I had held it from the creation of the world.

This doctrine of gaining an *estate in perpetuity* through any imposition upon land, which by length of time makes the *value of it less* in subsequent alienations, and, by pretended equity, the *interest in it less* to all new purchasers;

Is of dangerous consequence to the whole LANDED INTEREST of this kingdom.

It establishes a right *somewhere* in a PERPETUAL LAND-TAX; because within forty or fifty years time, since the land hath borne this charge, the value of land hath diminished in proportion; and two thirds of the lands of *England*, having within that time by purchase or exchange passed into the hands of *new owners*, (as may probably be the case of

all our lands before this tax can be released) therefore the *land owner*, who bought his land subject to the usual land-tax, shall in equity and conscience be for ever liable to pay *two, three, or four shillings in the pound*, by reason of his having bought the land *cheaper*.

And, the *country parson* shall ask him those subtle questions, 'Is he a land owner? Let him be asked, upon his conscience, whether he paid any consideration to the vender of the land beyond the usual price, and upon supposition that no land-tax would be due from his land? Is he a farmer? Let him be asked, upon his conscience, whether he pays more rent than used to be given for the farm, and in consideration of his paying no land-tax? If he cannot say that he either bought, or hired, the land-tax (and he can say neither) what title hath he to it? and therefore, there must be *another* owner who hath a *just* title to it.'

From *rules of property and rights of estate*, such as this *country parson* would establish, it must follow, that no usurpation on the lands of a kingdom could ever be resumed, consistently with conscience; that the foundations of ecclesiastics, in the *church of Rome* itself, ought not to be taken away, because the priests have

have the legal estate vested in them; that the impositions of arbitrary power become matter of right, in persons who can work the ancient *land owners* out of their inheritances; and, that, if SHIP MONEY had been exacted for a length of time, till the value of all our lands had sunk under the exaction, *new purchasers* would have had no right to have been eased of the burden, because they would have bought the land charged with it, and cheaper by reason of it.

In short, such consequences are unavoidable from this part of the *country parson's* plea, that were he to shew himself *in his proper figure*, speaking in this manner against the right of the people of *England* to enjoy their own lands, an IMPEACHING PARLIAMENT might probably charge him as an *enemy to property*; a *betrayor of the rights and liberties of the people*; advancing *false doctrines of dangerous consequence to the constitution of the kingdom*, and which tend to *subvert the protestant religion*, to *obstruct all reformation in the christian church*, to *receive popery and popish foundations*, and to *subject the commons of this realm to the yoke of enormous ecclesiastical power*.

Leaving him to the discipline of such national justice, whenever it shall find him — I
totally

totally deny him, or any person living, to possess any estate in the land, by reason of its having been lowered in value, through an unjust imposition; I conceive his *claim of tythe* to have no other foundation, in law or conscience, than *Peter-Pence* had before it was abolished by act of parliament; I conceive them both to have been usurpations of the same nature, which grew and obtained in the times of darkness and devotion through the craft of a *mercenary* clergy, and the superstition of a blind *deluded* laity; I likewise apprehend, that as the wisdom of parliament utterly abolished *the one*, because it impoverished the kingdom, so the representatives of the people have not only a right, but are bound in duty to moderate *the other*, whenever it shall be exorbitant in its amount, or oppressive in its exactions. But,

Because the estate of the clergy in tythe, is so much insisted on as their right in *conscience*, it may be fit to enquire on what consideration they had their original grants. The confirmation of king STEPHEN is an evidence of this kind, the preamble to which is as follows, *viz.*

Because through the providence of divine mercy we know it to be so ordered, and by the church's publishing it far and near, every body
hath

hath heard, that by the distribution of alms persons may be absolved from the bonds of sin, and acquire the rewards of heavenly joys: I Stephen, by the grace of God king of England, being willing to have a part with them, who by an happy kind of trading exchange heavenly things for earthly; and smitten with the love of God, and for the salvation of my own soul, and the souls of my father and mother, and all my forefathers and ancestors (confirm tythes and other donations to the church.)*

After such a specimen as this, I cannot have the least doubt that estates given under such considerations, are of all others the most proper for the disposition of parliament. But with reference to the *country parson's* charge against the Quaker, that "his conscience, which will not allow him to pay tythe, is a conscience which will not permit his neighbour to take

* Quoniam divina misericordia providente cognovimus esse dispositum, & longe lateque prædicante ecclesia, sonat omnium auribus divulgatum, quod ELEMOSYNARUM largitione possunt absolvi vincula peccatorum, & acquiri cœlestium præmia gaudiorum; ego Stephanus Dei gratia Anglorum rex partem habere volens cum illis, qui fœlici commercio cœlestia pro terrenis commutant, Dei amore compunctus, & pro salute animæ meæ, et patris mei matrisque meæ, & omnium parentum meorum, et antecessorum, &c.

" and:

“ and enjoy *his own* property.” It seemeth reasonable to hear the Quaker speak for himself; and the strongest writer on this subject amongst the Quakers, being *Anthony Pearson*, formerly a justice of peace in *Westmorland*, let us hear what he says in his *great case of tythes*, on the question *that tythe ought to be paid as a rent charge upon the estate.*

Unto which, *says he*, I answer,

“ That though it were true, and could
 ‘ be proved, that my ancestors gave tythes,
 ‘ and that for ever, yet am I not thereby bound
 ‘ to pay them, or stand any way chargeable
 ‘ with them. It is true, when they were owners
 ‘ of land, they might themselves yield and set
 ‘ forth what part of their increase they pleased,
 ‘ or might have given the tenth, or any other
 ‘ part of their land as they would, or they
 ‘ might have charged upon the land what rent
 ‘ they liked; but they could not charge their
 ‘ posterity with that which was no ways theirs,
 ‘ nor which, in any true sense, construction,
 ‘ or understanding, they could be said to have
 ‘ any property in, and which is not paid by
 ‘ reason of that which is derived from them.
 ‘ For, tythe is neither paid of land, nor by the
 ‘ reason of the land, but is paid by the reason
 ‘ of the increase or renewing; and therefore the
 ‘ doctrines

' doctrines of the old fathers, and the popish
 ' laws for tythes, do as well require the pay-
 ' ment of the tenth part of men's profit or
 ' gain, whether by trade, commerce, or mer-
 ' chandize, as of the fruits of the earth. Yea,
 ' the tenth part also of wages, and personal in-
 ' crease, though not raised immediately by
 ' land: and surely no man will say that he pays
 ' tythe of these because his ancestors charged
 ' him with them; nor will any man allow, that
 ' another person, by any gift of his ancestor,
 ' can have another distinct property in the
 ' tenth part of the fruits of his labour; and the
 ' case is the same as to all tythes, whether pre-
 ' dial, personal, or mixed. If I sit still and
 ' plough not, no corn will grow; if I sit still
 ' and work not, no profit will rise; so that it
 ' is my labour, my diligence and industry that
 ' raiseth the tythe, and in my power it is to
 ' make it less or more; and sometime, yea of-
 ' ten it falls out, that the tythe of corn is thrice
 ' more worth than the yearly value of the land
 ' on which it grows; and herein tythe of corn
 ' is far more hard and unequal than personal
 ' tythes; for the one pays but a tenth, all
 ' charges deducted; the other pays the tenth
 ' of charges and all.'

' Mine ancestor could not charge me with
 ' that which doth not accrue by reason of

‘ that which I have from him ; nor am I bound
‘ because mine ancestor left me land, to pay
‘ tythe, which is not paid by reason of the land,
‘ but of the increase, unto which I am no more
‘ tied by law, than he is who hath increased
‘ without land. If I have land and no increase,
‘ I pay no tythes. If I have increase, though
‘ no land, I ought by law to pay tythes. If I
‘ husband my land so that the increase is not
‘ to be severed, no tythe can be recovered of
‘ me ; and therefore if I pasture my land, no
‘ tythe shall be paid for the grafs which is eaten
‘ unsevered, but only a *rate tythe* for that which
‘ doth depasture on it ; which makes it plain
‘ that tythe is not paid by the reason of the
‘ land, but of the stock ; and, in that also it
‘ lies in my power to make the tythe much,
‘ little, or nothing ; if I plough, and sow
‘ corn, the tenth part of the increase is ge-
‘ nerally more worth than the land on which
‘ it grows, which comes not by the land that
‘ descends from the ancestor, but because of
‘ the increase won with the great charge, in-
‘ dustry, and labour of the husbandman. If
‘ I pasture my ground with sheep that yield
‘ a fleece, the tythe will be considerable,
‘ though not so much as by corn. If I pasture
‘ with cows or breeding-cattle, a much less
‘ tythe is paid : and if I eat up the pasture by
‘ horses or barren cattle, a small and incon-
‘ siderable

' siderable rate is only required; though in
 ' few places of the nation would that have been
 ' recovered in the times when *popish* laws were
 ' at greatest height. But if I plant wood,
 ' and let it stand for timber; or, if I store
 ' my land with beasts which be *feræ naturâ*,
 ' wherein there is no personal property, no
 ' tythes shall be paid; or, if I will let my
 ' land lie waste, (which may be supposed, be-
 ' cause it may be done) or will eat my mea-
 ' dow or corn standing, no tythe can be requir-
 ' ed. All these instances manifest that tythe
 ' still hath relation to the stock and personal
 ' estate, and not to the land; and is paid by
 ' the reason of the stock, and not of the land.
 ' And so no ancestor could lay and perpetuate
 ' such a charge as tythe upon it, nor could he
 ' bind his successor to pay it. If by my an-
 ' cestor I am bound to pay tythe *ratione tenu-
 ' ræ*, or in consideration of the land which
 ' he leaves me, to what value must it be of?
 ' I may yearly pay more tythe than the land
 ' he leaves me is worth: if I keep it in
 ' tillage, and if I pasture it I need not pay the
 ' twentieth part. Have I not herein (with-
 ' out fraud to my ancestor) power to pay
 ' him much or little? How then is tythe
 ' like a rent certain (which is by some ob-
 ' jected?) If tythes were paid by reason of
 ' the land, surely there is most reason, that
 ' the

' the tenth part of the grafs renewing upon
 ' all pasture grounds should be paid ; for the
 ' land still brings that with it ; and, it is
 ' easily dividable by rent, or let by month.
 ' If *another* hath as good right to the tenth
 ' part of the increase, as the owner hath to
 ' the nine ——— why cannot he take it with-
 ' out the owner's setting it out, or recover
 ' it by action of debt or trespass? But it
 ' is clear there is no title till it be set forth ;
 ' and then, if the owner of the land carry
 ' it away, an action of trespass lies, because
 ' he had set it out, and given it to another,
 ' and so altered his property, as one man
 ' doth by marking his cattle for another man ;
 ' and therefore it is, that the law which com-
 ' mands tythes, doth not give power to any
 ' one to take the tythe, because he had no
 ' title, but enjoins the owner to set it forth ;
 ' and in so doing to make it another's *by*
 ' *his own consent*. If any man claims tythes
 ' by my ancestor's gift, may I not ask him,
 ' to whom, or for what my ancestor gave
 ' them? And, it is plain beyond denial, that
 ' all those gifts of land or tythe in *England*
 ' (since *Austin* the monk planted the *popish*
 ' faith, and preached up the new payment
 ' of tythes) were given to *popish* priests, for
 ' saying prayers for the souls of the givers
 ' and their deceased ancestors, as old confe-

'crations do witness: and therefore in reason,
 'if the consideration and service be ceased,
 'so ought also the wages; for no man in
 'law or equity ought to claim wages, when he
 'will not do the work for which it was given;
 'and seeing these *popish* priests and prayers
 'are laid aside, the gift (if any such were,
 'and could be binding) ought to return to
 'the donor; and may not, without his consent,
 'be perverted to another use.

'But some object (as the *country parson* hath
 'done in his *plea*) that

*When I or my ancestor bought the land, it
 was sold cheaper (because it was supposed it
 ought to pay tythe) than I or my ancestor could
 have bought such land as was known to be tythe-
 free; and therefore, having a cheaper bargain,
 I am bound in equity to pay tythe.*

I answer,

'That, I have already proved all land is
 'tythe free; and that the charge of tythe is
 'upon the stock and personal estate, and not
 'upon the land. And, the strength of this
 'objection lies in comparing those who pay
 'tythes, with those who are free. Those who
 'buy lands *tythe-free* are eased of this oppres-
 'sion,

sion, and are in no hazard: and, though all
 others ought to be so, yet it being a que-
 stion, whether they can ease themselves of
 the burthen, they buy under a hazard, and
 are subject to such a charge. But if they
 cast off the yoke, *they get but what is their*
own; and seeing we have denied the *pope's*
 authority and supremacy, we may, so soon as
 we can, wholly cast off the burden which he
 laid on us: and thus, he that buys lands
 in the years of trouble and heavy taxes
 may, perhaps, buy much cheaper than when
 none or little is paid: shall he therefore be
 required to pay taxes when others are dis-
 charged? Or, shall he that bought cheap
 pennyworths on the borders between *Eng-*
land and *Scotland*, when those parts were in-
 fested with *moss-troopers*, always pay tribute
 to thieves and robbers? We bought land
 when the pope's yoke was upon our necks;
 and if we cast it from us, we may by as
 good reason be eased of our tythes, as they
 of their taxes. But if I bought it *cheaper*,
 what is that to the state or the priest?

This is the Quaker's defence against the
 charge of *setting up a title on the plea of con-*
science to another man's estate; wherein he
 proves, that his tenth, which the parson claims
 in the produce of land, is neither his right

by any condition annexed to the inheritance nor by any consideration allowed in the purchase; that neither the donor of the land gave, or could give it; and that neither conscience nor equity can require the Quaker to pay it.

The question will then depend upon the judgment of the legislative power; and we are still in the proper method of debating, what measures the legislative ought to prescribe, between the parson and the Quaker in the case of tythes.

We are told upon this footing of the judgment of the legislative power, and with some air of triumph, that persons withholding tythes are stiled *evil-disposed persons*, 27 Hen. VIII. *not regarding their duties to God and the king*, 32 Hen. VIII. and acting of an *ungodly perverse will and mind*: to which the parson might have added, *moved and seduced by the instigation of the devil*: ——— it would have made the same impression on the *commons of Great Britain*, before whom he is pleading; and, it would have been as full an answer to the charge upon the clergy of *oppression, avarice and injustice in their suits for tythe*.

The words *perverse, ungodly, undutiful to God and the king*, prove nothing but that the priests, who had power to obtain a penal statute, had leave to call people names in the preamble to it. But

If it be urged as the sense of those times concerning non-payment of tythe, will the *parson* allow me to cite other statutes, made about the same time, as the sense of the law-makers upon other ecclesiastical pretensions?

I fear, the sense of parliament hath very little weight with the clergy, when it is not on the side of their ambition; and therefore I may not perhaps hold it conclusive, when, influenced by their ungodly management, it lets them loose to defame and damn their enemies, as *enemies to God and the king*.

The statute of the first year of *Edward VI.*
cap. 2

Declares,

‘ That elections of archbishops and bishops,
‘ by deans and chapters, are as well to the
‘ long delay, as to the great costs and charges
‘ of such persons whom the king gives any

‘ archbishoprick or bishoprick unto, and that
 ‘ the said elections be *in very deed no elec-*
 ‘ *tions*, but only by a writ of CONGE
 ‘ D’ELIRE have *colours, shadows, or pre-*
 ‘ *tences of elections, serving nevertheless to no*
 ‘ *purpose*, and seeming also derogatory to the
 ‘ king’s prerogative royal.’

This act of parliament, though not held at present to be in force, doth certainly shew the *sense of our ancestors* on the subject of electing bishops.

Will the clergy allow us to speak of their *pretended* elections of bishops in the terms of this act of parliament? No — it is against divine right. If then they will not allow the *institution of bishops* to be tied down, to the preface of a law made in *Edward VI’s* time, will they tie every man down, *in the equity of tithes*, to the preface of a law made in *Henry VIII’s* time?

I trust in the right of an *Eng’ish* subject, that we shall not be restrained, from a larger consideration of so important an affair, and that neither our duty to God or the king shall be questioned, for no better reason than our difference of sentiments in the affair of *tithes*.

I reverence an act of parliament as much as any man living. It is the act of that power which we are all bound to trust and obey. But I am not so far concluded by an act of parliament, that I ought either to believe *implicitly* whatever it declares, or not to solicit the repeal of what it may enact.

And, I cannot but observe,

1. That when *Henry VIII.* unravelling his own reformation, went retrograde into the worst measures of popery, he past the *act of the six articles* in his 31st year, wherein he established *auricular confession* and *transubstantiation*. And

2. That in the next year he past the act for the *payment of tythes*, wherein is the famous expression of persons *not regarding their duties to God and the king*.

If therefore *tythes*, *transubstantiation*, and *auricular confession*, are of the same growth and family, we shall find that the same reasoning from acts of parliament, which makes the *payment of tythes* a DUTY to God and the king, by the statute of 32 *Hen. VIII.* would as forcibly prove *transubstantiation* and *auricular con-*

feſſion to be articles of faith fit for a christian to believe in, becauſe they are ſo declared, by the ſtatute of 31 *Hen. VIII.* which impoſed thoſe *ſix bloody articles* famous in the ſtory of thoſe times. And,

To ſay that the act of the *ſix articles* is repealed, but that the *tythe act* is ſtill in force, would make the matter infinitely ridiculous; for

This would ſuppoſe that our *duty to God*, or our *faith in Chriſt*, depends altogether on the exiſtences and duration of acts of parliament: So that it may be a *duty to God*, or not a *duty to God*; an *orthodox creed*, or not an *orthodox creed*, as different parliaments happen to be of different opinions,

If the *country parſon* is diſpleaſed, that ſuch abſurdities ſhould be laid at his door, he ſhould be leſs forward to preſs the ſenſe of our anceſtors, and authorities out of the ſtatute books, in proof of ſuch points as *duties to God*, wherein every man may take the bible and his own conſcience to be ſafer guides than any act of parliament.

If he is diſpleaſed, that the ſenſe of our anceſtors, and authorities out of the ſtatute books

books should be urged in support of the rights of the laity against the usurpations of the clergy, I must tell him, that to protect the people from injustice, is the proper and essential care of parliament, but that to define *duties to God*, is beyond the bounds of human authority; and though parliaments may specify what doctrines clergymen shall teach, yet they cannot require *any man to believe them*, because though the parson is the *servant* of the legislative power, yet every man is *master of his own conscience*.

Our *duty to God*, as to the payment of tythes is therefore in every respect as questionable, and as *conscientiously* to be denied, as if those laws had never been enacted, And,

The payment of tythes, as a *duty to God*, being denied by the quakers, and by almost all other men;

The *common good* can be the only justifiable reason for imposing it as a common charge.

Thus, we are once more in the case, where we ought to be, of debating the merits of this bill upon the principles of public justice.

The people called *Quakers* who are most oppressed by suits for tythe, apply for the better regulation of such suits, that they may be less oppressed by them.

As a people professing the religion of *Christ*, they cannot pay tythes or wages to the clergy, because they believe in their consciences that *Christ* abolished tythes, and forbid the payment of wages to the priesthood.

If they are in an error, it is the error of their consciences, and they ought not to be punished for it. But,

As subjects professing a dutiful obedience to the government under which they live, they yield according to the Gospel of *Christ*, submission to the civil magistrate, and what he takes from them, for the maintenance of the clergy, they patiently acquiesce in ;

They make no resistance to the officer who distrains their goods for tythe. And,

Can any thing be more reasonable, than to appoint an officer, who shall at their charge set out the tythe, when it is due in kind, or levy it, when it ought to be paid in money? Or,

Can any thing be more unreasonable, than to authorize the parson to sue the Quaker, not only for the tythe, but for *three times the value*, because he hath *not set it out*, when he is disabled by his conscience, and when any other man may be appointed by law to *set it out for him*?

We are told by the *country parson*, that every *wise* clergyman, for his own sake, and every *good* clergyman, for his neighbour's sake, will take the *easy and cheap* method which is left to his option by former acts of parliament; and,

Therefore, it is inferred, the legislature ought not to tie the clergy down, to this *easy and cheap method*, because the wisest and best of them already use it for their own sake, and their neighbours. But,

If the *wisest and best* use it of choice, this will be an argument, that the *unreasonable and unjust* should be restrained to it. For,

Are the subjects of *England* to have no better security against oppression, than the wisdom and goodness of the clergy? Or,

Ought the clergy to be trusted with a power, which, according to *the parson's* confession, neither a wise clergyman nor a good clergyman can use, without mischief either to himself or his neighbour?

Where the *power of oppression* is, acts of oppression will undoubtedly be. No church, no state, no body of men ever had this power but they used it. And,

Whoever gives an authority to oppress, is the author of oppression.

This truth, which is written in characters of blood in all the histories of mankind, is reason and evidence to justify a bill which restrains an oppressive power in the church :

A reason so convincing, an evidence so clear, as makes it *trifling with the justice* of parliament, when the clergy demand proof that they *do* oppress, whilst every man who hath eyes ~~must~~ see that they *may* oppress.

If they *may* many of them *will* : but,

If they *may not* none of them *can* commit oppression. And,

If they *have not* oppressed by that power whereby they *may* oppress; yet, it is incumbent on the justice of an house of commons to restrain such *oppressive power*. Because,

It is more the duty of parliament to prevent grievances than it is to redress them; it is more compassionate to save men from injustice than to relieve them under it; it is an happier effect of law to preserve property than to repair it; it is a nobler act of justice to restrain a crime than to punish it; and it is a more perfect constitution of government, under which oppression is not practicable, than that under which it is practised, and *may be punished*.

By a paper which I have seen, in the hands of Gentlemen (since this bill hath been depending) entitled *An account of prosecutions of the people, called Quakers in the several courts, since the seventh and eighth of king William the third, Anno 1696, when the Affirmation-Act was obtained, which gave justices of the peace power to judge of tythe demanded under the value of ten pounds;*

It appears that there have been,

<i>Prosecutions,</i>		<i>Prison.</i>	<i>Died in Prison.</i>
In <i>chancery</i>	38	10	1
In the <i>exchequer</i>	787	185	2
In the ecclesiastical courts	} 269	81	2
In the common-law courts	} 59	16	0
<hr/>		<hr/>	<hr/>
In all 1153		292	5

The Quakers add, that ‘they are very imperfect as to the whole number of suits brought, because several times such suits were made an end of in the country, and no account given of them to their *meeting of sufferings*; and many times, when friends were discharged from imprisonments *by acts for relief of insolvent debtors*, there were no account given; and, the like deficiency often happened, when their relations paid to release them out of goal.’

They alledge, ‘That the demands for tythe have been innumerable, within forty years past; but that the nature of the prosecutions, and sums levied by them may be judged of, they have collected forty-four cases, where the demands amount to 188 *l.* 3 *s.* 8 *d.* and the sums levied to 2252 *l.* 6 *s.* 10 *d.*

‘One

‘ One *Isaac Averil* was prosecuted three
‘ several times for three several sums amount-
‘ ing to 19 *l.* for which he had taken from him
‘ 187 *l.* 10 *s.*

‘ There was one friend a prisoner *ten* years
‘ for *forty* shillings.

‘ Another, a prisoner *four* years for *one*
‘ shilling.

‘ Two were prisoners *five* years for *twenty*
‘ shillings.

‘ One was a prisoner *nine* years for small
‘ tythe.

‘ One was a prisoner *six* years for *four pounds*
‘ *ten shillings.*

‘ They find an account of fifteen persons pro-
‘ secuted for above ten pounds each;

‘ The demands on the whole fifteen being
‘ 313 *l.* 9 *s.* 6 *d.* there was taken from them for
‘ that demand 1068 *l.* 7 *s.* 4 *d.* 2 *q.*

‘ They further specify the names of the fol-
‘ lowing persons with the tythe demanded under

*the value of ten pounds, and the sum levied on
on account thereof, viz.*

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
<i>James Haviland</i> ———	8	00	0	61	00	0
<i>Thomas Strong</i> ———	1	10	6	15	11	6
<i>Richard Case</i> ———	0	13	0	37	11	6
<i>Thomas Drape</i> ———	4	10	1	50	00	0
<i>Robert Holliday</i> ———	0	11	6	60	00	0
<i>Henry Wake</i> ———	1	4	6	30	00	0
<i>Josiah Williams</i> ———	2	00	0	30	00	0
<i>John Taylor</i> ———	1	5	8	44	18	0
<i>Alexander Moore</i> ———	6	15	11	87	16	11
<i>Jeremiah Ellis</i> ———	1	00	0	44	00	0
<i>George Bewley</i> ———	3	10	0	93	10	0
<i>Sam. Tully and T. Warner</i> ———	3	2	8	75	16	0
<i>William Pearson</i> ———	0	13	0	19	16	0
<i>Jonathan Peasely</i> ———	7	0	0	237	5	0
<i>Daniel Williams</i> ———	0	1	6	100	0	0
<i>Thomas Ellwood</i> ———	0	12	0	24	7	6
<i>Abraham Butterfield</i> —	8	0	0	90	0	6
<i>Roger Jenkins</i> ———	0	14	6	84	10	6
<i>Richard Allen</i> ———	1	15	6	80	0	0
<i>Thomas Jenkins</i> ———	1	5	0	67	10	0
<i>John Townshend</i> ———	4	00	0	77	14	0
<i>Francis Chairman</i> ———	7	16	0	73	0	0
	66	1	4	1484	6	11

This is a specification of suits, which the
country parson and his colleagues complain of,

as omitted *in the case of the Quakers*. I am told, that the registers of their *meeting of sufferings* have recorded the cases *at large*; and that they will inform any gentleman of the particulars of their hardships; which I mention, because, having no acquaintance amongst them, I am without fuller information myself, nor have I applied, where, I believe, I could not be refused; because, if I knew the exactest state of every case, it could not be discoursed of within the extent of these papers.

The number of suits herein specified, the prisoners, the distresses, and the immense disparity between the demand and sum exacted in suits for tythe, must raise abhorrence in any compassionate mind. The single article of ONE HUNDRED POUNDS taken for *eighteen pence* would be just provocation, for abolishing all the tythes of the clergy, if their suits could not be carried on in more humane methods. Such an instance of oppression in any civil concern would raise an insurrection: and, that men endure it from their spiritual guides, shews the universal passion for an interest in another world; though, the utmost force of imagination cannot paint an HELL more terrible to our fears, than what the cruelty of the clergy daily sets before our eyes.

In eleven hundred and fifty-three suits they made two hundred and ninety-two prisoners; in fifteen suits where the claims amounted to 313*l.* they exacted 1068*l.* which was at the rate of *one hundred* pounds for less than *thirty* pounds; in forty-four suits where the claims amounted to 188*l.* they exacted 2252*l.* which was at the rate of *one hundred* pounds for little more than 8*l.* and, in twenty-two suits where the claims amounted to 66*l.* they exacted 1484*l.* which was the rate of *one hundred* pounds for less than *four pounds ten shillings*. Or if we take these eighty-one suits all together, the sums demanded make 567*l.* which compared with 4804*l.* the total sum taken, is in the proportion of *one hundred* pounds levied, for every sum of *eleven pounds five shillings* demanded.

Compute the medium of the charge in any manner it is monstrous and enormous. Suits attended with *such costs* are a scandal on the justice of the kingdom, not to mention the profession of the gospel. And therefore this bill, which is designed to shorten suits and limit costs, will vindicate the laws as much as it will ease the people.

I perfectly agree with the *country parson* in
 ‘this *plea*, ‘That to secure property is one
 ‘main end of government, and that therefore
 ‘all *opinions*, all *practices* inconsistent with the
 ‘preservation of property, are also inconsistent
 ‘with government and society.’

No man can be more tender of property
 than I have ever been, and always shall be. But
 I think, that the laity have a property in their
 goods, as well as the clergy in tythe ;

That *nine parts in ten* are a more valuable
 property than a *single tenth* can pretend to be ;

That the property of a *tenth* ought not to
 devour the property of all *the other nine* ;

And, that it is destructive of all property to
 levy *four thousand eight hundred and four pounds*
 on the laity, where the sum of *567 l.* is the
 whole demand of the clergy.

The *country parson* hath a conceit, that this
 bill is the only instance of an application to
 any government in the known world, to coun-
 tenance an *opinion* destructive to the property
 of any of the subjects.

But surely, if it be his conception, he is wrong, vain, and unwarrantable.

That lands held in *mortmain*, or that the stagnation of property in dead hands, is contrary to the good of the kingdom, hath been the *opinion* of our parliaments, and the principle of our *laws*, ever since the foundation of this government, however destructive it must be to what *churchmen* call their property.

But further, that the Quakers hold the maintenance of the clergy to be antichristian and unreasonable, is fact; for,

That any sect should account it a sufficient charge upon them to maintain their own teachers, is but reason:

And that the Quakers, who pay nothing at all to their own teachers, should be obliged to maintain the teachers of any other sect, is to them not only an hardship, but an abomination.

Now this which tends to take away the maintenance of the priesthood, may to a parson seem very naturally destructive of *what he calls* his property. But,

Because

Because the Quaker withholds the *tenth* which the law gives the parson a title to, shall he take the other nine which the law can give him no title to? And, by reason of a claim of 567 l. consume four thousand eight hundred and four pounds of the Quaker's substance? And, more prodigious! shall he take an hundred pounds for eighteen pence?

I envy the clergy no maintenance which the law gives, or can give them; but, the maintenance of the priesthood ought not to devour the substance of the whole people, like the ears of corn in PHARAOH'S DREAM, that sprung up withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind; and devoured the ears that were full and good:

I have not contended either for taking away, or for making less, that maintenance which the law allows them. But I have always been of opinion, that to ask it from the good-will of society, and to take it without cruelty or oppression, will more firmly establish their revenues than the most arrogant claims of *divine-right*, or the most rigorous measures of ecclesiastical tyranny.

I firmly believe, that to seek for no more than their due, would be the surest means of always receiving their due;

I have ever observed, that the more they talk of their privileges, the less other people think of them :

And, whatever light I may stand in with the *reverend order*, I believe, I am a better friend to their interests than many of themselves can pretend to be ; for *they* would maintain that exorbitant usurpation of power, which they cannot make use of without making themselves most odious ; whereas, I would *disable them* from hurting their calling, or the cause of religion, by tyranny or by injustice.

I am of opinion, that if the church shall on every occasion oppose itself to the loud *complaint of the land*, and persist in these obstinate claims of powers, too heavy to be borne, the clergy will make the cause of the church such a load upon its friends, that the torrent of public resentment will be stronger than any minister can stem : the passions of mankind unreasonably provoked, will not be easily appeased, and though a *small sacrifice* might have contented every one in the beginning, yet when popular rage is too far incensed, a *great one* will not satisfy in the end.

Nothing so much calms and sweetens mankind, as the frank redress of a crying grievance. Any single hardship generously taken away, disposes the bulk of mankind to endure a thousand; they are subdued by gentleness and mercy, but grow restiff and head-strong under oppression.

In all societies and states, it is seen from the *parish priest* to the prince and ruler of the country, that he who asks with the greatest moderation, is paid with the greatest liberality.

I am therefore most clear, that the *country Parson* is an enemy to the interest of his order, by obstinately opposing that ease which the people aggrieved by tythe are likely to obtain by this bill.

‘ He says, indeed, that passing this bill in
‘ compliance to the obstinate Quakers, will
‘ make them be esteemed as confessors, who by
‘ their steadiness have made the law give way,
‘ and exalted their misguided consciences above
‘ the property of their fellow-subjects.’ But,

May it not be said with greater truth ?

That

That rejecting this bill, in compliance to the obstinate clergy, will make them be considered as a *a dead weight upon the constitution*; which, by its continual obstruction, keeps common justice at a stand, and exalts the ambition of churchmen above the rights of their fellow-subjects.

Is any property in the kingdom sacred from regulation besides theirs? or, is it fit that any should be?

Hath not the wisdom of parliament provided laws, for the *limitation of suits*, and for the *prevention of frivolous and vexatious arrests*?

Have not acts been made, to regulate the courts, and officers of justice, to discharge prisoners for debt, and to reform the gaols? Yet,

Did any man oppose these acts by claims of *birthright* in the law, and insolent demands of *property*, as if the law could stand in obstruction to public justice, or property in any one be a reason for the oppression of all?

To adjust the bounds of property, and to make the power of every subject compatible
with

with the safety of all the rest, are the highest ends of government :

And therefore all *opinions*, all *practices*, which tend to the exemption of any order of men from public enquiry, or public justice, are utterly inconsistent with government and society.

If an order of men have advantages from law, which are inconsistent with justice, ought not the law to give way for the free course of justice? Or ought the *legislative power* to exist in vain?

Is it to be a power, which, in any case having been misguided to oppress, shall for ever remain without capacity to right the injured subject?

If arguments of this sort had prevailed with our fathers, we should have continued, as absolute bigots and slaves to the church, at this hour, as our *fellow christians* are in *Italy* and *Spain*.

If arguments of this sort prevail for the time to come, we shall never be allowed to repeal or amend any law beneficial to the priesthood, however grievous to the people,

since the priests claim a *birthright in the law*, to bound the legislative power. But,

The bill ought to pass, were it only for the sake of an example, that it is not in the power of a *mitred doctor*, by his *letters missive* stirring up petitions from every diocese, to intimidate an house of commons in a matter of this high concern to the justice of the kingdom.

If such arts are successful to encrease the *waste paper on the clerks table*, I hope, a body of *English gentlemen* will never weigh petitions *in quantity* against any bill whatever; especially bills for the reformation of the church, against which, they are certain of having as many remonstrances as there are deaneries, arch-deaconries, chapters, colleges, or ecclesiastical precincts in *England, Wales*, and the town of *Berwick upon Tweed*.

Another reason that the bill should pass, is, that *if it pass*, the clergy are *desirous to have it made general*.

This seems to be the only equitable proposition in the *country parson's* plea; though I have been told, that his brethren wisely hope to defeat the bill, by extending the benefit

nefit of it to ALL the people of *England*!
But,

I cannot believe, that any man living will dislike a bill, because he and his friends are to share the good effects of it, as well as the people called *Quakers*.

Nor, will I imagine, that any set of men can be so simple, as to be against this act for the ease of the *Quakers*, on account of its being so highly expedient for every one else.

I am exceedingly desirous that it may be made general; and that the *Committee of the whole house* may secure not only the *Quakers*, but the whole people of *England* from ecclesiastical oppression. Yet,

If it should pass confined to the *Quakers* only, (which I am credibly informed that people do not desire;)

It shall nevertheless have my hearty concurrence.

Because, when a law is obtained of so much good to one part of the subjects, it will

be more easy to procure the like relief for all the rest; and,

An house of commons will have this act of indulgence to build upon, as the foundation of universal liberty. For this reason,

We ought to favour the Quakers as the first movers in the cause of liberty; and notwithstanding the unhandsome and unwarrantable language which some of the clergy bestow upon this innocent people,

I will say what my experience of them can justify, (nor was I without a full knowledge of them in the former part of my life;)

They deserve protection and indulgence as much as any part of his majesty's subjects:

They are unquestionably attached to the succession in his *protestant* royal family, and zealous in promoting the felicity of his reign:

They are naturally interested in the liberties of *England*, as a people whose religion can have no other refuge:

They are universally employed in trade and industry; they have the smallest number
of

of members either unprofitably rich, or miserably poor; and, they are the least to be accused of *luxury, corruption,* or **LAW-SUITS** of any set of men in the kingdom.

And, in justice to their principles,

I have ever thought their religion to be well deserving of countenance from a free and wise government. For,

It tends to establish no hierarchy, to monopolize no property, to invest no lands in useless or dangerous societies, to form no interest separate from the common good, to detach no part of the people from natural industry, nor to enslave any other part by bigotry and blind dependence.

If some little singularity in their forms may occasion witless drollery on their persons, wise men will excuse them, from the good effects even of their most rigid institutions. For,

By this means they preserve a modesty of apparel amongst their people, which no *sumptuary* laws that have been made in *England* could produce amongst us; and, a purity of manners, which shews our *reforming societies*

to be as despicable as they are useless, or worse.

If they are described, by those that do not know them, as *stiff* and ungraceful in their deportment, so far is it from being true, there are not any people in the world of more flowing affability, more social kindness, and easy humanity than many of the Quakers, who are taxed with stiffness of behaviour by the priesthood; though there is not a day of sun-shine, but the *express image* of all *priest-craft* may be seen in *St. James's Park*, cloathed in *church-buckram*, with that *insolent grimace*, and *powerless formality*, which would not less move the contempt of a Quaker, than the indignation of a gentleman. Lastly,

If the Quakers are traduced, by a defaming *parson*, as *not regarding their duties to GOD and the KING*, because they will not yield tythe to the clergy;

It may for the conclusion of this discourse, be justly observed in their favour; that,

1. As to their duty to *almighty GOD*,

Not

Not conceiving the clergy to have any right of maintenance from reason or revelation, this people who do not pay it, are justified in refusing it. But,

That the clergy, who whenever they administer the gospel by deputation, rarely give their substitute a better maintenance, than any gentleman gives to a *livery servant*,

Should tax the laity, and encumber the land, to be maintained in the luxury of lords, and the pride of sovereign princes: or,

Should, in the instance of every *country parson*, think it reasonable to demand in recompence for the *cure of souls*, five times, nay frequently ten times, as much as any parson alive will *pay their curate* for discharging the office in his stead;

Is such a contradiction, so full of enormity and imposture, as gives not only every Quaker, but every man cause to conclude, that all of the profession ask more than any of them deserve, by their own rule of paying *priests wages*. And,

2. As to their duty to the KING,

The Quakers never were questioned, till they were reflected on by this *country parson*, whose *loyalty* perhaps wants a better argument, to convince the world of its *sincerity*, than this *immoderate zeal for tythe* :

A person*, of whom it may be fairly said, because it is notoriously true,

That he had so far abandoned the obligation of his oaths, as to have no method of making the world suspect him of *ordinary allegiance*, but by the most *prostitute compliances*: and, that he was a JACOBITE in all men's opinion, till, as the lowest implement and most officious advocate of *corruption*, he shewed the *Whiggs*, that, servile by nature, and venal by profession, he could be the SLAVE of their power, though incapable of becoming a proselyte to their principles of liberty; and that, he could be reconciled to the *pensions* of the court, though not to the title of a *protestant* successor.

From such a man, such a charge of *not regarding duties* to GOD and the KING,

* The character of Dr. *Sherlock*, then bishop of *Salisbury*, late of *London*.

ought to be considered as pure defamation on the Quakers, proceeding from malevolence to the rights of all mankind.

It can make no impression to their disadvantage;

And therefore I humbly hope, *that the bill shall pass.*

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A
S E R M O N

Preached before the Honourable

House of COMMONS,

January the 30th, 1⁶₇⁹₉.

Being an Anniversary S E R M O N
for the D A Y.

By *WILLIAM STEPHENS*, B. D.
Rector of *Sutton* in *Surry*.

From a Copy corrected by the Author.

L O N D O N:

Printed in the Year 1700.

Advertisement.

N. B. The *Honourable Auditory* before whom the following sermon was preached, having expressed their dislike, I never designed to have had it printed: but since it is stolen uncorrectly into the world, without my privity, I hope it will not be imputed as a crime, that I amend the *errata* of the press.

WILL. STEPHENS.

THE
E D I T O R
T O T H E
P R E A C H E R.

S I R,

SINCE the *Printer* informed me, that he will make a second impression of your sermon, I thought it might be fit to offer you some satisfaction for printing it without your consent. For although I was told, that you were obstinate in refusing to print it, yet I thought it might be useful to the public, and no ways disserviceable to you to publish it.

Wherefore, having gotten a copy, I gave it to a printer, only with this charge, that he should make the impression as cheap as he could, for as I observed, that the preaching of it made you some enemies, so I concluded that the printing of it might gain you some friends; because the misrepresentations which were given abroad concerning it would vanish away.

And as to the *reflection* which was made upon you by a suppositious clergyman, I appeal to my Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*, if he did not receive satisfaction from a worthy member of parliament, being a man of unspotted reputation, that was objected against you by the *reflector* as to your flying from a suspected prosecution *, was wholly *false* and *scandalous*.

S I R,

I wish you well, and am yours, &c.

* High-churchmen were so much exasperated against the author for this discourse, that they raised and propagated a shameful lie, of his being obliged to fly from *Bristol* for sodomy.

TITUS III. I.*

Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, and to be ready to every good work.

TO understand the reason of this, and such-like admonitions, which frequently occur in the apostle's writings, two things may be premised :

I. That about the time of our Saviour Christ, there arose one *Judas of Galilee* (who is mentioned *Acts* v. 37.) preaching seditious doctrines to the people, and teaching, (as *St. Jerom* in his comment on my text observes,) That they ought to own no Sovereign Prince, but God alone : and if they paid their tythes to the priest, they were discharged from paying tribute to the emperor. And upon this account it was (as *St. Jerom* believed) that the *Pharisees* asked our Saviour that captious question, *Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or no ?* *Matth.* xxii. 17. Now to this account *Anastafius Nicenus* adds, that the followers of this *Judas* were very numerous, and called by the

* In the first edition of this volume, I had the misfortune of printing the following discourse from a very incorrect copy ; but this is printed from the true and genuine copy of the author.

name of *Galileans*, and commonly looked upon as men ill affected to the *Roman* government: particularly, because, when they offered sacrifice, they refused to make supplication for the emperor and people of *Rome*; upon which account it is thought that *Pilate*, the *Roman* deputy of *Judæa*, came upon them whilst they were sacrificing, and putting them to the sword, mingled their blood with the blood of the sacrifices; as you may read, *Luke* xiii. 1.

And from hence it was, that our Saviour Christ and his disciples were suspected of favouring seditious doctrines, because they came out of *Galilee*, as is observed by *St. Chrysostom*, in his twenty-third homily on the *Romans*, wherein he saith, that great reports were spread abroad, as if the disciples were a factious, seditious people, and designing against the government. It must also be confessed, that many of the *Jews*, who were converted to the christian faith, were not sufficiently respectful to the higher powers which God's providence had set over them: for which *Mr. Calvin* gives this reason, Since the powers that were then in being opposed themselves to our Saviour Christ, they thought them unworthy of respect and honour.

Now what hath been said concerning the *Galilean* persuasion, shews the reason why the apostles

apostles do so frequently in their letters direct the christian churches to loyalty, or a due submission to magistrates.

1. To clear themselves from the false and scandalous imputation of having imbibed the doctrine of *Judas the Galilean*. And,

2. To undeceive all those that had been perverted by that seditious doctrine.

II. The second thing I would premise, is, That about the time when *St. Paul* wrote this epistle, the people of *Crete* (which was *Titus* his diocess) were unruly and mutinous. *Grotius* says, that they were always a factious people; and for that reason *St. Paul* wrote to *Titus*, their bishop, to put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, and to be ready to every good work.

I. I shall take occasion from hence, First, To make a just comment upon the text.

II. To set forth the reasons and grounds upon which the apostles founded their doctrine of obedience to civil magistrates. And,

III. To apply these reasons in conjunction with the occasion of this day's humiliation. And,

I. First, It may be observed, that St. *Paul* does not direct *Titus* to teach the doctrine of civil obedience as a new thing, but only to refresh their memories therewith, *to put them in mind, &c.* For men cannot be supposed ignorant of the absolute necessity of government, to the defence and support of society; which were, in effect, to suppose, that 'twere better to lead the lives of beasts than men, and that the world were willing to lie under the continual calamity of war and oppression, filled only with a rout of fools and madmen. 'Twere to suppose every single person willing to expose himself to the uncontrolled world, and bid defiance to the unbounded power, rage, and malice of mankind. We cannot but see ourselves linked together by common wants into public societies, and that these societies cannot subsist, unless they are upheld by the power of government, whose wisdom and justice must appear by a due administration of good laws: and from hence we cannot but see a necessity of *principalities and powers*, of superior and inferior *magistrates*, without whom laws can be neither made nor executed. From whence 'tis very visible, that subjection to a good government is as much our interest as it is our duty. This was evident to the *Pythagorean* sect of old, who would not suffer the blood of any creature to be shed for their use,

but

but yet allowed the sword of the magistrate to cut off malefactors.

The following words in my text, are, *Principalities* and *Powers*. Now the word in the original signifying something which is prime and principal, must denote the supreme established power, from whence inferior authorities are derived, and is the same with the *higher powers* mentioned *Rom. xiii. 1*. But because *St. Paul* speaks of *principalities and powers* in the plural number, 'tis likely that he alludes to the distinction (which was so common among the *Romans*) of the greater and lesser powers, the former of which, during the commonwealth, were the consuls, pretors, and censors; all which powers, in *St. Paul's* time, were vested in the emperor, and made up the imperial dignity. The lesser powers were all those derived from hence, and were subordinate hereunto. And this distinction was so nicely observed among the *Romans*, that *Julius Cæsar* punished a tribune, because he suffered himself to be stiled one of the higher powers. *Sueton.*

But in the text it must be observed, that our obedience becomes due, not only to the supreme, but inferior authorities; for the *Cretans*, to whom *Titus* preached the gospel, were part of a *Roman* province, governed by inferior officers, deputed from *Rome*, who were the magistrates they

they were exhorted to obey. For though the superior and inferior powers differ greatly, if compared among themselves; yet, with respect to the subjects obedience, they are to be regarded alike; so that we cannot wilfully disobey the inferior, without affronting the sovereign authority. If then the *Cretans* would obey the emperor, it must be by submission to the ordinances and officers which he had appointed to their island; and if they behaved themselves suitably to these magistrates, they discharged their duty to the imperial power which deputed them.

We see that a large family cannot be governed by the personal presence of the master, much less can an empire; so that there will be need to call in to the prince's assistance, such persons into whom he may diffuse some measure of his political soul, and thereby unite them as members to his own body politic; whereupon they are to be treated as the hands, arms and eyes of majesty: and hence *Titus* admonished them, not only to *be subject to principalities and powers, but to obey magistrates.*

II. The second thing I proposed to speak to, were the reasons upon which the apostles grounded their doctrine of civil obedience; which are two:

The one is given by St. *Paul*, who teaches, That, *every soul should be subject to the higher powers, because the magistrate is the minister of God to us for good, Rom. xiii. 1, 4.*

The second reason is given by St. *Peter*, viz. because all governments and governors do arise from our own consent, *Submit yourselves* (saith the apostle) *to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as supreme, &c.* Where note, That the king is called the ordinance, or creature of man, because the sovereign power itself is vested in men, according to human compact: and from hence our subjection is urged by the apostle St. *Peter*, in his *first Epistle, second chapter, verse 13.*

I. To begin with St. *Paul's* argument, who calls magistracy a divine ordinance, because of the excellent use of it, whereby good magistrates resemble the divine power, wisdom and goodness, in securing to all men their rights and properties; in preserving the peace, health and safety of societies, both with respect to body and soul. But to be more particular.

1. *The preservation of property was the first benefit for which magistracy was designed.* Now property is originally attained by the labour of either body or mind; for supposing the earth

to have been common to its first inhabitants, it will follow that whoever took the pains to cultivate any part of it, and lay up necessary stores for his use, had by this his industry made himself the true proprietor thereof. And could we suppose this new proprietor to be as well guarded, as that man we read of in the Gospel, *who was well armed, and kept his palace and goods in peace*, yet it may likewise be supposed, (as it there follows) *that if a stronger than he shall come upon him, he will take from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divide his spoils*. And this uncertain condition of property shews the reason of men's uniting into societies, and setting up forms of government, which is for mutual defence and preservation of property: and that, not only for the benefit of the present possessors, but of future generations. So that, what becomes a man's own, either by labour, gift or purchase, may with safety be enjoyed by himself, and also conveyed down to his posterity.

2. Life and limbs are ours by the gift of God. And these properties are liable to be invaded and destroyed: though they cannot (like other goods) be transferred to the use of the spoiler. And since there is so much variance and malice, pride and strife among mankind, what ill offices may not one man apprehend from another? But when destructive
malice,

malice, a fiend of hell, shall transform itself into an *angel of light*, and persuade men that they are then inspired with the spirit of God, when they are possessed by the *Apollyon*, the great enemy and destroyer of mankind, when under the pretence of religion itself, men shall exert their sharpest malice, not only against the possessions and liberties, but against the lives of one another; how great need is there of the magistrates interposing power to disarm them of their spiritual as well as carnal weapons of warfare, to take away the ball of contention from among them, and the power of evil-doing from all contending parties? And,

3. In this the magistrate is God's minister to us for good, not only with respect to the preservation of our liberties and lives from destruction, but of our souls from sin; for whilst this just liberty, this natural right of worshipping God, according to that knowledge he hath given us, is supported by law, no man is forced into hypocritical compliances, contrary to the direction of his conscience, but every one may worship the One True God in singleness of heart; whereas on the other hand, if in matters of religion, force be suffered to take the place of reason, all religions will be alike, and (as colours in the dark) undistinguishable.

And although the magistrate can bestow no divine grace upon the souls of men, yet whilst by punishing vice, immoral practices are restrained, he prevents the overflowing of sin in a land. And if ceasing to do evil, be one step towards learning to do well, whilst the civil powers restrain us from immoralities, they turn us out of the broad way of perdition into the paths of righteousness and peace.

From hence then it appears, *that they who are wanting in their submission and assistance to the civil ministry of God, are false to their own interest, as well as that of their posterity.* Whereas on the other hand, he who is ready to every *good work* which may support this divine ministry to us for good, will be sure, in the performance of his duty, to find his account.

Let us then take a view of our goods and chattels, houses and lands, wives and children; let us consider the blessings of health, safety and liberty: let us think how to preserve our lives from destruction, our souls from sin: whether we eat or drink, or sleep or wake, or whatever we do with comfort or safety, we hereby discover our continual obligation to the good magistrates care over us, whereby we are *put in mind to be subject, &c.*

2. The other reason of submission given by St. Peter is, *because all governments and governors arise from the peoples consent.* They are the ordinances and appointments of men, the creatures of human compact. For we do not find that God did appoint any form of political government for a pattern to be followed by any society now in being upon the earth. We see no such rule in the book of nature; nor do we read in scripture of any particular polity prescribed to all, or any people, now imbodyed in the world. We read there, that all governments and governors are appointed by God's providence, *By me kings reign, &c.* But we find no particular administration, no particular family, or single person, now in being, ordained to government by divine precept: but each magistrate and magistracy is left to the ordinance and appointment of those men who have joined themselves together in society.

The great variety we see in civil government, shews, that they are all the effects of human contrivance, and suited to the several interests of the respective societies: thus the ancient charter of the neighbouring city *, containing all those useful and necessary powers, by which so great a body is governed, Was it not the wise contrivance of their ancestors? And did it not receive its establishment from the principalities

and powers of the realm? the great charter of the realm itself is no more than the wise ordinance of our forefathers: and the dates of its royal confirmations are still remaining among us. And as several smaller societies have their free customs distinct from one another; so in different nations there are various lodgments, even of the sovereign power, which appear to be the effects of free-will; because in every rational government, something may be observed which is peculiar and distinguishing.

Furthermore, have we not seen the forms of government, even in the same nations changed from what they formerly had been? as in *Sweden, France, and Denmark*. And have not our eyes beheld of late years, the legal form of the *English* monarchy degenerated into tyranny, and again recovered, through God's blessing, together with the courage and conduct of the man of his own right hand, who by restoring our ancient liberties, justly recommended himself to the imperial crown of this realm by the free consent of the people?

Nor was it otherwise of old, when *Moses* was by meekness and miracle recommended of God to be the father of his country. For tho' by a divine power he wrought out *Israel's* deliverance from *Egypt* by conducting them into the wilderness, yet there was no form of government

vernment established among the tribes till *Jethro* made a visit to his son-in-law *Moses*, to whose counsel it was owing that a sound polity was set up in the land of *Israel*. For instead of the whole burden of the government lying upon *Moses*, which *Jethro* told him was not good, he directs him to provide out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and place such over them to be rulers over thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties and rulers of tens; and let them judge the people at all seasons. And it shall be (saith *Jethro*) that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge, *Exod. xviii. 17, 21, 22.* Thus the burden of the civil government should sit easy upon the governors, and the people should receive a quick dispatch of their affairs.

Moses (as you read) follows this advice, and joins himself with the tribes of *Israel* in the choice of persons fit for this administration, as will appear by comparing the 25th verse of the forecited chapter with the first chapter of *Deuteronomy*. In the former verse we read that *Moses* chose able men out of *Israel* and made them heads over the people. But the latter place shews that the people's consent was had in the election of these officers. For so *Moses* repeats the circumstances of that action, *Deut. i. 9, &c.* And I spake unto you at that time saying, I am

not able to bear you myself alone, &c. take ye therefore wise men and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you. From hence it appears.

1. That the old constitution of *Israel's* government, was the contrivance of *Jethro* an *Heathen*, and the magistrates who were in the administration were chosen by the joint consent of *Moses*, and the people. And,

2. That no one person, though never so able, so wise, and valiant as *Moses*, is sufficient to govern a nation without the advice and joint assistance of inferior magistrates. Much less such a man who hath no pretence to the spirit and character of this divine legislator.

It has been thought by some, that a great conqueror might form a civil government in a conquer'd nation, without the consent of the people by the sole power of his own will. And suppose it were so, then that government, would be an human ordinance, because the conqueror is but a man. But I deny it to be possible for any conqueror, though never so great, to make himself a king over any people without their consent. For to let pass what our histories tell us of the capitulations which followed the respective conquest of the *Saxons*, *Dan.s*, and *Normans*, before they erected any form

form of government in this land. Let us suppose that a great general, with a powerful foreign army, should so far over-run a nation that the people thereof could not be able to make any considerable resistance; in such a case the relations of *lord* and *slave* are actually introduced by the conquest. The conquerors are *lords* and the natives *slaves*: but then this state is a state of war still, but no political or civil constitution. The absolute *lord* and his *slave* are as yet, upon no civil terms with one another, no obligations have as yet passed between them, but they are both left to their own wills; and if the lord may take away the life of his slave, the slave is under no obligation of dealing otherwise with his lord. So that if this great general intends to rule in peace over the conquer'd people he will find himself constrained to enter into some terms of compact with them, upon which they are willing to accept him for the head of their government, and oblige themselves to obey him. But put the case that a nation, to avoid present destruction, would consent to make themselves legal slaves, this can no more oblige them than an honest man is bound to keep promise with a barbarous highwayman; for iniquity cannot be established by a law, much less can it bind posterity, of whose lives and liberties they had no right to dispose. And consequently, they

justly restore themselves to a state of freedom, whenever they are able.

And if a mighty conqueror cannot attain a civil power over a conquer'd people without their consent, how shall he obtain it over his own conquering nation, without their free concurrence? Did this victorious people leave their native country, with all the liberties they enjoyed therein, to follow their chief into a foreign land, wherein they hoped to find a better settlement for themselves and posterity; would they indure all the hardships of war, and by their sweat and blood purchase an intricate conquest that they might be reduced to the miserable condition of the conquer'd people? that is, to become slaves to their general. I allow, that this chief may by the help of his own people, make himself owned by the conquered upon advantageous terms. But by what invisible power shall he gain to be (I will not say absolute master but even) the civil head over his new settled colony? It can be nothing else but their own free consent which can invest him with a political headship over them. And then, how great reason have they to pay a due submission to that ordinance which themselves have made, and to submit to principalities and powers which were their own appointment, and for their own benefit?

III. Having thus set forth the apostolical grounds of civil obedience, I crave leave to make some improvement of them: first by way of general application, for to insist on the dismal effects of this day's tragedy (with which you have been annually acquainted all your lives) would be superfluous labour. And therefore I shall rather endeavour *to offer some cautions which may probably prevent the like mischiefs for the future.* But,

1st. The apostolical reasons of obedience being duly considered, may serve to allay the fears and jealousies of some good men, who have conceived, that a national government hath not so sure a foundation as is necessary, if it be only bottomed upon human compact: because mens minds being subject to frequent alterations, all governments will, as they think, be very unsteady.

And it must be acknowledged, that in all dubious matters, wherein the judgment cannot come to a determination, the minds of men will be unsettled. So likewise in smaller matters, scarce worthy of serious deliberation, men will act differently. Nay, in matters of moment, some men may suffer themselves to be carried away by unaccountable capricio's: but yet none of these things can any ways endanger

a constitution settled upon the foundations before mentioned.

First, Because a good government is a matter of so necessary importance, that no man in his wits can doubt, whether he shall concur to its support or not. And

Secondly, *The compact by which all governors are introduced, is evermore solemn and deliberate; and attended with the strongest tie to the sovereign power by which 'tis possible for a man to ratify the solemn obligations he has contracted.* For such a bond is, *The oath of the Lord*; by which the allegiance of the subject is confirmed. And if a deliberate compact, freely entered into, upon the wisest and strongest motives of advantage, confirmed by solemn oaths and promises, be not a sufficient establishment, 'tis hard to say what is such. And notwithstanding some men may suffer themselves to be carried away from a useful and necessary establishment, by reasonings contrary to the general stream of a nation, it cannot be presumed that the number and abilities of such men will ever be sufficient to unhinge any tolerable administration of a government thus established.

Indeed, nothing but an absolute necessity, and such as is visible in an extraordinary manner, will be effectual to work a change in any settled

settled constitution, such an one, as renders mankind fully satisfied, without the least remaining scruple, that the government then in being, is not the ordinance of God to them for good.

2. From what hath been said it also appears, *That no man's pretence to the membership of any pure apostolic church, can excuse, much less warrant his disaffection to that government which God's providence and man's consent have set over a people for their good.*

I speak this to take away that scandal which some have endeavoured to fix upon the *church of England*; as if she had laid any obligation upon her sons, in opposition to the present constitution: whereas the contrary truth is self-evident. For does not our church, in her *sixth article*, receive all the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, and account them canonical? Is not my text part of that canon? And are not all our bishops and clergy thereby obliged, as much as *Titus* was, to put their hearers in mind of their *subjection to principalities and powers*? Or can we pretend to be members of an apostolical church, if we carry ourselves unseemly toward such a government, whose administration directly tends to our common good, and was also our own ordi-

nance and appointment, which are the apostolical reasons of civil obedience?

I speak not this, as if by virtue of the ministerial function we could pretend to prescribe forms of civil government to nations, to determine the *regalia* of princes, or the subordinate powers of inferior magistrates. *The book of God* does not furnish us with abilities for this work, much less require it of us. It enjoins us to make peace among our neighbours, by endeavouring to incline mens minds to a peaceable temper; but it does not enable us to judge the least point of legal right which is in controversy between them; much less does it teach us to determine the rights, titles or powers of princes and magistrates; but yet it enjoins us to *put men in mind to be ready to every good work*, which may contribute to support a good government.

Thirdly, From the doctrine already set forth, in conjunction with the misfortunes of that sovereign prince which we are this day called to remembrance, ariseth matter of caution to two sorts of people.

First, To all those who have the honour to share the public administration, that they make it their equal care that the government which at present we enjoy, may be always *the ministry*.

of

of God to us for good. For such an administration applies the text in the most sensible manner, convincing every one that he ought to be *subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, and to be ready to every good work.*

It is well known, that the character of a good prince is raised so high in the Holy Scripture, that such are called *Gods upon earth*; to admonish them of that continual overflowing kindness, that universal beneficence, that tender care and concern for their peoples welfare, which their high office requires. And from the Scriptures we are also informed, that the kind providences of God are immediately conveyed to men by his holy angels, who are therefore called *ministring spirits*, *Hebrews i. 14.* and are most especially employed in works of deliverance. By their means *Lot* was delivered out of *Sodom*, *Isaac* from the arm that was stretched forth to make him a sacrifice, *Israel* was conducted through the wilderness to *Canaan*, *Elijah* delivered from famine, and at last carried from earth to heaven. By their means *Daniel* was delivered from the lions, and the three *Israelites* from the fiery furnace. These were the heralds who first published the redemption of the world by our Saviour Jesus Christ, who likewise delivered *Peter* from his chains, *Paul* and *Silas* from their imprisonment.

Whereby a pattern is fet up to the *ministry* of a great and good prince; who are hereby directed to cultivate and adorn that deliverance which their *Great Master* hath wrought out for his people.

First, By the being messengers and promoters of those methods which may for ever hereafter secure our liberties from danger of relapse.

Secondly, By a diligent avoiding of all those methods by which the glory of former princes has been eclipsed, and the hearts of their people alienated from them.

The subordinate ministry is the visible majesty of the king, whereby he is made known to his people, and more especially in time of peace; for, though during a war, the personal courage and conduct of a great prince is made very public, whilst his person is exposed to the view of multitudes; yet when peace shall restore him to a more private state of life, his personal endowments, though never so illustrious in themselves, cannot become visible to the body of a people, any other way than by the constant care and conduct, the great diligence and public spirit of those to whom he hath committed the trust of his people's welfare: The want of this necessary concern for *public*
good,

good, did, in some measure, assist in bringing on that tragical scene, which is this day commemorated. As 'tis commonly seen, that men in a private condition of life are reduced to great miseries, by the male administration of those to whom they had committed their private trusts.

But when a *public ministry* shall join together hearts and hands, only to promote the *public weal*, without the least design of warping the *prince's favour* towards any one *party of men*, which like the light of the sun, and breathings of the air, is designed for common comfort and refreshment, no jealousies, fears or disaffections can arise; 'twill then be impossible for the most wicked and malicious to disturb the *public peace*, but the king's throne will be *established in righteousness*, and the voice of the *people* will be, *O king live for ever*.

Secondly, A second caution affects all those who are concerned *for the body of the people*, that they let slip no opportunity wherein *public advantages* are offered to them. The supreme magistrate is the greatest *minister of God to us for good*: but God himself is not wont to enforce his kindness upon us; but *expects our own concurrence for our own behoof*: and when a gracious prince shall make it appear, both by *words and facts*, that he *cannot have any separate interest*

interest from that of his people; when he shews himself ready to every good work which is esteemed beneficial to his people; though his compliance therewith may be complicated with some circumstances of self-denial, 'twould be a matter of sad reflection, if the public weal should not be improved by the advantages which so good and gracious an inclination administers unto us. An unanimous consent in any matter of public benefit will certainly procure it. To know what is good for us, is to attain it.

There is also one rule which our Saviour Christ has left with us, tending to the improvement of knowledge, which when reduced to practice, will suffer no man to be ignorant of what is good and fit to be done; 'tis only to carry a single eye about us, according to what is said, *Matth. vi. 22. The light of the body is the eye, if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light: if the eye of a man be carried on singly (without any biasing affection) toward either public or private good, he will certainly discover the good which he looked for. But if in the search after public weal, any private by-ends be aimed at; if a private love to ourselves, or a particular resentment against any persons or parties, shall over-rule; if either the admiration or disesteem of others, shall incline men to refuse good provisions, or embrace suspicious proposals; if any*
 thing

thing besides a *sincere desire to promote the public weal*, shall bear sway in a *public council*, 'tis no strange thing if *darkness* shall be called *light*, and *light* *darkness*.

It may also be observed, that amongst the many qualifications which have recommended our holy religion, no one has more forced its way among serious and considering men, than *its being so admirably adapted to the happiness of mankind, and the good of societies*.

Unbelievers have denied its *miracles*, and its *mysteries* have been disputed and derided by *sceptical and profane men*. But the greatest opposers of the christian name, can neither deny nor dispute the real tendency of *meekness, moderation, punctual justice, and universal good-will*, to make men live well one with another, *doing to others as we would have them to do to us*, and *loving our very enemies*, leave no room either for private oppression, or public disturbance. The spirit of this religion will not suffer us to perpetuate animosities, or carry on suspicions too far: to think that men who have once been in the wrong, can never be convinced, never repent of their errors: 'twill suffer no suspicions to hinder from a due consideration of any *proposals* in behalf of *public good*, from whatever quarter they may come: where the *single eye* is thus directed in a strait line towards the public weal,

weal, the *whole body of such a council will be full of light*, whereby they will certainly discover *the things which belong to our peace*. These things can never be hid, when a prince and people are thus in quest of them.

God forbid therefore, *That this day of solemn humiliation should be made use of to flatter princes with notions of arbitrary power, by drawing any conclusions from the ancient government of God's peculiar people, which may colour over modern tyranny**.

God forbid! That the *Roman imperial power in the hands of Claudius or Nero*, should be owned as God's ministry, under which the apostles of Christ suffered martyrdom. To entertain people with the melancholy thoughts of fetters and chains, which when laid upon them by ill princes, yet they must not endeavour to remove under penalty of eternal damnation, tends only to exasperate human nature, and make way for such another day of humiliation as that we are now celebrating: which, may divine goodness, for ever prevent! God forbid, that this day should be made use of to continue heats and animosities

* From the beginning of this paragraph, to the end of the sermon, there appears the masterly hand of Mr. *Trenchard*, the author's friend, who wrote this shining conclusion.

among us, which ought long since to have been buried in oblivion. Especially when the tragical scene of this day, was not then the act of the whole nation; and few spectators of it, scarce any actors in it, are now remaining.

But since the condition of the greatest men upon earth is subject to such *fatal catastrophes*, as that was which this day brings to mind; I cannot but lament the unhappy fate of those princes who are born in purple, and bred in luxury; encompassed with flatterers, and so intoxicated with the gaudy ornaments of power, as to forget the end for which they were elevated, and made gods upon earth. They little consider that this greatness is supported by the inheritance of the gentleman, the hazard of the merchant, and the sweat of the labourer; who readily contribute out of their small stock to support a government they themselves have set up. Who are contented to part with their natural liberty to those who formerly (it may be) were their equals, for their common good and protection; which is the only end of government. A due reflection hereon would make them first of all adore the goodness of God whose providence hath so distinguished them, and also love and cherish that society of men, who hath raised them to so high a station, and submitted themselves and their fortunes,

fortunes, in a great measure, to their discretion. Then the world would see the best men in the highest places, senates in authority, magistrates in esteem, and the temple of virtue the only passage to that of honour. Ambition and corruption will be out of countenance, and the world will triumph in an undisturbed felicity. The prince will be happy in the reverence and esteem of his people, and the people safe in the generosity of the prince.

All this and more we may expect from his majesty's most happy reign, who was not (like others) nursed up in flattery, but tasted early of the cup of affliction, that his greatness might be owing to his own courage, virtue and integrity, and not the uncertain gift of fortune. Wise by nature, improved by early adversity, and consummated by long experience in all the paths of greatness; a prince loved and obeyed by his own subjects, honoured by his allies, dreaded by his enemies, and will be admired by late posterity.

Nor do I here insist upon his great performances in the art of war, in which other princes have had their share, and are often themselves the wretched trophies, erected upon the tears of miserable men. But in his early years, to restore his native country, and since that, the liberties of three most potent nations, are
glories

glories peculiar to himself, and cannot be equalled by the exploits of the most renowned chiefs, either of the *Assyrian, Grecian, or Roman* monarchs. And to consummate all the felicity that can happen to mortal man, it hath been a particular honour reserved by providence for him alone, that as wherever he set his foot, slavery fled before him like a phantom, so in his dominions and under his protection, are almost all the remains of liberty now known in the world.

Not that I speak this, or any thing else I have here said, for your information, (for I know from what *honourable assembly* I ought to receive instruction) but as my text directed me, for your remembrance.

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A
DISCOURSE
CONCERNING

Unlimited Submission

AND

Non-resistance to the *Higher Powers*:

With some Reflections on the Resistance made to

King CHARLES I.

AND ON THE

Anniversary of his Death:

In which the MYSTERIOUS Doctrine of that Prince's
Saintship and Martyrdom is UNRIDDL'D:

The Substance of which was delivered in a SERMON preached
in the West Meeting-house in *Boston* the LORD'S-DAY
after the 30th of *January*, 1749-50.

Published at the Request of the Hearers.

By JONATHAN MAYHEW, D. D.
Pastor of the West Church in *Boston*.

Fear GOD, honour the King.

Saint PAUL

*He that ruleth over Men, must be just, ruling in the Fear of
GOD.*

Prophet SAMUEL.

*I have said ye are Gods—but ye shall die like Men, and fall
like one of the PRINCES.*

King DAVID.

Quid memorem infandas cædes? quid facta TYRANNI
Efferæ? Dii CAPITI ipsius GENERIQUE reservent—
Necnon Thricius longe cum veste SACERDOS
Obliquitur——

Rom. Vat. Prin.

First printed at *Boston* in *New-England* 1750.

The following advertisement, prefixed to the original edition, is here preserved.

THE author of this discourse has been credibly informed, that some persons both formerly and lately, have wrote either at, or about him——or something; (he cannot well tell what) in the common news-papers, which he does not often read. He therefore, takes this opportunity to assure the Writers of that rank, and in that form, once for all, that they may slander him as much as they please, without his notice, and, very probably, without his knowledge. But if any person of common sense and common honesty, shall condescend to animadvert in a different way, upon any thing which he has published, he may depend upon having all proper regard shewn to him.

J. M.

P R E F A C E.

THE ensuing discourse is the last of three upon the same subject, with some little alterations and additions. It is hoped that but few will think the subject of it an improper one to be discoursed on in the pulpit, under a notion that that is preaching politics, instead of CHRIST. However, to remove all prejudices of this sort, I beg it may be remembered, that "all scripture—is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for CORRECTION, for instruction in righteousness." Why, then should not those parts of scripture, which relate to civil government, be examined and explained from the desk, as well as others? Obedience to the civil magistrate, is a christian duty: and if so, why should not the nature, grounds and extent of it be considered in a christian assembly? Besides, if it be said, that it is out of character for a christian minister to meddle with such a subject, this censure will at last fall upon the holy apostles. They write upon it in their epistles to christian churches: and surely it cannot be deemed either criminal or impertinent, to attempt an explanation of their doctrine.*

It was the near approach of the Thirtieth of January, that turned my thoughts to this subject: on which solemnity the slavish doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance, is often warmly asserted;

* 2 Pet. iii. 16.

and the dissenters from the established church, represented, not only as schismatics, (with more of triumph than of truth, and of choler than christianity) but also as persons of seditious, traiterous and rebellious principles—GOD be thanked one may, in any part of the British dominions, speak freely (if a decent regard be paid to those in authority) both of government and religion; and even give some broad hints, that he is engaged on the side of liberty, the BIBLE and common sense, in opposition to tyranny, PRIEST-CRAFT and non-sense, without being in danger either of the Bastile or the Inquisition:—Though there will always be some interested politicians, contracted bigots, and hypocritical zealots for a party, to take offence at such freedoms. Their censure is praise: Their praise is infamy—A spirit of domination is always to be guarded against both in church and state, even in times of the greatest security; such as the present is amongst US; at least as to the latter. Those nations who are now groaning under the iron sceptre of tyranny, were once free. So they might, probably, have remained, by a seasonable precaution against despotic measures. Civil tyranny is usually small in its beginning, like “the drop of a bucket,” till at length, like a mighty torrent, or the mighty raging of the sea, it bears down all before it, and deluges whole countries and empires. Thus it is as to ecclesiastical tyranny also,*

* Isaiah xi. 15.

—the most cruel, intolerable and impious, of any. From small beginnings, “it exalts itself above all that is called GOD and that is worshipped*.” People have no security against being unmercifully priest-ridden, but by keeping all imperious BISHOPS, and other CLERGYMEN who love to “lord it over God’s heritage,” from getting their foot into the stirrup at all. Let them be once fairly mounted, and their “beasts, the laity †,” may prance and flounce about to no purpose: and they will, at length, be so jaded and hacked by these reverend jockies, that they will not even have spirits enough to complain, that their backs are galled; or, like Balaam’s ass, to “rebuke the madness of the prophet ‡.”

“The mystery of iniquity began to work ||” even in the days of some of the apostles. But the kingdom of Antichrist was then, in one respect, like the kingdom of heaven, however different in all others.—It was “as a grain of mustard seed †.” This grain was sown in Italy, that fruitful field: And tho’ it were “least of all seeds,” it soon became a mighty tree. It has long since overspread and darkened the greatest part of Christendom, so that we may apply to it what is said of the tree which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his vision—“The height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth—And

* 2 Thes. ii. 4. † Mr. Leslie. ‡ 2 Pet. ii. 16.

|| 2 Thes. ii. 7. † Mat. xiii. 31.

“*THE BEASTS OF THE FIELD have shad-
 “dow under it.*” Tyranny brings ignorance and
 brutality along with it. It degrades men from
 their just rank, into the class of brutes. It damps
 their spirits. It suppresses arts. It extinguishes
 every spark of noble ardor and generosity in the
 breasts of those who are enslaved by it. It makes
 naturally strong and great minds, feeble and little;
 and triumphs over the ruins of virtue and huma-
 nity. This is true of tyranny in every shape. There
 can be nothing great and good, where its influence
 reaches. For which reason it becomes every friend
 to truth and human kind; every lover of God and
 the christian religion, to bear a part in opposing
 this hateful monster. It was a desire to contribute
 a mite towards carrying on a war against this
 common enemy, that produced the following dis-
 course. And if it serve, in any measure, to keep
 up a spirit of civil and religious liberty amongst
 us, my end is answered.—There are virtuous
 and candid men in all sects; all such are to be
 esteemed: There are also vicious men and bigots
 in all sects; and all such ought to be despised.

“To virtue only, and her friends, a friend;
 “The world beside may murmur or commend.
 “Know, all the distant din that world can keep
 “Rolls o’er my grotto, and but sooths my sleep.”

POPE.

ROM. XIII. 1—8.

1. *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God.*

2. *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation.*

3. *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:*

4. *For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger, to execute wrath on him that doth evil.*

5. *Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.*

6. *For, for this cause pay you tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.*

7. *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom, to whom custom; fear, to whom fear; honour, to whom honour.*

IT is evident that the affair of civil government may properly fall under a *moral* and *religious* consideration, at least so far forth as it relates to the general nature and end of magistracy, and to the grounds and extent of

that submission, which persons of a private character ought to yield to those who are vested with authority. This must be allowed by all who acknowledge the divine original of christianity. For although there be a sense, and a very plain and important sense, in which Christ's *kingdom is not of this world* * ; his inspired apostles have, nevertheless, laid down some general principles concerning the office of civil rulers, and the duty of subjects, together with the reason and obligation of that duty. And from hence it follows, that it is proper for all who acknowledge the authority of Jesus Christ, and the inspiration of his apostles, to endeavour to understand what is in fact the doctrine which they have delivered concerning this matter. It is the duty of *christian* magistrates to inform themselves what it is which their religion teaches concerning the nature and design of their office. And it is equally the duty of all *christian* people to inform themselves what it is which their religion teaches concerning that subjection which they owe to the *higher powers*. It is for these reasons that I have attempted to examine into the scripture-account of this matter, in order to lay it before you with the same *freedom* which I constantly use with relation to other doctrines and precepts of christianity; not doubting but you

* John xviii 36.

will judge upon every thing offered to your consideration, with the same spirit of freedom and liberty with which it is spoken.

The passage read, is the most full and express of any in the new-testament, relating to rulers and subjects: and therefore I thought it proper to ground upon it, what I had to propose to you with reference to the authority of the civil magistrate, and the subjection which is due to him. But before I enter upon an explanation of the several parts of this passage, it will be proper to observe one thing, which may serve as a key to the whole of it.

It is to be observed, then, that there were some persons amongst the *christians* of the apostolic age, and particularly those at *Rome*, to whom St. *Paul* is here writing, who seditiously disclaimed *all* subjection to civil authority; refusing to pay taxes, and the duties laid upon their traffick and merchandize; and who scrupled not to speak of their rulers, without any due regard to their office and character. Some of these turbulent *christians* were converts from *judaism*, and others from *paganism*. The *Jews* in general had, long before this time, taken up a strange conceit, that being the peculiar and *elect* people of God, they were therefore exempted from the jurisdiction of any

heathen princes or governors. Upon this ground it was, that some of them, during the public ministry of our blessed saviour, came to him with that question—*Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not* *? And this notion many of them retained after they were profelyted to the *christian* faith. As to the *gentile* converts, some of them grossly mistook the nature of that *liberty* which the gospel promised; and thought that by virtue of their subjection to Christ, the *only* king and head of his church, they were wholly freed from subjection to any other prince; as though Christ's *kingdom had been of this world*, in such a sense as to interfere with the civil powers of the earth, and to deliver their subjects from that allegiance and duty, which they before owed to them. Of these visionary *Christians* in general, who disowned subjection to the civil powers in being where they respectively lived, there is mention made in several places in the new-testament: The Apostle *Peter* in particular, characterizes them in this manner—*them that—despise government—presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities* †. Now it is with reference to these doting *Christians*, that the apostle speaks in the passage before us. And I shall now give you the sense of it in a

* Matt. xxii. 17. † 2 Pct. ii. 10.

paraphrase upon each verse in its order, desiring you to keep in mind the character of the persons for whom it is designed, that so, as I go along, you may see how just and natural this address is; and how well suited to the circumstances of those against whom it is levelled.

The apostle begins thus—*Let every soul* be subject unto the higher powers; † for there is no power || but of God: the powers that be ‡ are*

* *Every soul.* This is an *hebraism*, which signifies *every man*; so that the apostle does not exempt the *clergy*: such as were endowed with the gift of prophecy, or any other miraculous powers which subsisted in the church at that day. And by his using the *hebrew* idiom, it seems that he had the *jewish* converts principally in his eye.

† *The higher powers*: more literally, the *overruling-powers*: which term extends to all civil rulers in common.

|| By *power*, the apostle intends not lawless *strength* and brutal *force*, without regulation or proper direction; but just *authority*; for so the word here used properly signifies. There may be *power* where there is no *authority*. No man has any *authority* to do what is wrong and injurious, though he may have *power* to do it.

‡ *The powers that be*: those persons who are in fact vested with authority; those who are in possession. And who those are, the apostle leaves Christians to determine for themselves; but who ever they are, they are to be obeyed.

ordained of God*, ver. 1. q. d. “Whereas
 “some professed *Christians* vainly imagine, that
 “they are wholly excused from all manner of
 “duty and subjection to civil authority, re-
 “fusing to honour their rulers, and to pay
 “taxes; which opinion is not only unrea-
 “sonable in itself, but also tends to fix a last-
 “ing reproach upon the *christian* name and
 “profession, I now, as an apostle and ambaf-
 “sador of Christ, exhort every one of you, be
 “he who he will, to pay all dutiful submission
 “to those who are vested with any civil office.
 “For there is, properly speaking, no autho-
 “rity but what is derived from God, as it is
 “only by his permission and providence that
 “any possess it. Yea, I may add, that all
 “civil magistrates, as such, although they
 “may be *heathens*, are appointed and ordained
 “of God. For it is certainly God’s will, that

* *Ordained of God*: as it is not without God’s providence and permission, that any are clothed with authority; and as it is agreeable to the positive will and purpose of God, that there should be *some persons* vested with authority for the good of society: not that any rulers have their commission immediately from God the supreme Lord of the universe. If any assert that kings, or any other rulers, are ordained of God in the latter sense, it is incumbent upon them to shew the commission which they speak of, under the broad seal of heaven. And when they do this, they will, no doubt, be believed.

“ so useful an institution as that of magistracy,
 “ should take place in the world, for the
 “ good of civil society.” The apostle pro-
 ceeds—*Whoever, therefore resisteth the power,
 resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that re-
 sist shall receive to themselves damnation.* ver. 2.
 q. d. “ Think not, therefore, that ye are guilt-
 “ less of any crime or sin against God, when
 “ ye factiously disobey and resist the civil au-
 “ thority. For magistracy and government
 “ being, as I have said, the ordinance and ap-
 “ pointment of God, it follows, that to resist,
 “ magistrates in the execution of their offices,
 “ is really to resist the will and ordinance of
 “ God himself: and they who thus resist,
 “ will accordingly be punished by God for
 “ this sin in common with others.” The
 apostle goes on—*For rulers are not a terror to
 good works, but to the evil*. Wilt thou then,*

* *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to
 the evil.* It cannot be supposed that the apostle de-
 signs here, or in any of the succeeding verses, to
 give the true character of *Nero*, or any other civil
 powers then in being, as if they were in fact such
 persons as he describes, a terror to evil works only,
 and not to the good. For such a character did not
 belong to them; and the apostle was no sycophant
 or parasite of power, whatever some of his pre-
 tended successors have been. He only tells what
 rulers would be, provided they acted up to to their
 character and office.

not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same. For he is the minister of God to thee for good, ver. 3d, and part of the 4th. q. d. "That you may see the truth and justness of what I assert, (*viz.* that magistracy is the ordinance of God, and that you sin against him, in opposing it,) consider that even *pagan* rulers, are not, by the nature and design of their offices, enemies and a terror to the good and virtuous actions of men, but only to the injurious and mischievous to society. Will ye not, then, reverence and honour magistracy, when you see the good end and intention of it? How can ye be so unreasonable? Only mind to do your duty as members of society; and this will gain you the applause and favour of all good rulers. For while you do thus, they are, by their office, as ministers of God, obliged to encourage and protect you; it is for this very purpose that they are clothed with power." The apostle subjoins — *But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain. For he is the minister of God, a revenger, to execute wrath upon him that doth evil**, ver. 4.

latter

* It is manifest that when the apostle speaks of it, as the office of civil rulers, to encourage what is good, and to punish what is evil, he speaks only of
civil

latter part. q. d. “ But upon the other
 “ hand, if ye refuse to do your duty as
 “ members of society; if ye refuse to bear
 “ your part in the support of government;
 “ if ye are disorderly, and do things which
 “ merit civil chastisement, then, indeed, ye
 “ have reason to be afraid. For it is not in
 “ vain that rulers are vested with the power
 “ of inflicting punishment. They are by their
 “ office, not only the ministers of God for

civil good and evil. They are to consult the good
 of society *as such*; not to dictate in religious con-
 cerns; not to make laws for the government of
 men’s consciences; and to inflict civil penalties for
 religious crimes. It is sufficient to overthrow the
 doctrine of the authority of the civil magistrate, in
 affairs of a spiritual nature, (so far as it is built upon
 any thing which is here said by *St. Paul*, or upon
 any thing else in the new-testament) only to ob-
 serve, that all the magistrates then in the world were
beathen, implacable enemies to christianity: so that
 to give them authority in religious matters, would
 have been, in effect, to give them authority to ex-
 tirpate the christian religion, and to establish the
 idolatries and superstitions of paganism. And can
 any one reasonably suppose, that the apostle had any
 intention to extend the authority of rulers, beyond
 concerns merely civil and political, to the over-
 throwing of that religion which he himself was so
 zealous in propagating! But it is natural for those,
 whose religion cannot be supported upon the foot-
 ing of reason and argument, to have recourse to
 power and force, which will serve a bad cause as
 well as a good one; and indeed much better.

“good to those that do well; but also his
 “ministers to revenge, to discountenance and
 “punish those that are unruly, and injurious
 “to their neighbours.” The apostle pro-
 ceeds — *Wherefore ye must needs be subject not*
only for wrath, but also for conscience sake,
 ver. 5. q. d. “Since therefore, magistracy
 “is the ordinance of God; and since rulers
 “are, by their office, benefactors to society,
 “by discouraging what is bad, and encou-
 “raging what is good, and so preserving
 “peace and order amongst men; it is evi-
 “dent that ye ought to pay a willing sub-
 “jection to them; not to obey merely for
 “fear of exposing yourselves to their wrath
 “and displeasure, but also in point of rea-
 “son, duty and conscience: Ye are under
 “an indispensable obligation, as *Christians*, to
 “honour their office, and to submit to them
 “in the execution of it.” The apostle goes
 “on — *For, for this cause pay you tribute also:*
for they are God’s ministers, attending continu-
ally upon this very thing, ver. 6. q. d. “And
 “here is a plain reason also why ye should
 “pay tribute to them; for they are God’s
 “ministers, exalted above the common level
 “of mankind, not that they may indulge
 “themselves in softness and luxury, and be
 “entitled to the servile homage of their fel-
 “low-men; but that they may execute an
 “office

“ office no less laborious than honourable ;
 “ and attend continually upon the public
 “ welfare. This being their business and
 “ duty, it is but reasonable, that they should
 “ be requited for their care and diligence in
 “ performing it; and enabled, by taxes le-
 “ vied upon the subject, effectually to pro-
 “ secute the great end of their institution,
 “ the good of society.” The apostle sums
 up all in the following words — *Render there-
 fore to all their dues: tribute * to whom tri-
 bute is due; custom*, to whom custom; fear,
 to whom fear; honour, to whom honour, ver.
 7. q. d.* “ Let it not, therefore, be said of
 “ any one of you hereafter, that you contemn
 “ government to the reproach of yourselves,
 “ and of the *Christian* religion. Neither your
 “ being *Jews* by nation, nor your becom-
 “ ing the subjects of Christ’s kingdom, gives
 “ you any dispensation for making disturbances
 “ in the government under which you live.
 “ Approve yourselves, therefore, as peaceable

* *Grotius* observes, that the *Greek* words, here used, answer to the *tributum* and *veſtigal* of the *Romans*; the former was the money paid for the soil and poll; the latter, the duties laid upon some sorts of merchandize. And what the apostle here says, deserves to be seriously considered by all Christians concerned in that common practice of carrying on an *illicit trade*, and *running of goods*.

“ and dutiful subjects. Be ready to pay to
 “ your rulers all that they may, in respect
 “ of their office, justly demand of you. Ren-
 “ der tribute and custom to those of your
 “ governors to whom tribute and custom be-
 “ long : and chearfully honour and reverence
 “ all who are vested with civil authority, ac-
 “ cording to their deserts.”

The apostle’s doctrine, in the passage thus explained, concerning the office of civil rulers, and the duty of subjects, may be summed up in the following observations ; * *viz.*

That the end of magistracy is the good of civil society, *as such* :

That civil rulers, *as such*, are the ordinance and ministers of God ; it being by his permission and providence that any bear rule ; and agreeable to his will, that there should be *some persons* vested with authority in society, for the well-being of it :

That which is here said concerning civil rulers, extends to all of them in common : it relates indifferently to monarchical republican

* The several observations here only mentioned, were handled at large in two preceding discourses upon this subject.

lican and aristocratical government; and to all other forms which truly answer the sole end of government, the happiness of society; and to all the different degrees of authority in any particular state; to inferior officers no less than the supreme.

That disobedience to civil rulers in the due exercise of their authority, is not merely a *political sin*, but an heinous *offence against God and religion*:

That the true ground and reason † of our obligation to be subject to the *higher powers*,
is

† Some suppose the apostle in this passage, inforces the duty of submission, with *two* arguments quite distinct from each other; one taken from this consideration, that rulers are the ordinance, and ministers of God, (ver. 1, 2, and 4.) and the other, from the benefits that accrue to society, from civil government, (ver. 3, 4, and 6.) And indeed these may be distinct motives and arguments for submission, as they may be separately viewed and contemplated. But when we consider that rulers are not the ordinance and the ministers of God, but only so far forth as they perform God's will, by acting up to their office and character, and so by being benefactors to society, this makes these arguments coincide, and run up into *one* at last: at least so far, that the former of them cannot hold good for submission, where
the

is the usefulness of magistracy (when properly exercised) to human society, and its subserviency to the general welfare :

That obedience to civil rulers is here equally required under all forms of government, which answer to the sole end of all government, the good of society ; and to every degree of authority in any state, whether supreme or subordinate :

(From whence it follows,

That if unlimited obedience and non-resistance, be here required as a duty under any one form of government, it is also required

the latter fails. Put the supposition, that any man bearing the title of a magistrate, should exercise his power in such a manner as to have no claim to obedience by virtue of that argument which is founded upon the usefulness of magistracy ; and you equally take off the force of the other argument also, which is founded upon his being the ordinance and the minister of God. For he is no longer God's ordinance and minister, than he acts up to his office and character, by exercising his power for the good of society——This is, in brief, the reason why it is said above, in the *singular* number, *that the true ground and reason, &c.* The use and propriety of this remark may possibly be more apparent in the process of the argument concerning resistance.

as a duty under all other forms; and as a duty to subordinate rulers as well as to the supreme.)

And lastly, that those civil rulers to whom the apostle enjoins subjection, are the persons *in possession; the powers that be*; those who are *actually* vested with authority*.

There is one very important and interesting point which remains to be enquired into; namely, the *extent* of that subjection *to the higher*

* This must be understood with this *proviso*, that they do not grossly *abuse* their power and trust, but exercise it for the good of those that are governed. Who these persons were, whether *Nero*, &c. or not, the apostle does not say; but leaves it to be determined by those to whom he writes. God does not interpose, in a miraculous way, to point out the persons who shall bear rule, and to whom subjection is due. And as to the unalienable, indefeasible right of *primogeniture*, the scriptures are entirely silent: or rather plainly contradict it: *Saul* being the first king among the *Israelites*; and appointed to the royal dignity, during his own father's life-time: and he was succeeded, or rather superseded, by *David* the last born among many brethren—Now if God has not invariably determined this matter, it must, of course, be determined by *men*. And if it be determined by *men* it must be determined either in the way of *force* or of *compact*. And which of these is the most *equitable*, can be no question.

higher powers, which is here enjoined as a duty upon all christians. Some have thought it warrantable and and glorious, to disobey the civil powers in certain circumstances; and, in cases of very great and general oppression, while humble remonstrances fail of having any effect; and when the public welfare cannot be otherwise provided for and secured, to rise unanimously even against the sovereign himself, in order to redress their grievances; to vindicate their natural and legal rights: to break the yoke of tyranny, and free themselves and posterity from inglorious servitude and ruin. It is upon this principle that many royal oppressors have been driven from their thrones into banishment; and many slain by the hands of their subjects. It was upon this principle that *Tarquin* was expelled from *Rome*; and *Julius Caesar*, the conqueror of the world, and the tyrant of his country, cut off in the senate-house. It was upon this principle, that king *Charles I.* was beheaded before his own banqueting-house. It was upon this principle, that king *James II.* was made to fly that country, which he aimed at enslaving: And upon this principle was that *revolution* brought about, which has been so fruitful of happy consequences to *Great Britain*. But in opposition to this principle, it has often been asserted, that the scripture in general (and the
passage

passage under consideration in particular) makes all resistance to princes a crime, in any case whatever ——— If they turn tyrants, and become the common oppressors of those, whose welfare they ought to regard with a paternal affection, we must not pretend to right ourselves, unless it be by prayers and tears and humble entreaties: and if these methods fail of procuring redress, we must not have recourse to any other, but all suffer ourselves to be robbed and butchered at the pleasure of the *Lord's anointed*; lest we should incur the sin of rebellion, and the punishment of damnation. For he has God's authority and commission to bear him out in the worst of crimes, so far that he may not be withstood or controuled. Now whether we are obliged to yield such an absolute submission to our prince; or whether disobedience and resistance may not be justifiable in some cases, notwithstanding any thing in the passage before us, is an enquiry in which we are all concerned; and this is the inquiry which is the main design of the present discourse.

Now there does not seem to be any necessity of supposing, that an absolute unlimited obedience, whether active or passive, is here enjoined, merely for this reason, that the precept is delivered in *absolute terms*, without
any

any exception or limitation expressly mentioned. We are enjoined, (ver. 1.) to be *subject to the higher powers*: and (ver. 5.) to be *subject for conscience sake*. And because these expressions are absolute and unlimited, (or more properly, general) some have inferred, that the subjection required in them, must be absolute and unlimited also: at least so far forth as to make passive obedience and non-resistance, a duty in all cases whatever, if not active obedience likewise. Though, by the way, there is here no distinction made between active and passive obedience; and if either of them be required in an unlimited sense, the other must be required in the same sense also, by virtue of the present argument; because the expressions are equally absolute with respect to both. But that unlimited obedience of any sort, cannot be argued merely from the indefinite expressions in which obedience is enjoined, appears from hence, that expressions of the same nature, frequently occur in scripture, upon which it is confessed on all hands, that no such absolute and unlimited sense ought to be put. For example, *Love not the world; neither the things that are in the world**; *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth* †; *Take therefore no thought for the morrow* ‡; are precepts expressed in at least equally ab-

* 1 John ii. 15. † Matt. vi. 19- ‡ Matt. vi. 34.
 solute

solute and unlimited terms: but it is generally allowed, that they are to be understood with certain restrictions and limitations; some degree of love to the world, and the things of it, being allowable. Nor, indeed, do the *Right Reverend Fathers in God*, and other dignified clergymen of the established church, seem to be altogether averse to admitting of restrictions in the latter case, how warm soever any of them may be against restrictions, and limitations, in case of submission to authority, whether civil or ecclesiastical. It is worth remarking also, that patience and submission under private injuries, are enjoined in much more peremptory and absolute terms, than any that are used with regard to submission to the injustice and oppression of civil rulers. Thus, *I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile with him, go with him twain**. Any man may be defied to produce such strong expressions in favour of a passive and tame submission to unjust, tyrannical rulers, as are here used to enforce submission to private injuries. But how few are there that understand those expressions literally? And the reason why they

* Matt. v. 39, 40, 41.

do not, is because (with submission to the *Quakers*) common sense shews that they were not intended to be so understood.

But to instance in some scripture-precepts, which are more directly to the point in hand. — Children are commanded to obey their parents, and servants their masters, in as absolute and unlimited terms as subjects are here commanded to obey their civil rulers. Thus this same apostle — *Children obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honour thy father and mother, — which is the first commandment with promise. — Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, with singleness of your heart as unto Christ**. Thus also wives are commanded to be obedient to their husbands — *Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH — Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands IN EVERY THING †*. In all these cases, submission is required in terms (at least) as absolute and universal, as are ever used with respect to rulers and subjects.

* Eph. vi. 1, &c.

† Eph. v. 22, 23, 24.

But who supposes that the apostle ever intended to teach, that children, servants and wives, should, in all cases whatever, obey their parents, masters and husbands respectively, never making any opposition to their will, even although they should require them to break the commandments of God, or should causelessly make an attempt upon their lives? No one puts such a sense upon these expressions, however absolute and unlimited. Why then should it be supposed, that the apostle designed to teach universal obedience, whether active or passive, to *the higher powers*, merely because his precepts are delivered in absolute and unlimited terms? And if this be a good argument in one case, why is it not in others also? If it be said that resistance and disobedience to *the higher powers*, is here said positively to be a sin, so also is the disobedience of children to parents; servants to masters; and wives to husbands, in other places of scripture. But the question still remains, whether in all these cases there be not some exceptions? In the three latter, it is allowed there are. And from hence it follows, that barely the use of absolute expressions, is no proof, that obedience to civil rulers, is, in all cases, a duty; or resistance, in all cases a sin. I should not have thought it worth while to take any notice at all of this argument

argument, had it not been much insisted upon by some of the advocates for passive-obedience and non-resistance: for it is, in itself, perfectly trifling; and rendered considerable only by the stress that has been laid upon it for want of better.

There is, indeed, one passage in the new testament, where it may seem, at first view, that an unlimited submission to civil rulers, is enjoined. — *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake**. — *To every ordinance of man.* — However, this expression is no stronger than that before taken notice of, with relation to the duty of wives — *So let the wives be subject to their own husbands* — **IN EVERY THING.** But the true solution of this difficulty (if it be one) is *this*: by *every ordinance of man* †, is not meant every command of the civil magistrate without exception; but *every order of magistrates appointed by man*; — whether *superior or inferior*: for so the apostle explains himself in the very next words — *Whether it be to the king as supreme, or to governors,*

* 1. Pet. ii. 13.

† Literally *every human institution, or appointment*. By which manner of expression the apostle plainly intimates, that rulers derive their authority *immediately*, not from God, but from *men*.

as *unto* them that are sent, &c. But although the apostle had not subjoined any such explanation, the reason of the thing itself would have obliged us to limit the expression [*every ordinance of man*] to such human ordinances and commands, as are not inconsistent with the ordinances and commands of God, the supreme lawgiver ; or with any other higher, and antecedent, obligations.

It is to be observed, in the next place, that as the duty of universal obedience and non-resistance to the *higher powers*, cannot be argued from the absolute unlimited expressions which the apostle here uses ; so neither can it be argued from the scope and drift of his reasoning, considered with relation to the persons he was here opposing. As was observed above, there were some professed *christians* in the apostolic age, who disclaimed all magistracy and civil authority in general, *despising government*, and *speaking evil of dignities* ; some under a notion that *Jews* ought not to be under the jurisdiction of *Gentile* rulers ; and others, that they were set *free* from the temporal powers, by Christ. Now it is with persons of this licentious opinion and character, that the apostle is concerned. And all that was directly to his point, was to shew, that they were bound to submit to magi-

stracy in general. This is a circumstance very material to be taken notice of, in order to ascertain the sense of the apostle. For this being considered, it is sufficient to account for all that he says concerning the duty of subjection, and the sin of resistance to the *higher powers*, without having recourse to the doctrine of unlimited submission and passive obedience, in all cases whatever. Were it known that those in opposition to whom, the apostle wrote, allowed of civil authority in general, and only asserted that there were *some cases* in which obedience, and non-resistance, were not a duty; there would, then, indeed, be reason for interpreting this passage as containing the doctrine of unlimited obedience, and non-resistance, as it must, in this case, be supposed to have been levelled against such as denied that doctrine. But since it is certain that there were persons who vainly imagined, that civil government in general, was not to be regarded by them, it is most reasonable to suppose, that the apostle designed his discourse only against *them*. And agreeably to this supposition, we find that he argues the usefulness of civil magistracy in general; its agreeableness to the will and purpose of God, who is *over all*; and so deduces from hence, the obligation of submission to it. But it will not follow, that because civil govern-

government is in general a good institution, and necessary to the peace and happiness of human society, therefore there are no supposable cases in which resistance to it can be innocent. So that the duty of unlimited obedience, whether active or passive, can be argued, neither from the manner of expression here used; nor from the general scope and design of the passage.

And if we attend to the nature of the argument with which the apostle here enforces the duty of submission to the *higher powers*, we shall find it to be such an one as concludes not in favour of submission to all who bear the *title* of rulers, in common; but only, to those who *actually* perform the duty of rulers, by exercising a reasonable and just authority, for the good of human society. This is a point which it will be proper to enlarge upon; because the question before us turns much upon the truth or falshood of this position. It is obvious, then in general, that the civil rulers, whom the apostle here speaks of, and obedience to whom he presses upon Christians as a duty, are *good rulers**, such
as

* By *good rulers*, are not intended such as are good in a *moral* or *religious*, but only a *political* sense;

as are in the exercise of their office and power benefactors to society. Such they are described to be, throughout this passage. Thus it is said, that they are not *a terror to good works but to the evil*; that they are *God's ministers for good*; *avengers to execute wrath upon him that doth evil*; and that *they attend continually upon this very thing*. St. Peter gives the same account of rulers: they are *for a praise to them that do well, and the punishment of evil doers*. It is manifest that this character and description of rulers, agrees only to such as are rulers in fact, as well as in name: to such as govern well, and act agreeably to their office. And the apostle's argument for submission to rulers, is wholly built and grounded upon a presumption that they do in fact answer this character; and is of no force at all upon supposition of the contrary. If *rulers are a terror to good works, and not to the evil*; if they are not *ministers for good to society*, but for evil, and distress by violence and oppression; if they *execute wrath upon sober, peaceable persons*, who do their duty as members of society; and suffer rich and honourable knaves to escape with

scandal; those who perform their duty so far as their office extends; and so far as civil society, as such, is concerned in their actions.

impunity; if, instead of *attending continually upon* the good work of advancing the public welfare, they *attend* only upon the gratification of their own lust and pride and ambition, to the destruction of the public welfare; if this be the case, it is plain that the apostle's argument for submission does not reach them; they are not the same, but different persons from those whom he characterizes; and who must be obeyed according to his reasoning. — Let me illustrate the apostle's argument, by the following *similitude*: (it is no matter how far it is from any thing which has, in fact, happened in the world.) Suppose, then, it was allowed, in general, that the *clergy* were an useful order of men; that they ought to be *esteemed very highly in love for their works sake**; and to be decently supported by those whom they serve, *the labourer being worthy of his reward*†. Suppose farther, that a number of *Reverend and Right Reverend Drones*, who *worked not*; who preached, perhaps, but *once a year*, and *then*, not the *gospel* of Jesus Christ, but the *divine right of tythes*; — *the dignity of their office as ambassadors of Christ*, the equity of *sine-cures*, and a *plurality of benefices*; —

* 1 Thef. v. 13.

† 1 Tim. v. 18.

the excellency of the *devotions* in that *prayer-book*, which some of them hired *chaplains* to use for them; ——— or some favourite point of *church-tyranny*, and *antichristian* usurpation; suppose such men as these, spending their lives in effeminacy, luxury and idleness; (or when they were not idle, doing that which is worse than idleness; suppose such men) should, merely by the merit of *ordination* and *consecration*, and a *peculiar, odd habit*, claim great respect and reverence from those whom they civilly called *the beasts of the laity**; and demand thousands *per annum*, for that good service which they ——— *never performed*; and for which, if they had performed it, this would be much more than a *quantum meruit*: suppose this should be the case, (it is only by way of *simile*, and surely it will give no offence) would not every body be astonished at such insolence, injustice and impiety? And ought not such men to be told plainly, that they could not reasonably expect the esteem and reward due to the ministers of the gospel, unless they did the duties of their office? Should they not be told, that their *tit'e* and *habit* claimed no regard, reverence or pay, separate from the *care* and *work*, and various *duties* of their *function*? And that while they neglected the *latter*, the *former* served only

* Mr. Leslie.

to render them the more ridiculous and contemptible?—The application of this *similitude* to the case in hand, is very easy.—If those who bear the title of civil rulers, do not perform the duty of civil rulers, but act directly counter to the sole end and design of their office; if they injure and oppress their subjects, instead of defending their rights and doing them good; they have not the least pretence to be honoured, obeyed and rewarded, according to the apostle's argument. For his reasoning, in order to shew the duty of subjection to the *higher powers*, is, as was before observed, built wholly upon the supposition, that they do, *in fact*, perform the duty of rulers.

If it be said, that the apostle here uses another argument for submission to the *higher powers*, besides that which is taken from the usefulness of their office to civil society, when properly discharged and executed; namely, that their *power is from God*; that they are *ordained of God*; and that they are *God's ministers*: and if it be said, that this argument for submission to them will hold good, although they do not exercise their power for the benefit, but for the ruin, and destruction of human society; this objection was obviated, in

part before. Rulers have no authority from God to do mischief. They are not *God's ordinance*, or *God's ministers*, in any other sense than as it is by his permission and providence, that they are exalted to bear rule; and as magistracy duly exercised, and authority rightly applied, in the enacting and executing good laws,—laws attempered and accommodated to the common welfare of the subjects, must be supposed to be agreeable to the will of the beneficent author and supreme Lord of the universe; whose *kingdom ruleth over all* †; and whose *tender mercies are over all his works* §. It is blasphemy to call tyrants and oppressors, *God's ministers*. They are more properly *the messengers of satan to buffet us* ||. No rulers are properly *God's ministers*, but such as are *just, ruling in the fear of God* *. When once magistrates act contrary to their office, and the end of their institution; when they rob and ruin the public, instead of being guardians of its peace and welfare; they immediately cease to be the *ordinance* and *ministers of God*; and no more deserve that glorious character than common *pirates* and *highwaymen*. So that whenever that argument for

† Psal. ciii. 19.

§ Psal. cxlv. 19.

* 2 Sam. xxiii. 3.

|| 2 Cor. xii. 7.

submission fails, which is grounded upon the usefulness of magistracy to civil society, (as it always does when magistrates do hurt to society instead of good) the other argument, which is taken from their being the ordinance of God, must necessarily fail also; no person of a civil character being *God's minister*, in the sense of the apostle, any farther than he performs God's will, by exercising a just and reasonable authority; and ruling for the good of the subject.

This in general. Let us now trace the apostle's reasoning in favour of submission to the *higher powers*, a little more particularly and exactly. For by this it will appear, on one hand, how good and conclusive it is, for submission to those rulers who exercise their power in a proper manner: and, on the other, how weak and trifling, and inconnected it is, if it be supposed to be meant by the apostle to show the obligation and duty of obedience to tyrannical, oppressive rulers in common with others of a different character.

The apostle enters upon this subject thus — *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers; for there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God**.

* Ver. 1.

Here he urges the duty of obedience from this topic of argument, that civil rulers, as they are supposed to fulfil the pleasure of God, are the ordinance of God. But how is this an argument for obedience to such rulers as do not perform the pleasure of God, by doing good; but the pleasure of the devil, by doing evil; and such as are not, therefore, *God's ministers*, but the devil's! *Whosoever, therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation* *. Here the apostle argues, that those who resist a reasonable and just authority, which is agreeable to the will of God, do really resist the will of God himself; and will, therefore, be punished by him. But how does this prove, that those who resist a lawless, unreasonable power, which is contrary to the will of God, do therein resist the will and ordinance of God? Is resisting those who resist God's will, the same thing with resisting God? Or shall those who do so, *receive to themselves damnation!* *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good; and thou shalt have praise of the same. For he is the minister of God to thee for good* †. Here the apostle argues more explicitly than he had

* Ver. 2. † Ver. 3d, and part of the 4th.

before done, for revering, and submitting to magistracy, from this consideration, that such as really performed the duty of magistrates, would be enemies only to the evil actions of men, and would befriend and encourage the good; and so be a common blessing to society. But how is this an argument, that we must honour, and submit to such magistrates as are not enemies to the evil actions of men; but to the good; and such as are not a common blessing, but a common curse, to society! *But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid: for he is the minister of God, a revenger, to execute wrath upon him that doth evil**. Here the apostle argues from the nature and end of magistracy, that such as did evil, (and such only) had reason to be afraid of the *higher powers*; it being part of their office to punish evil doers, no less than to defend and encourage such as do well. But if magistrates are unrighteous; if they are *respecters of persons*; if they are partial in their administration of justice; then those who do well have as much reason to *be afraid*, as those that do evil: there can be no safety for the good, nor any peculiar ground of terror to the unruly and injurious. So that, in this case, the main end of civil government will be frustrated. And what reason is there for submit-

* Ver. 4th, latter part.

ting to that government, which does by no means answer the design of government? *Wherefore ye must needs be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake* *. Here the apostle argues the duty of a chearful and conscientious submission to civil government, from the nature and end of magistracy as he had before laid it down, *i. e.* as the design of it was to punish evil doers, and to support and encourage such as do well; and as it must, if so exercised, be agreeable to the will of God. But how does what he here says, prove the duty of a chearful and conscientious subjection to those who forfeit the character of rulers? To those who encourage the bad, and discourage the good? The argument here used no more proves it to be a sin to resist such rulers, than it does, to *resist the devil*, that he may *flee from us* †. For one is as truly the *minister of God* as the other. *For, for this cause pay you tribute also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing* §. Here the apostle argues the duty of paying taxes, from this consideration, that those who perform the duty of rulers, are continually attending upon the public welfare. But how does this argument conclude for paying taxes to such princes, as are continually endeavouring to ruin the pub-

* Ver. 5. † James iv. 7. § Ver. 6.

lic? And especially when such payment would facilitate and promote this wicked design? *Render therefore to all their dues; tribute, to whom tribute is due; custom, to whom custom; fear, to whom fear; honour, to whom honour**. Here the apostle sums up what he had been saying concerning the duty of subjects to rulers. And his argument stands thus——

“ Since magistrates, who execute their office
 “ well, are common benefactors to society;
 “ and may, in that respect, be properly stiled
 “ *the ministers and ordinance of God*; and
 “ since they are constantly employed in the
 “ service of the public; it becomes you to
 “ pay them tribute and custom; and to re-
 “ verence, honour, and submit to them in
 “ the execution of their respective offices.”

This is apparently good reasoning. But does this argument conclude for the duty of paying tribute, custom, reverence, honour, and obedience, to such persons as (although they bear the title of rulers) use all their power to hurt and injure the public? Such as are not *God's ministers*, but *satan's*? Such as do not take care of, and attend upon, the public interest, but their own, to the ruin of the public? that is, in short, to such as have no natural and just claim at all to tribute, custom, reverence, honour and obedience? It is to be hoped that those who have any re-

* Ver. 7.

gard to the apostle's character as an inspired writer, or even as a man of common understanding, will not represent him as reasoning in such a loose incoherent manner; and drawing conclusions, which have not the least relation to his premises. For what can be more absurd than an argument thus framed? "Rulers are, by their office, bound to consult the public welfare and the good of society: therefore you are bound to pay them tribute, to honour and to submit to them, even when they destroy the public welfare, and are a common pest to society, by acting in direct contradiction to the nature and end of their office."

Thus, upon a careful review of the apostle's reasoning in this passage, it appears that his arguments to enforce submission, are of such a nature, as to conclude only in favour of submission to *such rulers as he himself describes*; *i. e.* such as rule for the good of society, which is the only end of their institution. Common tyrants, and public oppressors, are not intitled to obedience from their subjects, by virtue of any thing here laid down by the inspired apostle.

I now add, farther, that the apostle's argument is so far from proving it to be the duty

duty of the people to obey, and submit to, such rulers as act in contradiction to the public good *, and so to the design of their office, that it proves *the direct contrary*. For, please to observe, that if the end of all civil government, be the good of society; if this be the thing that is aimed at in constituting civil rulers; and if the motive and argument for submission to government, be taken from the apparent usefulness of civil authority; it follows, that when no such good end can be answered by submission, there remains no argument or motive to enforce it; and if instead of this good end's being brought about by submission, a *contrary end* is brought about, and the ruin and misery of society effected by it; here is a plain and positive reason against submission in all such cases, should they ever happen. And therefore, in such cases, a regard to the public welfare ought to make us withhold from our rulers, that obedience and subjection which it would otherwise be our duty to render to them. If it be our duty, for example, to obey our king,

* This does not intend, their acting so in a few particular instances, which the best of rulers may do through mistake, &c. but their acting so *habitually*; and in a manner which plainly shows, that they aim at making themselves great by the ruin of their subjects.

merely for this reason, that he rules for the public welfare, (which is the only argument the apostle makes use of) it follows, by a parity of reason, that when he turns tyrant, and makes his subjects his prey to devour and to destroy, instead of his charge to defend and cherish, we are bound to throw off our allegiance to him, and to resist; and that according to the tenor of the apostle's argument in this passage. Not to discontinue our allegiance, in this case, would be to join with the sovereign in promoting the slavery and misery of that society, the welfare of which, we ourselves, as well as our sovereign, are indispensibly obliged to secure and promote, as far as in us lies. It is true, the apostle puts no case of such a tyrannical prince; but by his grounding his argument for submission wholly upon the good of civil society; it is plain he implicitly authorises, and even requires us to make resistance, whenever this shall be necessary to the public safety and happiness. Let me make use of this easy and familiar *similitude* to illustrate the point in hand—Suppose God requires a family of children to obey their father and not to resist him; and inforces his command with this argument; that the superintendence and care and authority of a just and kind parent, will contribute to the happiness of the whole family;

mily;

mily; so that they ought to obey him for their own sakes more than for his: suppose this parent at length runs distracted, and attempts in his mad fit, to cut all his children's throats: now, in this case, is not the reason before assigned, why these children should obey their parent while he continued of a sound mind, namely, *their common good*, a reason equally conclusive for disobeying and resisting him, since he is become delirious, and attempts their ruin? It makes no alteration in the argument, whether this parent, properly speaking, loses his reason; or does while he retains his understanding, that which is as fatal in its consequences, as any thing he could do, were he really deprived of it. This similitude needs no formal application. —

But it ought to be remembered, that if the duty of universal obedience and non-resistance to our king or prince, can be argued from this passage, the same submission under a republican, or any other form of government; and even to all the subordinate powers in any particular state, can be proved by it as well: which is more than those who alledge it for the mentioned purpose, would be willing should be inferred from it. So that this passage does not answer their purpose; but really overthrows and confutes it. This matter deserves to be more particularly considered.—The advocates
for

for unlimited submission and passive obedience, do, if I mistake not, always speak with reference to kingly or monarchical government, as distinguished from all other forms; and, with reference to submitting to the will of the king, in distinction from all subordinate officers, acting beyond their commission, and the authority which they have received from the crown. It is not pretended that any persons besides kings, have a divine right to do what they please, so that no one may resist them, without incurring the guilt of factiousness and rebellion. If any other supreme powers oppress the people, it is generally allowed, that the people may get redress, by resistance, if other methods prove ineffectual. And if any officers in a kingly government, go beyond the limits of that power which they have derived from the crown, (the supposed original source of all power and authority in the state) and attempt illegally, to take away the properties and lives of their fellow-subjects, they may be forcibly resisted, at least till application can be made to the crown. But as to the sovereign himself, he may not be resisted in any case; nor any of his officers, while they confine themselves within the bounds which he has prescribed to them. This is, I think, a true sketch of the principles of those who defend the doctrine of passive obedience and non resistance.

Now

Now there is nothing in scripture which supports this scheme of political principles. As to the passage under consideration, the apostle here speaks of civil rulers in *general*; of all persons in *common*, vested with authority for the good of society, without any particular reference to one form of government, more than to another; or to the supreme power in any particular state, more than to subordinate powers. The apostle does not concern himself with the different forms of government*. This
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* The essence of government (I mean *good* government; and this is the *only* government which the apostle treats of in this passage) consists in the *making and executing of good laws*—laws attuned to the common felicity of the *governed*. And if this be, *in fact*, done, it is evidently, in itself, a thing of no consequence at all, what the *particular* form of government is;—whether the legislative and executive power be lodged in *one and the same* person, or in *different* persons;—whether in *one* person, whom we call an *absolute monarch*; whether in a *few*, so as to constitute an *aristocracy*;—whether in *many*, so as to constitute a *republic*; or whether in *three co-ordinate branches*, in such manner as to make the government *partake* something of *each* of these forms; and to be, at the same time, *essentially different* from them all. If the *end* be attained, it is enough. But no form of government seems to be so unlikely to accomplish this *end* as *absolute monarchy*—Nor is there any one that has so little pretence to a *divine original*, unless it be in this sense, that God
 first

he supposes left entirely to human prudence and discretion. Now the consequence of this is, that unlimited and passive obedience, is no more enjoined in this passage, under monarchical government; or to the supreme power in any state, than under all other species of government, which answer the end of government; or, to all the subordinate degrees of civil authority, from the highest to the lowest. Those, therefore, who would from this passage infer the guilt of resisting kings, in all cases whatever, though acting ever so contrary to the design of their office, must, if they will be consistent, go much farther, and infer from it the guilt of resistance under all other forms of government; and of resisting *any petty officer* in the state, though acting beyond his commission, in the most arbitrary, illegal manner possible. The argument holds equally strong in both cases. All civil rulers, as such, are the *ordinance* and *ministers of God*; and they are all, by the nature of their office, and in their respective spheres and stations, bound to consult

first introduced it into, and thereby overturned, the commonwealth of *Israel*, as a *curse* upon that people for their *folly* and *wickedness*, particularly in *desiring* such a government. (See *1 Sam.* viii chap.) Just so God, before, sent *quails* amongst them, as a *plague*, and a *curse*, and not as a *blissing*. *Numb.* chap. xi.

the public welfare. With the same reason therefore, that any deny unlimited and passive obedience to be here enjoined under a republic or aristocracy, or any other established form of civil government; or to subordinate powers, acting in an illegal and oppressive manner; (with the same reason) others may deny, that such obedience is enjoined to a king or monarch, or any civil power whatever. For the apostle says nothing that is *peculiar to kings*; what he says, extends equally to *all* other persons whatever, vested with any civil office. They are all, in exactly the same sense, the *ordinance of God*; and the *ministers of God*; and obedience is equally enjoined to be paid to them all. For, as the apostle expresses it, *there is NO POWER but of God*: and we are required to *render to ALL their DUES*; and not MORE than their DUES. And what these *dues* are, and to *whom* they are to be rendered, the apostle *sayeth not*; but leaves to the reason and consciences of men to determine.

Thus it appears, that the common argument, grounded upon this passage, in favour of universal and passive obedience, really overthrows itself, by proving too much, if it proves any thing at all; namely, that no civil officer is, in any case whatever, to be resisted, though acting in express contradiction to the design of his

his

his office ; which no man in his senses, ever did or can assert.

If we calmly consider the nature of the thing itself, nothing can well be imagined more directly contrary to common sense, than to suppose that *millions* of people should be subjected to the arbitrary, precarious pleasure of *one single man* ; (who has *naturally* no superiority over them in point of authority) so that their estates, and every thing that is valuable in life, and even their lives also, should be absolutely at his disposal, if he happens to be wanton and capricious enough to demand them. What unprejudiced man can think, that God made ALL to be thus subservient to the lawless pleasure and phrenzy of ONE, so that it shall always be a sin to resist him ! Nothing but the most plain and express revelation from heaven could make a sober impartial man believe such a monstrous, unaccountable doctrine, and indeed, the thing itself, appears so shocking—so out of all *proportion*, that it may be questioned, whether all the *miracles* that ever were wrought, could make it credible, that this doctrine *really* came from God. At present, there is not the least syllable in scripture which gives any countenance to it. The hereditary, indefeasible, divine right of kings, and the doctrine of non-resistance, which is built upon
the

the supposition of such a right, are altogether as fabulous and chimerical, as transubstantiation; or any of the most absurd reveries of ancient or modern visionaries. These notions are fetched neither from divine revelation, nor human reason; and if they are derived from neither of those sources, it is not much matter from *whence they come, or whether they go.* Only it is a pity that such doctrines should be propagated in society to raise factions and rebellions, as we see they have, in fact, been both in the *last*, and in the *present*, REIGN.

But then, if unlimited submission and passive obedience to the *higher powers*, in all possible cases, be not a duty, it will be asked, “How far are we obliged to submit? If we may innocently disobey and resist in some cases, why not in all? Where shall we stop? What is the measure of our duty? This doctrine tends to the total dissolution of civil government; and to introduce such scenes of wild anarchy and confusion, as are more fatal to society than the worst of tyranny.”

After this manner, some men object; and indeed this is the most plausible thing that can be said in favour of such an absolute submission as they plead for. But the worst (or rather the best

best) of it, is, that there is very little strength or solidity in it. For similar difficulties may be raised with respect to almost every duty of natural and revealed religion.—To instance only in two, both of which are near akin, and indeed exactly parallel, to the case before us. It is unquestionably the duty of children to submit to their parents; and of servants, to their masters. But no one asserts, that it is their duty to obey, and submit to them, in all supposable cases; or universally a sin to resist them. Now does this tend to subvert the just authority of parents and masters? Or to introduce confusion and anarchy into private families? No. How then does the same principle tend to unhinge the government of that larger family, the body politic? We know, in general, that children and servants are obliged to obey their parents, and masters respectively. We know also, with equal certainty, that they are not obliged to submit to them in all things, without exception; but may, in some cases, reasonably, and therefore innocently, resist them. These principles are acknowledged upon all hands, whatever difficulty there may be in fixing the exact limits of submission. Now there is at least as much difficulty in stating the measure of duty in those two cases, as in the case of rulers and subjects. So that this is really no objection, at least no reasonable one,

against resistance to the *higher powers*: Or, if it is one, it will hold equally against resistance in the other cases mentioned.——

It is indeed true, that turbulent, vicious-minded men, may take occasion from this principle, that their rulers may, in some cases, be lawfully resisted, to raise factions and disturbances in the state; and to make resistance where resistance is needless, and therefore, sinful. But is it not equally true, that children and servants of turbulent, vicious minds, may take occasion from this principle, that parents and masters may, in some cases be lawfully resisted, to resist when resistance is unnecessary, and therefore, criminal? Is the principle in either case false in itself, merely because it may be abused; and applied to legitimate disobedience and resistance in those instances, to which it ought not to be applied? According to this way of arguing, there will be no true principles in the world; for there are none but what may be wrested and perverted to serve bad purposes, either through the weakness or wickedness of men*.

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* We may very safely assert these two things in general, without undermining government: One is, That no civil rulers are to be obeyed when they enjoin things that are inconsistent with the commands of God: All such disobedience is lawful and glo-

A PEOPLE really oppressed to a great degree by their sovereign, cannot well be insensible

rious; particularly if persons refuse to comply with any *legal establishment of religion*, because it is a gross perversion and corruption (as to doctrine, worship and discipline) of a pure and divine religion, brought from heaven to earth by the *son of God*, (the only king and head of the *christian church*) and propagated through the world by his inspired apostles. All commands running counter to the declared will of the supreme legislator of heaven and earth, are null and void: and therefore disobedience to them is a duty, not a crime. Another thing that may be asserted with equal truth and safety, is, that no government is to be submitted to, at the *expense* of that which is the *sole end* of all government,—the common good and safety of society. Because, to submit in this case, if it should ever happen, would evidently be to set up the *means* as more valuable, and above, the *end*; than which there cannot be a greater solecism and contradiction. The only reason of the institution of civil government; and the only rational ground of submission to it, is the common safety and utility. If therefore, in any case, the common safety and utility would not be promoted by submission to government, but the contrary, there is no ground or motive for obedience and submission, but for the contrary.

Whoever considers the nature of civil government must, indeed, be sensible that a great degree of *implicit confidence*, must unavoidably be placed in those that bear rule: this is implied in the very notion of authority's being originally a *trust*, committed

sensible when they are so oppressed. And such a people (if I may allude to an ancient *fable*) have

mitted by the people, to those who are vested with it, as all just and righteous authority is; all besides is mere lawless force and usurpation; neither God nor nature having given any man a right of dominion over any society, independently of that society's approbation, and consent to be governed by him—now as all men are fallible, it cannot be supposed that the public affairs of any state, should be always administered in the best manner possible, even by persons of the greatest wisdom and integrity. Nor is it sufficient to legitimate disobedience to the *higher powers* that they are not so administered; or that they are, in some instances, very ill managed; for upon this principle, it is scarcely supposable that any government at all could be supported, or subsist. Such a principle manifestly tends to the dissolution of government; and to throw all things into confusion and anarchy.—But it is equally evident, upon the other hand, that those in authority may abuse their *trust* and power to such a degree, that neither the law of reason, nor of religion, requires, that any obedience or submission should be paid to them; but on the contrary, that they should be totally *discarded*; and the authority which they were before vested with, transferred to others, who may exercise it more to those good purposes for which it is given.—Nor is this principle, that resistance to the *higher powers*, is in some extraordinary cases, justifiable, so liable to abuse, as many persons seem to apprehend it. For although there will be always some petulant, querulous men, in every state—men of factious, turbulent and carping dispositions,—

have, like the *Hesperian* fruit, a DRAGON for their *protector* and *guardian*: nor would they have

glad to lay hold of any trifle to justify and legitimate their caballing against their rulers, and other seditious practices; yet there are, comparatively speaking, but few men of this *contemptible character*. It does not appear but that mankind, in general, have a disposition to be as submissive and passive and tame under government as they ought to be. —Witness a great, if not the greatest, part of the known world, who are now groaning, but not murmuring, under the heavy yoke of tyranny! While those who govern, do it with any tolerable degree of moderation and justice, and in any good measure act up to their office and character, by being public benefactors, the people will generally be easy and peaceable; and be rather inclined to flatter and adore, than to insult and resist them. Nor was there ever any *general* complaint against any administration, *which lasted long*, but what there was good reason for. Till people find themselves greatly abused and oppressed by their governors, they are not apt to complain; and whenever they do, in fact find themselves thus abused and oppressed, they must be stupid not to complain. To say that subjects in general are not proper judges when their governors oppress them, and play the tyrant; and when they defend their rights, administer justice impartially, and promote the public welfare, is as great *treason* as ever man uttered; — it is treason, — not against one *single* man, but the state — against the whole body politic; — it is treason against mankind; — it is treason against common sense; — it is treason against God. And this impious principle lays the foundation for justifying

have any reason to mourn, if some HERCULES should appear to dispatch him—For a nation thus abused to rise unanimously, and to resist their prince, even to the dethroning him, is not criminal; but a reasonable way of vindicating their liberties and just rights; it is making use of the means, and the only means, which God has put into their power, for mutual and self-defence. And it would be highly criminal in them, not to make use of this means. It would be stupid tameness, and unaccountable folly, for whole nations to suffer *one* unreasonable, ambitious and cruel man, to wanton and riot in their misery. And in such a case it would, of the two, be more rational to suppose, that they that did NOT *resist*, than that they who did, would *receive to themselves damnation*. And

fyng all the tyranny and oppression that ever any prince was guilty of. The people know for what end they set up, and maintain, their governors; and they are the proper judges when they execute their *trusts* as they ought to do it;—when their prince exercises an equitable and paternal authority over them;—when from a prince and common father, he exalts himself into a tyrant—when from subjects and children, he degrades them into the class of slaves;—plunders them, makes them his prey, and unnaturally sports himself with their lives and fortunes.—

THIS naturally brings us to make some reflections upon the resistance which was made about a century since, to that unhappy prince, KING CHARLES I; and upon the ANNIVERSARY of his death. This is a point which I should not have concerned myself about, were it not that *some men* continue to speak of it, even to this day, with a great deal of warmth and zeal; and in such a manner as to undermine all the principles of LIBERTY, whether civil or religious, and to introduce the most abject slavery both in church and state: so that it is become a matter of universal concern.—What I have to offer upon this subject, will be comprized in a short answer to the following *queries, viz.*

For what reason the resistance to king Charles I. was made?

By whom it was made?

Whether this resistance was REBELLION*, or not?

* *N. B.* I speak of rebellion, treason, saintship, martyrdom, &c. throughout this discourse only in the *scriptural* and *theological sense*. I know not how the *law* defines them; the study of *that* not being my employment—

How

How the *anniversary* of king *Charles's* death came *at first* to be solemnized as a day of fasting and humiliation?

And lastly,

Why those of the episcopal clergy, who are very high in the principles of *ecclesiastical authority*, continue to speak of this unhappy man, as a great SAINT and a MARTYR?

For what reason, then, was the resistance to king *Charles* made? The general answer to this inquiry is, that it was on account of the *tyranny* and *oppression* of his reign. Not a great while after his accession to the throne, he married a *French catholic*; and with her seemed to have wedded the politics, if not the religion of *France*, also. For afterwards, during a reign, or rather a tyranny of many years, he governed in a perfectly wild and arbitrary manner, paying no regard to the constitution and the laws of the kingdom, by which the power of the crown was limited; or to the solemn oath which he had taken at his coronation. It would be endless, as well as needless, to give a particular account of all the illegal and despotic measures which he took in his administration; — partly from his

own natural lust of power, and partly from the influence of wicked counsellors and ministers.—He committed many illustrious members of both houses of parliament to the *Tower*, for opposing his arbitrary schemes.—He levied many taxes upon the people without consent of parliament;—and then imprisoned great numbers of the principal merchants and gentry for not paying them.—He erected, or at least revived, several arbitrary courts, in which the most unheard-of barbarities were committed with his knowledge and approbation.—He supported that more than fiend, archbishop *Laud* and the clergy of his stamp, in all their church-tyranny and hellish cruelties.—He authorised a book in favour of *sports* upon the *Lord's day*; and several clergymen were persecuted by him and the mentioned *pious* bishop, for not reading it to the people after *divine service*.—When the parliament complained to him of the arbitrary proceedings of his corrupt ministers, he told that *august body*, in a rough, domineering, unprincely manner, that he wondered any one should be so foolish and insolent as to think that he would part with the meanest of his servants *upon their account*—He refused to call any parliament at all for the space of twelve years together, during all which time, he governed in an absolute lawless and despotic manner

manner — He took all opportunities to encourage the *Papists*, and to promote them to the highest offices of honour and trust—He (probably) abetted the horrid massacre in *Ireland*, in which two hundred thousand protestants were butchered by the roman-catholics. — He sent a large sum of money, which he had raised by his arbitrary taxes, into *Germany*, to raise foreign troops, in order to force more arbitrary taxes upon his subjects. — He not only by a long series of *actions*, but also in *plain terms*, asserted an absolute uncontrollable power; saying even in one of his speeches to parliament, that as it was blasphemy to dispute what God might do; so it was sedition in subjects to dispute what the king might do.—Towards the end of his tyranny, he came to the house of commons with an armed force *, and demanded five of its principal members to be delivered up to him — And this was a prelude to that unnatural war which he soon after levied against his own dutiful subjects; whom he was bound by all the laws of honour, humanity, piety,

* Historians are not agreed, what number of soldiers attended him in this monstrous invasion of the privileges of parliament — some say three hundred, some four hundred; and the author of *The history of the kings of Scotland*, says five hundred.

and I might add, of *interest* also, to defend and cherish with a paternal affection—I have only time to hint at these facts in a general way, all which, and many more of the same tenor, may be proved by good authorities: so that the *figurative* language which St. *John* uses concerning the just and beneficent deeds of our blessed Saviour, may be applied to the unrighteous and execrable deeds of this prince, *viz.* *And there are also many other things which king Charles did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself, could not contain the books that should be written**. Now it was on account of king *Charles's* thus assuming a power above the laws, in direct contradiction to his coronation oath, and governing the greatest part of his time, in the most arbitrary oppressive manner; it was upon this account, that the resistance was made to him, which, at length, issued in the loss of his crown, and of *that head* which was unworthy to wear it.

But by whom was this resistance made? Not by a private *junto*;—not by a small seditious party; not by a few *desperadoes*, who, to mend their fortunes, would embroil the state;—but by the LORDS and COM-

* John xxi. 25.

MONS of *England*. It was they that almost unanimously opposed the king's measures for overturning the constitution, and changing that free and happy government into a wretched, absolute monarchy. It was they that when the king was about levying forces against his subjects, in order to make himself absolute, commissioned officers, and raised an army to defend themselves and the public: and it was they that maintained the war against him all along, till he was made a prisoner. This is indisputable. Though it was not properly speaking the parliament, but the army, which put him to death afterwards. And it ought to be freely acknowledged, that most of their proceedings, in order to get this matter effected; and particularly the court by which the king was at last tried and condemned, was a little better than a mere mockery of justice.—

The next question which naturally arises, is, whether this resistance which was made to the king *by the parliament*, was properly *rebellion*, or not? The answer to which is plain, that it was not; but a most righteous and glorious stand, made in defence of the natural and legal rights of the people, against the unnatural and illegal encroachments of arbitrary power. Nor was this a rash and too sudden opposition. The nation had been patient under the op-

pressions of the crown, even to *long-suffering*; — for a course of many years; and there was no rational hope of redress in any other way— Resistance was absolutely necessary in order to preserve the nation from slavery, misery and ruin. And who so proper to make this resistance as the lords and commons; — the whole representative body of the people; — guardians of the public welfare; and each of which was, in point of legislation, vested with an equal, co-ordinate power, with that of the crown *? Here were *two* branches of the legislature

* The *English* constitution is originally and essentially *free*. The character, which *Julius Cæsar* and *Tacitus* both give of the ancient *Britains* so long ago, is, That they were extremely *jealous of their liberties*, as well as a people of a *martial spirit*. Nor have there been wanting frequent instances and proofs of the same glorious spirit (in both respects) remaining in their posterity ever since, — in the struggles they have made for liberty, both against foreign and domestic tyrants. — Their kings hold their title to the throne, solely by grant of parliament; *i. e.* in other words, by the voluntary consent of the people. And, agreeably hereto, the prerogative and rights of the crown are stated, defined, and limited by law; and that as truly and strictly as the rights of any inferior officer in the state; or indeed, of any private subject. And it is only in this respect that it can be said, that “the king can do no wrong.” Being restrained by the law, he cannot, while he confines

gislature against *one*;—two, which had law and equity and the constitution on their side, against

confines himself within those just limits which the law prescribes to him as the measure of his authority, injure and oppress the subject. — The king, in his coronation oath, swears to exercise only such a power as the constitution gives him; and the subject, in the oath of allegiance, swears only to obey him in the exercise of such a power. The king is as much bound by his oath, not to infringe the legal rights of the people, as the people are bound to yield subjection to him. From whence it follows, that as soon as the prince sets himself above law, he loses the king in the tyrant: he does to all intents and purposes, unking himself, by acting out of, and beyond, that sphere which the constitution allows him to move in. And in such cases, he has no more right to be obeyed, than any inferior officer who acts beyond his commission. The subject's obligation to allegiance *then ceases* of course: and to resist him, is no more *rebellion*, than to resist any foreign invader. There is an essential difference betwixt *government* and *tyranny*; at least under such a constitution as the *English*. The former consists in ruling according to law and equity; the latter, in ruling contrary to law and equity. So also, there is an essential difference betwixt resisting a tyrant, and rebellion; the former is a just and reasonable self defence; the latter consists in resisting a prince whose administration is just and legal; and this is what denominates it a crime.—Now it is evident, that king *Charles's* government was illegal, and very oppressive, through the greatest part of his reign: and, therefore, to resist him, was no more rebellion, than to oppose any foreign invader, or any other domestic oppressor.

against one which was impiously attempting to overturn law and equity and the constitution; and to exercise a wanton licentious *sovereignty* over the properties, consciences and lives of all the people:—Such a *sovereignty* as some inconsiderately ascribe to the supreme governor of the world.—I say, inconsiderately; because God himself does not govern in an absolutely arbitrary and despotic manner. The power of this Almighty King (I speak it not without caution and reverence; the power of this Almighty King) is *limited by law*; not indeed, by *acts of parliament*, but by the eternal *laws of truth, wisdom and equity*; and the everlasting *tables of right reason*;—tables that cannot be *repealed, or thrown down and broken* like those of *Moses*.—But king *Charles* set himself above all these, as much as he did above the written laws of the realm; and made mere humour and caprice, which are no rule at all, the only rule and measure of his administration. And now, is it not perfectly ridiculous to call resistance to such a tyrant, by the name of *rebellion*?—*the grand rebellion!* Even that—parliament, which brought king *Charles II.* to the throne, and which run *loyally mad*, severely reprov'd one of their own members for condemning the proceedings of that parliament, which first took up arms against the former king. And upon the same principles that

that the proceedings of this parliament may be censured as wicked and rebellious, the proceedings of those who, since, opposed king *James II.* and brought the prince of *Orange* to the throne, may be censured as wicked and rebellious also. The cases are parallel.—But whatever *some* men may *think*, it is to be hoped that, for their own sakes, they will not dare to *speak* against the REVOLUTION, upon the justice and legality of which depends (in part) his present MAJESTY's right to the throne.

If it be said, that although the parliament which first opposed king *Charles's* measures, and at length took up arms against him, were not guilty of rebellion; yet certainly those persons were, who condemned, and put him to death; even this perhaps is not true. For he had, in fact, *unkinged himself* long before, and had forfeited his title to the allegiance of the people, so that those who put him to death, were, at most, only guilty of *murder*; which indeed, is bad enough, if they were really guilty of *that*; (which is at least disputable.) *Cromwell*, and those who were principally concerned in the (*nominal*) king's death, might possibly have been very wicked and designing men. Nor shall I say any thing in vindication of the reigning *hypocrisy* of those times; or of *Cromwell's* male-administration during the *inter-*

ter-regnum: (for it is *truth*, and not a *party*, that I am speaking for.) But still it may be said, that *Cromwell* and his adherents were not properly speaking, guilty of *rebellion*; because he, whom they beheaded, was not properly speaking, *their king*; but a *lawless tyrant*.— Much less, are the whole body of the nation at that time to be charged with rebellion on that account; for it was no *national act*; it was not done by a *free* parliament. And much less still, is the nation at present, to be charged with the great sin of rebellion, for what their *ancestors* did, (or rather did NOT) a century ago.

But how came the *anniversary* of king *Charles's* death, to be solemnized as a day of fasting and humiliation? The true answer in brief, to which inquiry, is, that this fast was instituted by way of *court and compliment* to king *Charles II.* upon the *resurrection*. All were desirous of making their court to him; of ingratiating themselves; and of making him forget what had been done in opposition to his *father*, so as not to revenge it. To effect this, they ran into the most extravagant professions of affection and loyalty to him, insomuch that he himself said, that it was a *mad and hair-brained* loyalty which they professed. And amongst other strange things, which his first parliament

parliament did, they ordered the *thirtieth* of *January* (the day on which his father was beheaded) to be kept as a day of solemn humiliation, to deprecate the judgments of heaven for the rebellion which the nation had been guilty of, in that which was no national thing; and which was not rebellion in them that did it—Thus they soothed and flattered their new king, at the expence of their liberties:— And were ready to yield up *freely* to *Charles II.* all that enormous power, which they had justly resisted *Charles I.* for usurping to himself.

The last query mentioned, was, Why those of the *episcopal clergy*, who are very high in the principles of *ecclesiastical authority*, continue to speak of this unhappy prince as a *great saint* and a *martyr*? This, we know, is what they constantly do, especially on the *thirtieth* of *January*;—a day sacred to the *extolling* of *him*, and to the *reproaching* of those who are not of the *established church*. Out of the same mouth on this day, *proceedeth blessing and cursing**; *therewith bless they their God, even Charles, and therewith curse they the dissenters*: And their tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. King *Charles* is, upon this solemnity, frequently compared to our

*. James iii. 8, 9, 10.

Lord Jesus Christ, both in respect of the *holiness* of his life, and the greatness and injustice of his *sufferings*; and it is a wonder they do not add something concerning the *merits* of his death also — But *blessed saint* and *royal martyr* are as humble titles as any that are thought worthy of *him*.

Now this may, at first view, well appear to be a very strange *phænomenon*. For king *Charles* was really a man black with guilt, and laden with *iniquity**, as appears by his crimes before mentioned. He lived a tyrant; and it was the oppression and violence of his reign, that brought him to his untimely and violent end at last. Now what of faintship or martyrdom is there in all this? What of faintship is there in ~~encouraging people to profane~~ the *Lord's Day*? What of faintship in falsehood and perjury? What of faintship in repeated robberies and depredations? What of faintship in throwing real saints, and glorious patriots into gaols? What of faintship in overturning an excellent civil constitution?—and proudly grasping at an illegal and monstrous power? What of faintship in the murder of thousands of innocent people; and involving a nation in all the calamities of a civil war? And what of

* *Isaiah* i. 4.

martyrdom is there, in a man's bringing an immature and violent death upon himself, by *being wicked overmuch* †? Is there any such thing as grace, without goodness? As being a follower of Christ without following him? As being his **disciple**, **without** learning of him to be just and beneficent? Or as sainthood without sanctity ‡? If not, I fear it will be hard to prove this man a saint. And verily one would be apt to suspect, that *that church* must

† Eccles. vii. 17.

‡ Is it any wonder that even persons who do not *walk after their own lusts*, should *scoff* at such *saints* as this, both in the *first* and in the *last days*, even *from everlasting to everlasting*? 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4. — But perhaps it will be said, that these things are **MYSTERIES**, which (*although* very true in themselves) *lay-understandings* cannot comprehend: or, indeed, any other persons amongst us, besides those who being **INWARDLY MOVED BY THE HOLY GHOST** have taken a trip across the *Atlantic* to obtain *episcopal ordination* and the *indelible character* — However, if these *consecrated gentlemen* do not quite despair of us, it is hoped that, in the abundance of their charity, they will endeavour to *illucidate* these *dark points*; and, at the same time, explain the creed of *another* of their *eminent saints*, which we are told, that unless we *believe faithfully*, (i. e.) *believingly*) we cannot be saved: which creed, (or rather *riddle*) notwithstanding all the labours of the *pious* — and *metaphysical* Dr. *Waterland*, remains somewhat *enigmatical* still.

be but *poorly stocked* with saints and martyrs, which is forced to adopt such enormous sinners into her *kalendar*, in order to swell the number.

But to unravel this *mystery of* (nonsense as well as of) *iniquity*, which has *already worked* for a *long time* amongst us*; or, at least, to give the most probable solution of it; it is to be remembered, that king *Charles*, this *burlesque* upon faintship and martyrdom, though so great an oppressor, was a true friend to the *Church*;—so true a friend to her, that he was very well affected towards the *roman catholics*; and would probably have been very willing to unite *Lambeth* and *Rome*. This appears by his marrying a true *daughter* of that true *mother of harlots*†; ~~which he did with a dispensation from the Pope, that supreme BISHOP;~~ to whom when he wrote, he gave the title of MOST HOLY FATHER. His queen was extremely bigotted to all the follies and superstitions, and to the *hierarchy* of *Rome*; and had a prodigious ascendancy over him all his life. It was, in part, owing to this, that he (probably) abetted the massacre of the protestants in *Ireland*; that he assisted in extirpating the *French* protestants at *Rochelle*; that

* 2 Thess. ii. 7.

† Rev. xvii. 5.

he all along encouraged *papists*, and popishly affected *clergymen*, in preference to all other persons, and that he upheld that monster of wickedness, ARCHBISHOP LAUD, and the bishops of his stamp, in all their church tyranny and diabolical cruelties. In return to his kindness and indulgence in which respects, they caused many of the pulpits throughout the nation, to ring with the divine absolute, indefeasible right of kings; with the praises of *Charles* and his reign; and with the damnable sin of resisting the *Lord's anointed*, let him do what he would. So that not *Christ*, but *Charles*, was commonly preached to the people.—In *plain English*, there seems to have been an impious bargain struck up betwixt the *scepter* and the *surplice*, for enslaving both the bodies and souls of men. The king appeared to be willing that the clergy should do what they would,—set up a monstrous hierarchy like that of *Rome*,—a monstrous inquisition like that of *Spain* or *Portugal*,—or any thing else which their own pride, and the devil's malice, could prompt them to: *provided always*, that the clergy would be *tools* to the crown; that they would make the people believe, that kings had God's authority for breaking God's law; that they had a commission from heaven to seize the estates and lives of their subjects at pleasure; and that it was a damnable sin to resist them,

even when they did ~~such things~~ as deserved more than damnation.—This appears to be the true key for explaining the *mysterious* doctrine of king *Charles's* faintship and martyrdom. He was a faint, not because he was in his life a good *man*, but a good *churchman*; not because he was a lover of *holiness* but the *hierarchy*; not because he was a friend to *Christ*, but the *craft*. And he was a martyr in his death, not because he bravely suffered death in the cause of truth and righteousness, but because he died an enemy to liberty and the rights of conscience; i. e. not because he died an enemy to *sin*, but *dissenters*. For these reasons it is that all bigotted clergymen, and friends to church-power, paint this man as a faint in his life, though he was such a mighty, such a *royal sinner*; and as a martyr ~~in his death~~, though he fell a sacrifice only to his own ambition, avarice, and unbounded lust of power. And from prostituting their praise upon king *Charles*, and offering him that incense which is not his due, it is natural for them to make a transition to the dissenters, (as they commonly do) and to load them with that reproach which they do not deserve; they being generally professed enemies both to civil and ecclesiastical tyranny. We are commonly charged (upon the *thirtieth of January*) with the guilt of putting the king to death; under a notion that it

was

was our ancestors that did it; and so we are represented in the blackest colours, not only as schismatics, but also as traitors and rebels and all that is bad. And these *lofty* gentlemen usually rail upon this head, in such a manner as plainly shews, that they are either grossly ignorant of the history of those times which they speak of; or, which is worse, that they are guilty of the most shameful prevarication, slander and falsehood.—But every *petty priest*, with a *roll* and a *gown*, thinks he must do something in imitation of his *bettors* in *law*, and shew himself a *true son* of the church: And thus, through a foolish ambition to appear *considerable*, they only render themselves *contemptible*.

But suppose *our* fore-fathers did kill their *mock* saint and martyr a century ago, what is that to *us* now? If I mistake not, these gentlemen generally preach down the doctrine of the *imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity*, as absurd and unreasonable, notwithstanding they have solemnly subscribed what is equivalent to it in *their own articles of religion*. And therefore one would hardly expect that they would lay the guilt of the king's death upon *us*, although *our fore-fathers* had been the only authors of it. But this conduct is much more surprising, when it does not appear that our
ancestors

ancestors had any more hand in it than *their own*.—However, bigotry is sufficient to account for this, and many other *phænomena*, which cannot be accounted for in any other way.

Although the observation of this *anniversary* seems to have been (at least) superstitious in its *original*; and although it is often abused to very bad purposes by the established clergy, as they serve themselves of it, to perpetuate strife, a party spirit, and divisions in the christian church; yet it is to be hoped that one good end will be answered by it, quite contrary to their intention; it is to be hoped, that it will prove a standing *memento*, that *Britons* will not be *slaves*; and a warning to all corrupt counsellors and *ministers*, not to go too far in advising to arbitrary despotic measures.—

To conclude: Let us all learn to be *free*, and to be *loyal*. Let us not profess ourselves vassals to the lawless pleasure of any man on earth. But let us remember, at the same time, government is *sacred*, and not to be trifled with. It is our happiness to live under the government of a Prince, who is satisfied with ruling according to law; as every other *good prince* will.—We enjoy under his administration all the liberty that is proper and expedient for us. It becomes us, therefore, to be contented,

contented, and dutiful subjects. Let us prize our freedom; but not *use our liberty for a cloke of maliciousness* *. There are men who strike at *liberty* under the term *licentiousness*. There are others who aim at *popularity* under the disguise of *patriotism*. Be aware of both. *Extremes* are dangerous. There is at present amongst *us*, perhaps more danger of the *latter* than of the *former*. For which reason I would exhort you to pay all due regard to the government over us; to the KING and all in authority; and to *lead a quiet and peaceable life* †.—And while I am speaking of loyalty to our *earthly prince*, suffer me just to put you in mind to be loyal also to the supreme RULER of the universe, *by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice* ‡. To which king eternal, immortal, invisible, even to the ONLY WISE GOD ||, be all honour and praise, DOMINION and thanksgiving, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. AMEN.

* 1 Pet. ii. 16; † 1 Tim. ii. 2. ‡ Prov. viii. 15.
|| 1 Tim. i. 17.

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There was a time, known as the Golden Age of Freethought, from about 1865 to 1925, when it was thought that the Higher Religions -- Rationalism, Secularism, Deism, Atheism and other “thinking” religions (as opposed to the lower “believing” religions) would be the main religious force in Western Civilization within 50 years. The failure of this great upward religious movement was no fault of the new and elevating religious ideas; these new progressive religious ideals were forcefully suppressed by the political power of the old beliefs.

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The MANNER of
*CONSECRATION
OF THE
BISHOPS
IN
DUBLIN,

By the Lord Primate in the year 1660.

WHEREAS we have thought fit to appoint the 27th of this instant *January 1660*, for the consecration of bishops; to the end therefore that the same may be so ordered, as decency and the dignity of so holy an office shall require; we have thought fit, by the advice of our brethren the bishops, who are to assist in that sacred administration, and with whom we have consulted in that behalf, to order,

That at seven o'clock in the morning of the said day, the lords bishops elect do attend us, at the dean of Christ church his house, and

* The editor considers this small piece as a prelatie comment on the words of Christ, *my kingdom is not of this world*; and as such it is here published,

that all the bishops consecrators be there also in their cornered caps, rochets and chimers.

That notice be given to the said deans of the two cathedral churches of *Dublin*, that they likewise are expected to attend at the same time and place in their formalities.

That the said deans respectively shall give orders to the dignitaries, prebendaries, canons, petit-canons, vicars, choral, and choristers, that they do attend at the same hour, in their respective formalities in the body of Christ-church.

That the vice-chancellor, or pro-vice-chancellor of the university, all doctors of divinity, and of the law, as also all the ministers and civilians in this city, with the whole university, do likewise repair thither, so far as they can conveniently furnish themselves with gowns and formalities to their respective offices and dignities appertaining.

That the order of proceeding be as follows ;

That the pursuivant of the court of prerogative, and the apparator general bare-headed.

The vergers of the said two cathedrals also bare-headed.

The choristers two and two, and the rest of the procedents also in order, two and two as followeth.

Vicars chorals.

Petit-canons.

Prebendaries.

Dignitaries.

The said two deans.

The bishops elect in their albs.

The lord primate's gent. usher, and secretary
bare-headed.

The lord primate.

The other bishops consecrators two and two.

The beadle of the university.

The vice-chancellor, or pro-vice-chancellor,
and provost.

Deans and doctors two and two.

That the abovesaid orders may proceed with a silent, solemn, and slow paced gravity, until the time of entrance into the west-gate of St. *Patrick's* church, where the vicars and choristers are to proceed singing into the choir, and there continue singing the *te deum*, accompanied with the organ, until the archbishops, bishops, and the rest of the principal precedents shall be placed and seated in their respective stalls.

That the office of morning prayer be solemnly celebrated by the dean of the said church: Which ended, Dr. *Fer. Taylor*, lord bishop elect of *Down*, designed to preach the *concio ad clerum*, is to ascend the pulpit during the singing of *per veni nobis*.

That after the said bishop hath ended his sermon, he be conveyed by the verger to his stall.

That upon his lordship's descent from the pulpit an anthem be sung.

That from the end of the anthem the voice of the organ be heard, and continued until the lord primate and the other bishops who are to consecrate, ascend into the enclosure within the rails, and somewhat longer; at least till the noise, which may be occasioned by the usual motion of the people from their places after sermon, shall cease.

That after the primate and bishops consecrators are seated in their chairs, and the sound of the organs continuing, the vicar-general (as sent by the said primate) is to go to the lords elect, sitting in their stalls, and so with the dean of *St. Patrick* to conduct their lordships to the enclosure, and there to range them in their order according as direction shall be given by the primate.

That then the office of consecration be celebrated, which ended, the anthem to that purpose composed by the dean of *St. Patrick's*, called *quam denuo exaltavit dominus coronam*, be sung as it here followeth.

Anthem

Anthem after the consecration.

Treble.

*Now that the Lord hath readvanc'd the crown,
Which thirst of spoil and frantic zeal threw down.*

Tenor.

*Now that the Lord the mitre has restor'd,
Which with the crown lay in the dust abhorr'd.*

Treble—Praise him ye kings } Chorus all
Tenor—Praise him ye priests } sing
Glory to Christ our high priest, highest king.

Treble.

May Judah's royal sceptre still shine clear,

Tenor.

May Aaron's holy rod still blossoms bear.

Treble and Tenor.

*Sceptre and rod rule still, and guide our land,
And those whom Gad anoints feel no rude hand;
May love, peace, plenty, wait on crown and chair,
And may both share in blessings as in care.*

Chorus.

*Angels look down, and joy to see,
Like that above, a monarchy.
Angels look down, and joy to see,
Like that above, an hierarchy.*

That

That while *veni creator* is singing, the bishops to be consecrated shall have their rochets and chimers put on; which done, the consecration ended, and the *anthem* and *te deum* sung, the communion is to follow, and after the communion the blessing to be pronounced by the lord primate.

That after the consecration ended, the whole procession do attend us to the primate his lodgings.

That the *lætificetur cor regis* be sung before the lord primate, as he goeth from the choir to the outward part of the church.

That in the return of his grace from the church; the procession be so altered, that the new consecrated archbishops and bishops, be disposed with the other bishops consecrators, according to the respective dignities of their sees, quality, and seniority of consecration.

Jo. Armacanus.

THE
P I L L A R S
O F
P R I E S T C R A F T
A N D
O R T H O D O X Y
S H A K E N.

As for the rending of the church, we have many reasons to think it is not that which ye labour to prevent, so much as the rending of your pontifical sleeves: That schism would be the sorest schism to you. MILTON.

Neither can religion receive any wound by disgrace thrown upon the prelates, since religion and they surely were never in such amity. They rather are the men who have wounded religion, and their stripes must heal her. IDEM.

V O L. III.

L O N D O N :

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MDCCLXVIII.

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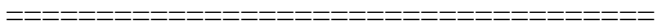
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A
L E T T E R
TO THE
Reverend Dr. S N A P E ;
Wherein the
A U T H O R I T Y
O F T H E
Christian Priesthood

I S M A I N T A I N ' D ;

The U N I N T E R R U P T E D S U C C E S -
S I O N of B I S H O P S from the Apo-
stles Days is lineally deduced ; and
the Cavils of H E R E T I C S and
F A N A T I C S are answer'd.

By a C U R A T E of W I L T S .

From the T H I R D E D I T I O N .

First Printed in the Year 1718.

L E T T E R

T O T H E

Reverend Dr. S N A P E,* &c.

Reverend SIR,

SINCE writing letters in print to a friend, is so much in fashion, I hope I shall not incur your displeasure, if I run in with the herd of those, who, following your footsteps, have with the utmost familiarity address'd themselves to their superiors: and, though but a country curate, presume to apply myself to you, who are at present one of the most renowned champions of our *distress'd church*, which has been so violently attack'd of late, by *men* whose *interest* as well as profession should have led them to defend *her*.

* These two letters to Dr. *Snape* have been generally ascribed to Bishop *Fleetwood*: and the late Dr. *Birch*, a good judge in these matters, told me that he always understood Bishop *Fleetwood* to have been the author; but that Dr. *Herring's* timidity made him omit them in the collection of the Bishop's works.

Holy Church
 We all see how ~~she~~ has been torn and man-
 gled of late, how her power hath been ques-
 tion'd, her honour debas'd, and her true gran-
 deur vilify'd ; and all this hath been done,
 only to make way for *carnal reason* and *bare*
religion ; as if power, honour and riches were
 no essential part of our church.

It is true, *reason* and *religion* are very good
 things, when locked up amongst the *Artana* of
 a church ; but when they come to be once pro-
 flituted to the hands of the *vulgar*, they are
 the most dangerous instruments of *its* ruin.
 Then will the *sheep* begin to judge of their
shepherds sermons, and calling loudly for their
Bibles, pretend to be their own interpreters ;
 and this detestable *licence* shall be commended
 under the specious name of *christian liberty*.
 Our great adversary the bishop of *Bangor*,
 hoping to get all the *fanatics* on his side, and
 thereby more effectually accomplish his perni-
 cious designs against *us*, has trump'd up this
 doctrine of *searching the scripture, and submit-*
ting our conscience to no man's direction. To
 support which *heresy*, he tells us, ' that no set
 ' of men (not even the clergy whom we very
 ' justly call the *church*) have any authority to
 ' direct the consciences of men ; that Christ is
 ' king in his own kingdom, and that no power
 ' on earth can add by-laws to the laws of
 ' Christ ;

' Christ ; and that to add sanctions, rewards,
 ' or punishments to his laws, is to dethrone
 ' Christ ; that *we* priests are not by *divine right*,
 ' but only a laudable *humane* institution ; and
 ' that our claim to our *sacerdotal powers* by
 ' an *uninterrupted succession* from the apostles,
 ' is a chimera ; that our excommunications are
 ' idle terrors of men ; and that the laity may
 ' go to heaven without our intervention,
 ' without *benefit of clergy*.' If this be not
 wresting out of our hands the very leading-
 strings of the laity, and at once destroying the
 power of the clergy, if this be not making the
church of Christ a Babel, and his kingdom a
 realm of confusion, I know not what is.
 Thus does a governor of our *church* shew
 himself less zealous for her, than the silver-
 smiths at *Ephesus* were for their *Diana* ; whilst
 they cry, *Great is the goddess of the Ephesians*,
 he cries, *Small is the power of the church of*
England. However since your great *self* are
 pleased to enter the lists against him, since
 you have been follow'd by such an able second
 as the dean of *Chichester*, and since Mr. *Law*
 has laid down his plan of *church power*, to the
 utter confusion of the new heresy ; I shall not
 fear to throw in some few of my answers
 to the bishop's arguments ; which I will ven-
 ture to say no one has handled with more
 freedom, nor declared themselves against with

more sincerity, nor has any one spoke out the sentiments of the orthodox priesthood with more christian zeal.

First then, the bishop affirms, *that our church has not any power to add by-laws to the laws of Christ.* I would fain know whether he doth not allow, that any little *body politic* hath a power to make *by-laws* for their own honour, profit or safety; if so, shall not our *church* or *clergy*, a *body* the most *politic* in the world, be permitted to have a poor privilege, which is not deny'd to the pettiest borrough, or to the meanest corporation? That our bishops, deans, archdeacons, and the rest of our brethren, whose revenues exceed those of all the *bodies corporate* in *England*, should not be admitted to an equality with any other sett of prophane laymen, who are stiled, *mayer, aldermen and common-council*, seems to me not only blasphemous, but even ridiculous to affirm. Oh! poor *church*, to what low ebb art thou reduced?

In the second place, the bishop affirms, *that to add sanctions of this world to the laws of Christ, is to act against Christ, for his kingdom is not of this world.* I must ask the bishop another question here, and that is, Whether in the time of Christ and his apostles, men were not afflicted, for their want of faith, and for their

their

their sins, by corporal and temporal punishments from heaven, such as *blindness, lameness, palsy, &c*? I think, from our Saviour's common phrase in curing these infirmities, *thy sins are forgiven thee*, that it plainly appears that these were temporal punishments for sin: and yet no one can affirm that these temporal punishments were a *bar* to the eternal ones. So now in the christian dispensation, corporal punishments and temporal discouragements may be annexed to the want of faith, and to the commission of particular sins, and yet no way interfere with the eternal chastisements reserved for sinners in *another world*. And indeed, as the punishment of sin here on earth has by the greatest divines been believed to be an alleviation of it hereafter, I cannot see but that christian charity and common humanity teach us to fall heavy upon all *infidels, schismatics and heretics*, and to persecute them with the utmost rigour out of mere good nature: at least we cannot blame those of our brethren that act upon so good a principle.

Thirdly, The bishop denies, *That any sect of men can have a power over other mens consciences, or that they can interpret the laws of Christ authoritatively for any one, for no church is infallible*. In answer to this assertion, I shall deal more sincerely with the prelate than any of his antagonists have done, and own at once,

that I think our church is *infallible*. And though at this moment you may think I say too much, yet I shall in its proper place prove that you have said the *same thing*, and then I am sure I need not fear my being in an error. To return to the thing in question. I readily agree with the bishop, that it would be nonsense in terms to say that a church that was *fallible* could act *infallibly*. Which if a church cannot do, she cannot pretend to impose her interpretation of Christ's laws upon others, because they may be in the right and she in the wrong. And indeed though no church but the *Roman* has claimed infallibility in words, yet none in the world but claims it in fact. To convince mankind of this truth, I defy any one to shew me an instance of a church, that hath acknowledged itself in an error. Did not the *Synod of Dort* proceed every whit as vehemently against the *minority* (which is in other words the *heretics*) as the *Council of Trent*? Indeed they had not so many engines of this world at their command, but they seemed to have a spirit to have set as many at work. I have known many worthy men who have believed the *infallibility* of a *general council*; nay all pious christians do entirely submit to the decrees of the four first *general councils*, as *infallible*. And why a *divine* of the church of *England*, may not al-

low

low the *convocation infallibility*, I know not. For my own part, I see no absurdity in allowing, that when an assembly of regularly ordained divines meet to establish a doctrinal point, there may be an infallible spirit present, directing the resolutions of the majority. Omitting all the cloud of witnesses, which I could bring from the fathers, from the councils, and from the pope's declarations, to evince this matter, I shall only mention that wise article in the decrees of the council of Trent, of which father Paul gives us an account: That all seculars ought to receive that doctrine of faith which is given them by the church, without disputing or thinking farther about it. And among the Theses propounded by the Jesuits to be maintained in their public hall at Clermont, there were these two remarkable ones.

Thesis XIX.

*Christum nos
ita caput agno-
scimus, ut illius
regimen, dum in
cæli abiit, pri-
mum Petro dein
de successoribus
ejus commiserit.
& eandem quan-
ipse habuit infal-*

Thesis XIX.

Thus we acknowledge Christ to be the head of the church, that at his departure into heaven, when he was no longer to govern his church in person, he committed the government of it to his apostle Peter, and then to his successors, in whom he lodged the same powers even

libilitatem concesserit, quoties ex cathedra loquuntur. | of infallibility, which were vested in himself, as often as they speak from the chair.

Thesis XX.

Thesis XX.

Datur ergo in ecclesia controversiarum fidei iudex infallibilis, etiam extra concilium generale. | There is therefore in the church an infallible judge of faith, even without a general council.

And now give me leave, worthy doctor, to quote a paragraph out of your * first letter to the bishop, wherein you thus acknowledge Christ to be the head of the church. *At his departure into heaven, when he was no longer to govern his church in person, he provided for the good government of it by others, whom he commissioned to bear rule and authority over his subjects, to be his vicegerents, to act in his name and stead, and to perpetuate a succession of men, thro' all the succeeding ages in the world, in whom the same powers should be lodged; and tho' he made none of them infallible, &c.*

Now tho' at first sight this may seem to be a total renouncing any title to *infallibility*, yet I shall in its proper place, shew that you mean

* P. 19.

nothing less. This therefore may by an *incurious* reader be taken for a transcript from the *ghostly fathers* above-mentioned, but to a critical eye will appear to be a great improvement on their narrow scheme, which confines the *succession* to one *armed chair*. A poor local business! If we understand one another, this, Dr. *Snape*, is your meaning, That when *Christ* went to heaven, he provided for the good government of his church by others, that is, by his twelve apostles, (at the head of whom, he placed St. *Peter*) whom he commissioned to expound his laws, to bear rule and authority over his subjects, (even over our fellow-subjects * the fallen angels, whom they often cast forth and dispossess'd of their fastnesses) to be his vicegerents to act in his name and stead; a power which they could never have presumed to exercise, had they not for that purpose been made *infallible* by the *Holy Ghost*. However, as they were not made immortal, it was necessary for the preservation of the church, that when these apostles went to heaven themselves, they should leave others in their room to perform their functions in the church, that so there might be a perpetual succession of men, thro' all succeeding ages, in whom the same powers (of infallibility, vicegerency, and the like) were to be

* *Snape's* second letter, p. 43.

lodged: Datur ergo infallibilis controversiarum fidei iudex. That is, we have *infallibility* somewhere, and some how or other *lodged* in our church. For what signifies an *uninterrupted succession* from the *apostles*, if their *successors* are not vested with the SAME POWERS which they had? But why do I call them *successors*, since they can have no right to be *styled* such, unless they have the SAME POWERS? Will any one say that a *doge* is or can be properly said to *succeed* a *monarch*? Though he should pretend to sit on the same throne, and to put on the same dress and pageantry with the king that preceded; yet if he does not succeed to the *legal authority and power*, a man shall as soon persuade me that *Æsop's beast* in the lion's skin was what he pretended to be, as that such a *doge* can continue the *succession* of a *monarchy*. So that to deny *infallibility* to our church, is at once to destroy its whole title to an *uninterrupted succession from the apostles*; it is taking away the *divine right of episcopacy*; it is diminishing or rather (I fear) abrogating all church authority, by founding it upon the poor *secular basis* of a decent *human institution*. This may serve to shew the danger and folly of disclaiming *infallibility*.

I confess at the end of that *paragraph*, which I already cited out of your *first letter* to the
 bishop,

bishop, you say *that he* (Christ) *made none of them* (the apostles successors) *infallible*. This the world has understood to be saying, *that they had and that they had not the same powers with the apostles*, in the same breath. Such expressions in the *bishop* must indeed have pass'd for gross nonsense, because that he, being unacquainted with our *church-logick*, could not have brought himself off. But I will undertake that, thro' the help of some *nice* distinctions, you shall appear very consistent, with all *us* true sons of the church, and which is harder yet with your *own self*. For it is plain, that you do not any where assert that the *successors* of the *apostles* are *not infallible*, but that *he* (Christ) *made none of them so*. Now every one knows that *infallibility* was the gift of the *Holy Ghost*, a considerable time after *Christ* was ascended into heaven. And since we are, none of us, *Arians*, (as many of the bishop's friends are) but do allow a distinction of persons in the Trinity, it is evident that you affirm a truth, when you say, *Christ made none of them infallible*. Thus may you see how, by a subtle distinction kept in *Petto* till a time of need, we can avoid the charge of nonsense and contradiction. A liberty never communicated to the laity; as being a right only annexed to the indelible character. And indeed, we seldom fail of making use of our *privilege*; for when

when we write for *protestantism* we never forget to *tack a popish salvo*, and when we write for *popery*, we put in a *protestant salvo*. In which art of writing, our good friend the *dean* has discovered a most admirable talent. From what has been said, it manifestly appears, that you never really declared against *infallibility*, as the generality of readers thought you did. But, worthy doctor, your seeming *salvo*, I confess, was very prudently subjoined to your *claim of apostolical powers*, that thereby (as you * term it) our *claim* might appear the more INNOCENT. For those superficial readers, the laity, should we be so imprudent as to claim *fullness of power* and *infallibility* at the same time, (tho' the one does necessarily include the other) might be so alarmed and provoked, as to deny us both. No, Sir, let us but get our power once confirmed, and we shall not ask any body leave to be infallible. For we see that the power of our secret friend the *pope*, does not so much consist in his *infallibility*, as his *infallibility* is built on his *power*. Thus, Sir, tho' our *church* politics utterly forbid us to speak out, unless we are drove to a pinch; yet you yourself, as well as all other true churchmen, do know, that the *apostles* left behind them a *succession* of men vested with the

* Second letter, p. 51.

same powers with themselves, one of which we are sure was *infallibility*; and tho' we do not think it expedient to mention the word (which like *Balaam's* angel might open the mouth of our beast the laity) yet tacitly we claim no less. And therefore I cannot think the bishop has acted a fair part in bringing an argument against *us* which is only founded upon an opinion that we dare not speak our mind freely, and support our just claim to *authoritative power in interpreting scriptures*, by owning our *infallibility*, which that learned *prelate* knew was the only thing that could entitle us to it.

The last argument which the bishop has urged against our *church's* interest, which I shall take notice of; is, *that the notion of an uninterrupted succession of bishops is not to be supported from any words of scripture, and is not to be made out in history; and that 'twould be wicked to make such a nicety a thing on which our salvation should depend.* I answer to this, I was once determined to have produced * those many *texts* out of scripture, which you affirm that you could bring to evince the contrary. Now as I knew that you could not mean the common edition of the scriptures, I looked into an old bible in my study; which unluckily hap-

* First letter, p. 20.

pened to be that heretical one translated by *Tindal*; in which I could not even find the word *church*, much less any account of *vicegerents* and *uninterrupted successions* in it. This plainly convinced me that he did not understand *Greek*; for had he skilled it as well as *Dr. Sherlock* and some of us do, he would never have rendered the word ἐκκλησία *congregation*, but *convocation* or *church*, nor Διάκονος *ministers*, but *lords* or *rulers*, nor Παῦλος δαλός τῆς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, *Paul the servant of Jesus Christ*, but *Paul Christ's vicegerent*: For as the dean very rightly observes Δαλός does not always signify a *servant* or *slave*, but may for the good of the church be translated, as his holiness's motto *Servus Servorum*, which signifies *the lord of lords*. However these gross errors of *Tindal* are amply made up by the pious and ingenious editors of the *Rhemish* testament (which I am confident is the same, which you † brag of) where we can find to our great consolation, not only the words *church*, *rulers*, *vicegerents*, and *uninterrupted successions*; but also a number of other wholesome texts, with very learned notes, as pat to our scheme of *church-government*, as if you and I had written them ourselves. Now, reverend Sir,

† Second letter, p. 42.

Since this bible seems in a peculiar manner to belong to you ; being myself far your inferior, I shall not presume to look for *harts in your royalty*, but leave you to start those many *texts* which you say you can find ; and I doubt not but you will play *text* against *text*, as much to your credit, as formerly you did *bishop* against *bishop*. Thus relying wholly upon your performance in *text-finding*, I shall proceed to an historical argument of no small importance to our cause.

I shall shew the bishop (notwithstanding his many insinuations to the contrary) that we have at this very hour, a most authentic list of *successors perpetuated in an uninterrupted succession down from one of the apostles* to these our days. I will be so ingenuous as to confess that if any man can overthrow the credit of the LIST, which I here present my reader with, that then our *succession* falls at once to the ground, this being the only *one* now extant in the *church*. I design in my *catalogue* frequently to subjoin some remarkable instance of *infallibility* in the *vicegerent* ; and shall also fairly mention every *schism*, where two or more claimed the *succession*

cession at the same time, and mark out the man whom I prefer. Farther, reverend doctor, I can assure you that there is no one fact related here, for which I cannot cite as my authors, either *Platina*, *Baronius*, *Onuphrius*, *Concil. Constant*, *Bale*, *Agrippa*, *Wesselus*, or father *Paul*.



A

L I S T

O F

Christ's Vicegerents,

W I T H

An account of many of their acts of infallibility for the good government of the church.

(467)
A. D. 44. Schism first. St. Peter and St. Paul.

THE list of our vicegerents does unfortunately begin with a *schism*, for Paul as anti-pope did *withstand* St. Peter to his face. And although without question St. Peter be our man, yet was he not a *pope* after our own hearts, for he did not *bear rule*, and besides was a married man.

57. 2. Linus.

Historians have very much question'd whether there ever was a bishop of this name, which would make our *succession* doubtful, but that we are sure this difficulty was started by hereticks.

78 A. D. 67. 3. *Cletus.*

Also called *Anacletus*; he did not live long enough in his office, to leave many marks of his infallibility behind him.

91 68. 4. *Clement*

Being banished to an island, where two thousand christians were hewing marble, furnish'd them with a spring of fresh water by a miracle.

99 84. 5. *Anacletus*

Ordered priests not to let their beards nor hair to grow.

100 96. 6. *Evaristus*

Ordained that priests should be honoured and shaven; and that no accusation of the laity should be receiv'd against a bishop.

109. 7. *Alexander*

Order'd that the people should be married by none but priests.

119 117. 8. *Sixtus I.*

Invented holy water, and order'd it to be blest with salt, and sprinkled, in order to chace away and coerce the *rebellious subjects* of Christ, the *devils*. He first brought up the use of linen surplices.

127. 9. *Telesphorus*

Enacted that no layman should presume to touch the garment of a clergyman.

A. D. 138. 10. *Hyginus*

Brought in fasting in *Lent*.

142. 11. *Pius I.*

Found out *chrysm*.

154 153. 12. *Anicetus*

Condemned St. *Polycarp* for his wearing long hair.

163. 13. *Concordius Soterus*

Decreed all marriages to be null without the benediction of a priest.

177 174. 14. *Eleutherus*

Was a great lover of sweet-breads.

183 186. 15. *Victor I.*

Excommunicated the *Western* churches for not keeping *Lent*, at the same time when he did.

201 198. 16. *Zephyrinus*

Order'd that the wine at the communion should not be consecrated (as before it had been) in *wood* or *glass*, but in *gold* or *silver*: Also that no *bishop* accused by his *patriarch* or *metropolitan* should be condemned, but by the *apostolic see*.

219 218. 17. *Calistus*

Died of a fistula.

226. 18. *Urban I.*

Invented the form of consecrating churchyards; and ordained that lands and farms might be given to *God*, but ought to be divided among the *clergy*.

26 *The Pillars of PRIESTCRAFT*

A. D. 231. 19. *Calphurnius*

Order'd psalms and mattins to be sung in churches, to drive away the evil spirits that troubled poor people in their graves.

35 236. 20. *Anterus*

Wrote a legend.

237. 21. *Fabianus*

Order'd that *christm* used in the Lord's supper should be renewed once a year, and the old burned.

251. 22. *Schism second, Cornelius, Novatianus.*

Cornelius was certainly a true successor: for with exorcisms and holy water, he drove all the rats out of a church near *Ravenna*.

253. 23. *Lucius*

Ordained that heretics should not be re-baptized.

255. 24. *Stephanus*

Ordained that heretics should be re-baptized.

257. 25. *Sixtus II.*

Invented copes, and other vestments.

260. 26. *Dionysius*

Allotted to every minister his own church, parish and salary.

271. 27. *Felix*

Ordered masses to be sung in churches for the dead martyrs.

A. D. 275. 28. *Eutychianus*

Ordered all fruits, and especially beans and grapes, to be consecrated upon the altar; he likewise would have martyrs buried in purple.

283. 29. *Caius*

Like an honest pope, ordered that no layman should commence a suit against a clergyman.

296. 30. *Marcellinus*

Sacrificed to *Hercules, Jupiter and Saturn*, in the temple of *Vesta*.

308 304. 31. *Marcellus*

Divided *Rome* into twenty parishes; was groom of the stables to *Maxentius*, in which office he dy'd.

309. 32. *Eusebius*

Ordered that no bishop should be sued.

311. 33. *Miltiades*

Ordained that no fasts should be kept on *Tuesday*, or *Sunday*.

314. 34. *Silvester*.

Under his administration, and by his approbation, *Anthony the hermit* set up the monastic course of life. He was the first pope that wore a crown of gold.

335. 35. *Marcus*

Ordered that the *Nicene creed* should be sung in churches.

A. D. 337. 36. *Julius I.*

Censured the *Eastern* bishops for calling a council at *Antioch*, without his leave; order'd that no clergyman should plead before a lay judge, or be sentenced by him. He was the first that confirmed the *Athanasian* creed.

355. 37. *Schism third. Liberius, Felix I.*

Liberius was by the church esteemed as the true pope: tho' he condemned the *Athanasian* creed, which his infallible predecessor had confirmed.

361. 38. *Felix II.*

Instituted plumb-porridge at *Christmas*. He ran with the *Arians*, but held with the *Athanasians*.

366. 39. *Schism fourth. Damasus, Ursin.*

Damasus was an adulterer, but *Ursin* was an heretic. So that the former must by Dr. *Snape* and me be allowed the best successor: for heresy in an infallible chair is infinitely worse than adultery.

385. 40. *Siricius*

Ordered that whosoever should marry a widow, or a second wife, should lose his benefice.

398. 41. *Anastasius*

Granted a pardon from sin for five hundred days to any, that should say a prayer of his composing, and beginning *Jesu Christi, &c.*

A. D. 402. 42. Innocent I.

Ordered a fast in the church every Saturday.

416. 43. Zozinus

Ordained the blessing of wax-tapers upon Easter-eve; and confirmed the decrees of the council of Carthage, or in other words the Pelagian heresy.

419. Schism fifth. 44. Boniface, Eulalius.

Boniface was the true vicegerent, for he ordered that no Roman should touch the consecrated pall or incense; and also that no servant or debtor should be admitted amongst the clergy.

423. 45. Celestine I. *Like the D. of Edessa*

Was an excellent fidler.

432. 46. Sixtus III.

Got a nun with child.

446. 47. Leo I.

Invented processions on saints days, and ornaments for their tombs.

461. 48. Hilarius

Built almost fifty new churches, and invented the litany.

467. 49. Simplicius

Found, by his followers means, the bones of Elisha, the body of St. Barnabas, and the gospel of St. Matthew, written in his own hand.

hand. He also decreed that no clergyman should hold a benefice of a layman.

A. D. 483. 50. *Felix III.*

Ordained that churches should only be consecrated by bishops.

492. 51. *Gelasius I.*

Excommunicated the emperor *Anastasius*, and anathematized the king of the *Vandals*. He regulated the canon of scripture to his own fancy, declaring it heresy for laymen to judge of it.

496. 52. *Anastasius II.*

Excommunicated the emperor *Anastasius* for being an *Eutychian*, when he himself (for being one) was afterwards forsaken by his whole clergy. He died by voiding his bowels in a privy-house.

498. 53. *Schism sixth. Symmachus, Lawrence, Peter II.*

Symmachus, by the assistance of a hundred and twenty bishops with their clergy, in arms, got the day from his other two rivals.

514. 54. *Hormisdas*

Left behind him many natural children.

523. 55. *John I.*

Was a hearty friend to the *Arians*.

526. 56. *Felix IV.*

Invented extreme unction, and for the benefit of the clergy, divided the chancel from the church.

A. D.

A. D. 530. 57. *Schism seventh. Boniface II. Dioscorus.*

Boniface was the right pope, for he recanted his *Arian* notions in order to qualify himself for the chair. But his antagonist was a *Simoniack*.

532. 58. *John II.*

Was a great projector.

534. 59. *Agapetus*

Was a great friend to *Theodatus*, who murdered that miracle of the age, *Amalasuintha*, queen of the *Goths*.

535. 60. *Schism eighth. Silverius, Vigilius.*

Silverius was natural son to *Hormisdas*, but a heretic; we shall therefore esteem *Vigilius* as our true successor to *St. Peter*, since he was only guilty of perjury; a small fault now a *shys* in a churchman.

555. 61. *Pelagius I.*

Poisoned *Vigilius*, and decreed that the secular arm ought to be called in to suppress *heretics* and *schismatics*.

561. 62. *John III.*

Established the custom of worshipping the bones of saints.

575. 63. *Benedict I.*

Died of grief.

572. 64. *Pelagius II.*

Disputed with the bishop of *Constantinople* against the resurrection of the body.

say sent St August had vast mounds to buy
A. D. 590. 65. Gregory I.

Invented purgatory, the invocation of saints, illustrations on the purification of the virgin, stations and pilgrimages; caused all priests to put away their wives, but soon condemned this infallible decree, when upon draining one fish-pond, he found the heads of six thousand infants there.

604. 66. *Sabinianus*

Opposed all that his infallible predecessor had done; and was torn in pieces by the people of Rome, for keeping up a vast hoard of corn in a time of famine.

606. 67. *Boniface III.*

Obtained the title of *Universal Bishop* from the usurper *Phocas*, upon his approving and confirming his title. He began to use the modest phrase of *Volumus et Jubernus*.

606. 68. *Boniface IV.*

Joined with *Phocas* as his predecessor had done, and thereby obtained great privileges for the church. With these two *Bonifaces* properly began the *papal primacy*.

612. 69. *Deodatus*

Made a law that no woman should marry a man, whose father had been her godfather, as being too near of kin.

616. 70. *Boniface V.*

Made the church an asylum for the greatest villanies, by privileging all thieves, murderers,

&c. that should take sanctuary in any church or chapel.

A. D. 622. 71. *Honorius I.*

Was a *Monothelite Heretic*, and stands condemned as such by pope *Agatho*, by the sixth, seventh and eighth general councils, and as such was excommunicated by *Leo II.*

637. 72. *Severinus*

Was a pious charitable man, but a bad pope; for he not only did nothing to enlarge the power of the church, but even sacrilegiously permitted its treasures to be diminished.

638. 73. *John IV.*

Worthy doctor, you will doubtless be pleased with this pope, who was famous for his love of black-puddings, notwithstanding the decrees of the council of *Jerusalem*, held by pope *James*, at which our first *vicegerent* pope *Peter* also assisted.

641. 74. *Theodorus*

Took the bones of *St. Primus*, and *St. Fellucanus* out of their graves, set them in silver, and left them in *St. Stephen's* chapel to be worshipped by all good catholics.

647. 75. *Martinus I.*

Olympius being sent to the church to seize him, was struck blind just in the instant when he was going to execute his orders. And from this pope's time, the chain has claimed

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the power of striking people blind, as often as it is for the interest of the church, that they should not see. This man ordered priests to have their pollis shaven.

A. D. 654. 76. *Eugenius*

Was so charitable and so humble a man, and did so little to augment the power of the church, that were it not to keep our *succession perpetuated*, you and I, doctor, would scarce own him for a *viceroyent*. This sad man ordered that bishops should have prisons to confine disorderly priests in, whereas we know prisons ought only to be made for the laity.

657. 77. *Vitalianus*

Was the first that introduced organs into the church, as a mechanical help to internal devotion, lest men should pray without intenseness of heat.

672. 78. *Deodatus II.*

Built churches, and introduced the custom of fasting upon fish in *Lent*.

676. 79. *Dono.*

Paved St. Peter's porch with marble, and wished he could have done it with the skulls of *heretics*.

679. 80. *Agatho.*

Ordained that all popes decrees should be received as if they were uttered by St. Peter's own mouth.

A. D. 682. 81. Leo II.

He set the church service to music.

684. 82. Benedict II.

Obtained of the emperor, that popes should be chosen by the clergy, without needing his confirmation. He first assumed the title of *Christ's vicegerent*.

685. 83. John V.

Lay'd a-bed all his popedom, and was famous for writing a book concerning the dignity of the *Pall*.

686. 84. Conon

Poison'd himself, being, as some affirm, distracted.

687. 85. Sergius I.

His true name was *Bocco di Porco*, or *Swine-Snout*; but not liking his name, he introduced the fashion of the popes changing their names, which has continued ever since. He was a notorious adulterer.

701. 86. John VI.

Repaired three churches.

705. 87. John VII.

Refused to call a synod to settle some points of faith then in dispute. He was a bastard to *John VI.* and like *Nebuchadnezzar*, every where erected images, and made the people fall down and worship them.

707. 88. Sisinnius

Died of the gout.

A. D. 707. 89. Constantine

Prevailed with *Theodore* the emperor's admiral in *Italy*, to seize upon the archbishop of *Ravenna*, for denying the power of the chair, and to burn out his eyes. This was the first pope that offered his feet to be kissed.

716. 90. *Gregory II.*

Raised a rebellion against the emperor *Leo Isaurus*, because he caused images in churches to be pulled down.

731. 91. *Gregory III.*

Made a golden image of the *Virgin Mary*, which he ordered to be worshipped on pain of excommunication.

741. 92. *Zachary.*

Excommunicated *Virgilius*, as a detestable heretic, for asserting that there were *antipodes*.

752. 93. *Stephen II.*

Was pope three days.

752. 94. *Stephen III.*

Was the first pope that was carried on men's shoulders. He added the exarchat of *Ravenna*, to the patrimony of *St. Peter*, as knowing that *Christ's kingdom* may sometimes be of *this world*.

757. 95. *Schism ninth. Paul II. Theophilus, Constantine, Philip.*

Paul was the true vicegerent. He wrote a book in defence of what is commonly called idolatry, calling images the *Layman's Kalender*.

A. D. 768. 96. *Stephen IV.*

Assembled a council at *Rome* to assert the honour of images, against the *Iconoclasti* (image-breakers) of the *East*.

772. 97. *Hadrian I.*

Established image-worship, at the second council of *Nice*. Covered the poor fisherman *Peter* with silver and gold, and added *Spoletto* and *Beneventum* to his patrimony.

796. 98. *Leo III.*

Was set upon by conspirators, who not only whipped his breech, but also plucked out his eyes and his tongue, which (as the *Legendary* says) were so well restored to him next day by the apostles, that he pronounced sentence on those that did it, and saw them executed.

816. 99. *Stephen V.*

Lived but seven months infallible.

817. 100. *Paschal I.*

Joined in an assassination plot, in which many of the emperor *Lewis's* great men were murdered in the *Lateran*. He first founded the college of cardinals, who were at first but parish priests in *Rome*, but soon became mates for kings.

824. 101. *Schism tenth. Eugenius II. Zinzinus.*

Eugenius was the right pope, for he excommunicated all that did not own him as such.

A. D. 827. 102. *Valentino.*

Was choaked with a fish-bone, forty days after his election. He was too good a man to be a good pope.

828. 103. *Gregory IV.*

Instituted the feast of *All-Saints.*

844. 104. *Sergius II.*

Removed a great many saints bones to better graves.

847. 105. *Leo VI.*

Introduced *Peter-pence.*

855. 106. *John VIII.*

By some fanatics, called *Pope Joan.* She was an *English* woman, *Gilberta* by name; and after having disguised herself in man's apparel, she travelled to *Athens* with her lover: where she became so great a proficient in learning, that all the clergy looked upon her as the ablest divine in the whole church. She was at length chosen *pope*, and after she had conferred orders, made *abbots*, ordained *bishops*, *priests*, and *deacons*, consecrated churches, baptized infants, and played the *pope* for one year, four months, and four days, this *literal whore of Babylon*, between the *Colossian theatre*, and *St. Clements*, fell in labour, was delivered of a *bastard-child*, and died on the spot. For this reason, succeeding *popes* were placed in a *porphyry-chair* with a hole in the bottom, and immediately after the election, their

genitals

genitals were to be searched by the youngest woman. Now, though almost fifty different authors confirm this story, yet we true churchmen must insist upon it, that she was a true vicegerent, no woman, but a regular priest, and rightful successor of St. Peter. For if she were not so, we may chance not to have one bishop or canonical priest in all England. For who knows but the present sort may be such as were ordained by others, who were ordained by men, whose ordination originally came from our vicegerent. Whose right and qualification therefore if we should be so imprudent as to deny, we might at once destroy the whole divine right of episcopacy, and reduce the poor church of England to such a pass, as to stand merely upon the secular basis of an act of parliament.

857. 107. *Benedict III. Anastasius III.*

Benedict is the man whom I prefer, who was himself buried by his own direction before St. Peter's threshold, an honour St. Peter had never received from any pope before.

858. 108. *Nicholas I.*

Introduced the fashion of praying in an unknown tongue, and for the honour of God made every one address themselves to him in *Latin*.

A. D. 867. 109. *Hadrian II.*

Was put into the chair by a *faction* at *Rome*, and then excommunicated the emperor for not owning him immediately.

872. 110. *John IX.*

Took it into his head to dispose of crowns, and anointed *Lewis* emperor, for which he was forced to fly; and afterwards to retain the chair, submitted to *Charles* the III^d, and anointed him emperor.

882. 111. *Martin II.*

He was only given to *forcery*; so long as he abstained from *heresy*, we may receive him for a *vicegerent*.

884. 112. *Hadrian III.*

By a decree deprived the emperors of that right, which they had always claimed and enjoyed, of electing the popes.

885. 113. *Stephen VI.*

Was esteemed the best chess player of his time. Shewed himself a great friend to *witches*, *adulterers*, and likewise to the church.

890. 114. *Schism twelfth. Formosus, Sergius III.*

Formosus obtained the chair by *bribery*, and by force obliged his rival to fly out of *Italy*.

895. 115. *Boniface VI.*

Cardinal *Baronius* affirms that this man was **not** canonically chosen. Alas! doctor, either

we must differ from a cardinal (which we do not care to do) or we must give up our uninterrupted succession.

A. D. 895. 116. *Stephen VII.*

Dug up the body of his predecessor, *Formosus*, to try him for heresy; and having convicted his *infallibility*, cut off the three fingers of his right hand, wherewith he used to give blessing, and to consecrate.

897. 117. *Romanus*

Condemned his infallible predecessor for his barbarity to *Formosus*.

897. 118. *Theodorus*

Restored all the decrees of *Formosus*, which *Stephen* had abrogated. Which of their *infallibilities* was in an error, we will not here determine.

897. 119. *John X.*

Called a council to condemn all *Stephen's* decrees.

899. 120. *Benedict IV.*

Was pope but five months.

The church was without any vicegerent four years, which was a sad thing.

903. 121. *Schism thirteenth. Leo V.*

Christopher.

Christopher unpoped *Leo*, after he had governed the church for forty days; upon which the poor man broke his heart and died.

A. D.

A. D. 904. 122. *Sergius IV.*

Unpoped *Christopher*; kept *Marozio*, a noble woman, as his whore; and lastly instituted the bearing of candles at the feast of the purification, which from thence has been called *Candlemas-day*.

911. 123. *Anastafius IV.*

Was a quiet man, and did nothing either good or bad during his whole pontificate.

912. 124. *Lando*

Was an admirer of salt-fish and eggs, and very famous for fasting.

913. 125. *John XI.*

The bastard of *Sergius*, and much versed in the art of war.

928. 126. *Leo VI.*

Being thrown into prison, at the end of six months, his christian patience being quite worn out, he died of grief, some say of poison.

928. 127. *Stephen VIII.*

By some is called the VIIth. Was a peaceable man, and did nothing for the good of the church.

930. 128. *John XII.*

Another of *Sergius's* bastards, and a notorious friend to reliques. He poisoned *Leo* and *Stephen*, his predecessors; and being caught in adultery, was slain by an impudent layman, that said he was the husband to his holiness's mistress.

A. D. 935. 129. *Leo VII.*

Was a great patron of monks and friars.

939. 130. *Stephen IX.*

Was all his time busied in civil wars.

943. 131. *Marinus.*

All that's remarkable of him, is that some writers call him *Martin III.*

946. 132. *Agapetus II.*

Was the first that instituted music at *Vespers.*

956. 133. *John XIII.*

Was accused in a synod before the emperor *Otho*, for having put out the eyes of some of his cardinals, plucking out the tongues of others, cutting off the hands, feet, fingers, noses, and genitals of others: for ordaining deacons (to perpetuate our succession) in a stable, for making boys bishops for money, for ravishing both virgins and pilgrims, and lastly for calling upon the devil for assistance at dice, and drinking to his health. For these spiritual acts of *vicegerency*, the emperor set him aside, and placed *Leo* in his stead. But no sooner was the emperor gone from *Rome*, than *John* returned, drove *Leo* out, and repossessed the chair. In which he continued to act as *vicegerant*, till being caught in bed with another man's wife, he was like his predecessor *John XII.* slain by the husband in the very act of adultery.

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A. D. 963. 134. *Schism fourteenth. Leo VIII.
Benedict V.*

Leo like a true pope call'd for assistance from the *secular arm*, which seized upon his rival, and made him end his days in a prison.

965. 135. *John XIV.*

Invented the blessing and baptizing of bells, which, before his time, were unhallowed things.

972. 136. *Dono II.*

Was a lazy pope, and a great eater, which is all that we hear of his holiness.

972. 137. *Benedict VI.*

Was imprisoned, and afterwards strangled in his prison, which *Platina* affirms was much too gentle a death for him.

972. 138. *Boniface VII.*

Came to the popedom by two murders, that of *Benedict*, and that of *John*, a deacon that opposed him, whose eyes he first plucked out, and then killed him. This vicegerent alas! stole all the church-treasure.

975. 139. *Benedict VII.*

Lived a whole *Lent* upon almonds, raisins and milk.

983. 140. *John XV.*

Died in a gaol for want of necessaries, having been thrown into that place by the people of *Rome*, whom he had most violently oppressed.

A. D. 985. 141. *John XVI.*

Sold the church-plate and jewels to enrich his kindred, whose example hath been for the most part followed ever since.

995. 142. *John XVII.*

Baronius questions much, if there ever was such a pope; but you and I, doctor, will not permit a popish cardinal to rob us of a *successor*; for if he does not know the church's interest, we do.

996. 143. *Schism fifteenth. Gregory V.*
John XVIII.

Gregory was the right man, who invented the ringing the little bell before mass. I cannot deny that *John* had some claim to the chair, for *Platina* says he was a thief and a robber.

998. 144. *Silvester II.*

Was a great necromancer: he set up a *brazen head*, which he consulted, as many catholics have done since. One day, as he was officiating at high mass, at *St. Cross of Jerusalem at Rome*, those rebellious subjects of Christ the devils took his vicegerent away, and he was never heard of more.

1003. 145. *John XIX.*

Is looked upon by the historians as no *Pope* at all, but is always counted one by true churchmen, who are determined never to give up the divine right of bishops. He is said to have been an excellent magician.

A. D. 1003. 146. *John XX.*

Till his time the people of *Rome* always chose their own *pope*: but this man took that privilege out of their hands, and vested it in the clergy, in whom it has ever since continued to be *jure divino*.

1009. 147. *Sergius V.*

Commonly called IV. He was a *Pythagorean*, and forbid all his clergy eating beans: He was the first *vicegerent* of the *prince of peace*, that consecrated swords.

1012. 148. *Benedict VIII.*

Wrote an encomium on the monastic life, was married, and died, he and his family of the plague.

1024. 149. *John XXI.*

Platina and others affirm he never was in holy orders; but since he ordained *bishops*, *priests* and *deacons*, we might as well give into the story of *Pope Joan*, as allow this man to have been a *lay-vicegerent*.

1033. 150. *Schism sixteenth.* *Benedict IX.*

Silvester III. 151. *Gregory VI.*

Benedict was a *sorcerer*, *Silvester* a *sodomite*, and *Gregory* an *usurer*. Three persons so well gifted, that I am at a stand to determine who had the best claim. To avoid mistakes, let us join the three together, and we may affirm that amongst them, they made up one well qualify'd *pope*.

A. D. 1047. 152. *Clement II.*

Did nothing remarkable besides making all the people in *Rome* perjure themselves, a thing commonly practised by divines.

1048. 153. *Damasus II.*

Poisoned his predecessor, and enjoyed the chair but three and twenty days after.

1049. 154. *Leo IX.*

Invented the useful doctrine of transubstantiation; and to make the absurdity swallow'd, gave out that Christ and he had many personal conversations.

1055. 155. *Victor II.*

Excommunicated many of his clergy for fornication, by whom he was poisoned as a tyrannical vicegerent.

1057. 156. *Schism seventeenth. Stephen X.
Benedict X.*

Stephen was our right successor, for he sentenced a man to death for saying *St. Peter* did not die at *Rome*.

1059. 157. *Nicholas II.*

Excommunicated and persecuted all those that denied transubstantiation, and made *Berengarius* recant his errors, which were the same tenets, that the church of *England* now holds.

*A.D. 1061. 158. Schism eighteenth. Alexander II.
Honorius II.*

Alexander^{II}, like a true head of the church, deprived all laicks of the right of investiture to sacred functions.

*1073: 159. Schism nineteenth. Gregory VII.
Clement III.*

Gregory (by others called *Hildebrand*) made his way to that dignity by poisoning five of his predecessors; excommunicated *Henry IV.* and made him wait bareheaded and barefoot three days, before he would readmit him into the church.

*1086. 160. Schism twentieth. Victor III.
Clement III.*

Victor excommunicated *Henry IV.*^{IV} as his predecessor had done, and was poisoned in a chalice for his pains.

1088. 161. Urbanus II.

Made a decree that no layman should give an ecclesiastical benefice. From his quarrelsome temper was nicknam'd *Turbanus*.

*1099. 162. Schism twenty-first. Paschal II.
Guibert, Alberto d'Atella, Frederick, Maginulphus.*

Paschal was the true pope, and had been a creature of *Gregory VII.* He made a league with the emperor *Henry IV.* and confirmed it with the most solemn oaths; but no sooner

was

was Henry gone out of Italy, when he revoked all that he had done, and excommunicated him; nay, and made him wait at his door bare-foot, before he would recall the excommunication.

1118. 163. Schism twenty-second. Gelasius II.
Gregory VIII.

Gelasius was the true successor, to whose piety the world owes the foundation of the knights templars.

1119. 164. Calistus II.

Decreed that no lousy person should enter the church, and declared it was adultery for a bishop to forsake his see; by which we may understand who *my lady bishop* is.

1124. 165. Schism twenty-third. Honorius II.
Celestin II.

Honorius, to manifest his sincere love to the church, put to death *Arnulphus*, a low-church preacher in those times, for inveighing against the pride and usurped power of the Romish church.

1130. 166. Schism twenty-fourth. Innocent II.
Anacletus II. Victor IV.

Innocent doubtless was the truest vicegerent, for he ordained that no layman should presume ever to lay violent hands on a clergyman.

A. D. 1143. 167. *Celestin III.*

Commonly called II. Was the first inventor of that christian method of cursing by *bell, book and candle.*

1144. 168. *Lucius II,*

Brought up the orthodox custom of eating pancakes and fritters on a *Shrove-Tuesday.*

1145. 169. *Eugenius III.*

Repaired seven churches.

1153. 170. *Anastafius IV.*

Converted the *Pantheon*, where the heathen deities were worshipped, into the *Maria Rotunda*, where popish saints are prayed to.

1154. 171. *Hadrian IV.*

From a beggar at *St. Albans*, came to be pope; and being thus mounted, to try how well he could ride, made the emperor *Frederick Barbarossa* hold his stirrup, after which he excommunicated him, because he would not hold the empire as a fief or tributary to the pope. He absolved all the subjects of *William* king of *Sicily* from their allegiance; and, in a word, was a true friend to the church.

1159. 172. *Schism twenty fifth.* *Alexander III.*

Victor IV. *Paschal III.*

Alexander was my man, for he trod upon the emperor *Frederick's* head, saying, *Super aspidem et basiliscum ambulabis*; the emperor (as if he had been tutored by the bishop of *Bangor*)

Bangor) answered, *Non tibi sed Petro*, that is, You cannot pretend to that power tho' Peter might, who was an apostle, and infallible; to which the pope replied, (as if you and I had been by to advise him) *et mihi et Petro*, the same powers are lodged in me as were in Peter.

A. D. 1181. 173. Lucius III.

Attempted to abolish the whole constitution at Rome, and bring it into subjection to himself; in which he succeeded so far, as to destroy the whole consular power.

1186. 174. Urban III.

Was a great encourager of the holy war, but died of a fright.

1187. 175. Gregory VIII.

Was pope two months, and sick all the time, whether infallibility did not agree with his constitution, or what else ailed him, I cannot tell.

1188. 176. Clement III.

Pardoned all sins that were committed by any that should afterwards die in the holy wars. He excommunicated the *Dones* for maintaining the marriage of their clergy.

1191. 177. Celestin III.

First with his feet put the crown upon the emperor *Otho's* head, and then kick'd it off, saying, *Per me regnant reges*, that is, *My kingdom is of this world.*

A. D. 1198. 178. *Innocent III.*

Excommunicated the emperor *Otho IVth.* made king *John of England* hold his crown as tributary, and confirmed the heavenly doctrine of *auricular confession.*

1217. 179. *Honorius III.*

By this vicegerent's instigation, *St. Dominick* set the *engines of this world* at work, and practised wholesome severities against the heretical *Waldenses* and *Albigenses*, of whom not above a hundred thousand suffered for believing what is now the doctrine of *our church*, but was then a damnable heresy, the *last determination of the church* being against it.

1227. 180. *Gregory IX.*

Excommunicated his patron *Frederick II.* by whose means alone he was made pope: to shew that gratitude cannot influence the church in favour of a man that opposes their power. However, to shew that there is a way of *influencing the church*, (tho' not by gratitude) he absolved the emperor upon payment of one hundred and twenty ounces of gold.

1241. 181. *Celestin IV.*

Died of poison eighteen days after his election, before he knew that he was infallible.

1242. 182. *Innocent IV.*

Persecuted *Robert Grosthead*, bishop of *Lincoln*, for calling him *Anti-Christ*. He first directed

directed the cardinals to wear *red hats*, which *heretics* say, was a certain token that they belonged to the *scarlet whore*.

A. D. 1254. 183. *Alexander IV.*

Declared all the *Saracens* were in a state of damnation, and not finding they fought the worse, died of grief.

1261. 184. *Urban IV.*

Excommunicated *Mainfroy* king of *Sicily*, and published a *croisade* against him, pronouncing a great number of pardons and benedictions to those of his subjects, that should either dethrone or kill him.

1265. 185. *Clement IV.*

Was first a soldier, then a lawyer, and last of all a pope.

The see of Rome was vacant two years, which was a sad thing.

1271. 186. *Gregory X.*

Exactd of all the clergy a tenth part of their livings towards the charge of the holy war: but no occasion happening, applied it all to his own private use.

1275. 187. *Innocent V.*

Was the first that kept a solemn coronation.

1276. 188. *Hadrian V.*

Died thirty-six days after he was elected.

1276. 189. *John XXII.*

Was a very good physician, and an expert astrologer; notwithstanding which great helps, *Platina* affirms he acted very foolishly.

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A. D. 1277. 190. *Nicholas III.*

Was the real author of that very wholesome severity to the *French* in *Sicily*, known by the name of the *Sicilian vespers*.

1281. 191. *Martin IV.*

Entirely answered the doctrine which you and I, Sir, have so often asserted. For he certainly sate in *Christ's* stead, when the ambassadors of *Palermo*, kneeling, repeated thrice to him these words, — *Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.* Which address his holiness received very graciously. He kept for many years a concubine of his predecessor *Nicholas's*.

1285. 192. *Honorius IV.*

Excommunicated *Peter* king of *Arragon*, and his son; and opposed our *Englsh* king in levying taxes.

1288. 193. *Nicholas IV.*

Made himself mediator to all the princes in *Europe*, and would have sent them all *sauntering* into the holy wars.

1294. 194. *Celestin V.*

Was too simple and too honest a man to do much service to the church.

1294. 195. *Boniface VIII.*

Made up for the inactive spirit of his predecessor; invented the market of *indulgences*, and for every hundred years founded a *jubilee*; at which time every man's sins were forgiven,
upon.

upon his visiting *St. Peter* and *St. Paul* at their churches in *Rome*. *Philip*, king of *France*, convicted him in open parliament of symony, murder, atheism, usury, adultery, and also of a secret league with the *Saracens*. I am sorry to say that, for our arguments sake, you and I, doctor, must accept of this man for one of *Christ's vicegerents*.

A. D. 1303. 196. *Benedict XI.*

Was poisoned for his probity.

1304. 197. *Clement V.*

Was the first that fixed a standing price upon indulgences.

1315. 198. *Schism twenty-sixth. John XXIII.*
Nicholas V.

John was the true head of the church. He caused *Peter* a monk and many of his followers (who taught that *Christ* had no property, and also that his disciples had none) to be burned alive. He was also of opinion that in the text *My kingdom is not of this world*, the word NOT was spurious, and ought not to remain in any *orthodox Bible*. This is an answer to the modern heresy that we never thought of, and deserves well to be considered.

1334. 199. *Benedict XII.*

Excommunicated the emperor *Lewis*, and gave away all his dominions in *Italy*.

56 *The Pillars of PRIESTCRAFT*

A. D. 1342. 200. *Clement VI.*

Ordered the *jubilee* to be kept every fifty years, the hundred years market coming round too seldom for the church's benefit.

1352. 201. *Innocent VI.*

Burned *Johannes de Rupe Sciffa*, for pretending to assert, that the *Scripture* might be interpreted by a private judgment; by which it appears, that had the bishop of *Bangor* lived then, he might have been burned for his notions.

1362. 202. *Urban V.*

Excommunicated *Barnabon* king of *Milan*, for denying his infallibility; was a great stickler for the privileges of holy church, and confirmed the order of *St. Bridget*.

1370. 203. *Gregory XI.*

Never lived at *Rome*, till upon his suspending a bishop for non-residence, he was asked how he could punish a fault he committed himself.

1378. 204. *Schism twenty-seventh. Urban VI.
Clement VII.*

Urban, the true successor, took five of the cardinals that had voted against him, and putting them into sacks, threw them into the sea.

1389. 205. *Boniface IX. Benedict XIII.*

Boniface, the real pope, while the other lived at *Avignon*, seized a priest at the head of
a con-

a considerable number of priests in white garments, and suspecting he had a design of making himself pope, ordered him to be burned alive.

A. D. 1404. 206. *Schism twenty-eighth.*
Innocent VII. Benedict XIII.

Innocent, our vicegerent, upon being reproached by the citizens of *Rome*, for breach of his oath, ordered eleven of them immediately to be beheaded, saying, *that was the only way to remove schism and sedition.*

1406. 207. *Schism twenty-ninth.* *Gregory XII.*
Benedict XIII.

Gregory, the true head of the church, did nothing of consequence, but excommunicate his opponent. Which he did in order to make him a *heretic*, and so render void the oath which he had made to him, that if he were chosen *Pope*, he would resign to him; but *fides cum hereticis non est servanda.*

1409. 208. *Schism thirtieth.* *Alexander V.*
Benedict XIII.

Deposed *Ladislaus* king of *Naples*, and gave his kingdom away to *Lewis* of *Anjou*.

1414. 209. *Schism thirty first.* *John XXIV.*
Benedict XIII.

John was deposed by the council of *Constance* as a drunkard, an incestuous person, a pedlar of pardons, and an *infidel*. In the same council, *Benedict* was likewise deposed. One of the resolutions of the council was, *That a*

general council legally summoned, was invested with the supreme authority next to Jesus Christ. Then it was that infallibility crept into a general council.

A. D. 1417. 210. *Schism thirty-second.*
Martin V. Clement VIII.

The latter of these abdicated the popedom, soon after he had obtained it. But *Martin*, like a wise man, thought fit to dismiss the council of *Constance*, upon its being proposed there to consider of a reformation of manners amongst the clergy. This was the good pope that condemned *Wickliff*, and effectually quelled those disturbers of the church's unity, *John Hufs* and *Jerome of Prague*, by the help of those necessary engines called fire and faggot.

1431. 211. *Schism thirty-third.* *Eugenius IV.*
Felix IV.

Eugenius, the true vicegerent to the prince of peace, was, during his whole popedom, engaged in a war.

1447. 212. *Nicholas VI.*

Gave an indulgence to a friend of his, to go to a forcerer for the recovery of *stolen goods*.

1455. 213. *Calistus III.*

Canonized *Vincent Ferrier*, a notorious wizard.

1458. 214. *Pius II.*

Was a quiet man, and of no use to the church,

church, which stands in need of men of active and enterprizing geniuses.

A. D. 1464. 215. *Paul III.*

Commonly called II. He decreed all learning to be heresy, and very truly declared *ignorance* to be the *mother of devotion*. He told *Platina* that all laws human and divine were lodged in his breast.

1471. 216. *Sixtus IV.*

Murdered one of the princes of the *Medici* family by hired assassins, whilst he was at mass. He permitted public bawdy-houses to be kept in *Rome*, upon their paying him certain fines; and brought in the use of beads.

1484. 217. *Innocent VIII.*

Collected a vast sum of money for a war against the *Turks*, and employ'd it all in a war with the king of *Naples*, who was a *christian*. He was much given to excesses in drinking and to venery.

1492. 218. *Alexander VI.*

Obtained the popedom by nothing but bribery. He was poison'd by a mistake with the very *dose*, which his son had prepared for a rich cardinal that supped with him. He very frankly own'd all his bastards, which were no small number; was accused of committing incest with his sister, and of having entered into a compact with the devil.

60 *The Pillars of PRIESTCRAFT*

A. D. 1503. 219. *Pius III.*

Was poison'd twenty six days after he was chosen.

1505. 220. *Julius II.*

Was a true member of the church militant, for he never was out of war, all his lifetime. He sodomitically ravished two noble *Venetian* youths, had two bastards, and dy'd of a fever at seventy years of age. He was remarkably zealous for the *power* of the church, which one good quality may cover a *multitude of sins*, in the opinion of us staunch churchmen, sooner by much than *charity*.

1514. 221. *Leo X.*

He sold pardons at very reasonable rates. And was heard by some *heretics* (as they have affirm'd in print) to say that the gospels might more properly be called the *fabls of Christ*. But this we *successionists* believe to be fabulous.

1522. 222. *Adrian VI.*

Acknowledged that he himself was fallible, and that the church of *Rome* was a sink of vices. This therefore is the worst of all our *successors*, and we should disown him, could we perpetuate our *succession* without him. This we may say, that he deserved as little to be pope as a certain person does to be a bishop, since both of them betray the *secrets of their order*.

1532. 223. *Clement IX.*

In this vicegerent's time, there arose a set of men with the bishop of *Banger's* notions,
and

and to the great disturbance of the church's peace and unity, taught these heretical doctrines: That no man was infallible, and therefore no man was qualified to act in *Christ's stead*: That Christ was *king* in his *own kingdom*; and therefore no man could impose their interpretations of his laws upon others: That all his laws were contained in Scripture, and that every thing necessary to salvation was there so plainly delivered, that the meanest capacity might understand it: and that every one was to read in that book, and judge for themselves. At the same time, translations of the bible were made in all languages. Thus was the *veil of the temple rent in twain*, and hidden mysteries were exposed to the eyes of the vulgar. These free-thinking notions prevailed so far, that at length the secular power in this nation embraced them; and cutting off a noble revenue from the church, (what now a-days would amount to ten or twelve millions *per annum*, for which many honest churchmen fight to this day.)

Schism thirty-fourth.

King Henry VIII. made himself *supreme head of the church*, which example all our kings have followed. And as this title has been confirmed by *acts* of parliament, which make it a *premunire* to speak against it: so ever since that time, it has been the fashion in England

(*Fidei Defensor*)

to

Defender of the Faith - conferred by Leo X on Henry VIII. for a treatise against Luther in behalf of the Curia of Rome Oct 11/1521.

62. *The Pillars of PRIESTCRAFT*

to look upon the *Roman Catholics* as the *Schismatics*.

Out of prudence I proceed no farther in my list, but shall leave every honest churchman to guess who are the rest of my vicegerents: I doubt not but we shall understand one another's meaning, as well as if we spoke out. However if any of our friends should be so dull as not to know what we would have, let them consult Dr. *Hicks's* works, and *Lesley's Case of the Pontificate, and the Regale*. There he may discover, not only where the sincerest of us lodge the *supremacy*, but also learn the absolute necessity of an *uninterrupted succession of men vested with that supremacy*, without which, it seems, we must all be *unavoidably damned*. And although some weak brethren may be puzzled in this affair, because they know we have swallowed certain odd *oaths*, which seem to contradict both our *conversation* and *doctrine*: yet, if they will but consider how unreasonable and how antichristian it is, that *we* spiritual members of the *church* should be tied down by *oaths* invented by *laymen*, they may soon discover where it is, that we place our *uninterrupted succession of Christ's vicegerents*.

You see, learned doctor, that I have cleared up the *hierarchy* of our church, and replaced
the

the divine right of episcopacy upon its true and solid basis; a basis not to be shaken by the breath of every scoffing free-thinker. Let then the bishop, and his seconds, the enemies of all revelation, read here, and be confounded. Let them see here a perpetuated succession of infallible men from the apostles days; though indeed they are many of them guilty of facts, which in any layman might have served for foils to the actions of a Nero or Heliogabalus; yet since they were committed by clergymen, are only to be regarded as sanctified trifles, and venial Peccadillo's; as appears from the pious annotations in our * Orthodox Testament on the 23d chapter of St. Matthew, which affirm, That notwithstanding the bishop of Rome were ever so wicked of life; yea, though some traitor as evil as Judas were bishop thereof, it should not be prejudicial to the church. Thus, reverend Sir, it is plain, that no objection of weight can be started against us: For were our succession composed of devils incarnate, provided they were regularly ordained, it would be never the worse; nay in the condition things now stand, it would be much the better. For the more power Satan had (and he certainly would have vast power were he a pope) the greater would the obligation be upon the laity of keeping us up, as a

* Printed at Rheims, 1582.

spiritual standing army against him. To say the truth, were our enemy (or shall I call him our friend) *the monarch of hell* totally subdued and crushed, I doubt it would fare with us, as it did with many of the gentlemen of the sword, since the death of *Lewis XIV.*—We should either be disbanded or reduced to half-pay. A misfortune which those gentlemen of a carnal warfare might easily have avoided, had they taken *us spiritual militia* for their example, and either sought booty, or taken care not to *cast forth and dispossess* the enemy too often of their *fastnesses*. A *priestly foresight*, which the rash D. of *M—* wanted in *Flanders*. He was a *layman*, but thank our stars *we* of the clergy have more prudence than to rout our enemies too much, and therefore we shall never run the risque of being laid aside, as he was. To which end, instead of attempting to remove the wickedness, the ignorance and superstition of the vulgar, three main *props* of our *sacerdotal power*, let us preach up nothing but *party sermons*, let us cry up our own *authority*, and continually alarm the nation with the *danger of the church*; and I cannot in the least doubt, but we shall see the honest *laity* content still to follow us with strings in their noses. To shew you, doctor, that I have not been idle in this grand affair; I can assure you that, though I am but a *country curate*, I have been for these

many

many years inculcating into my congregation the belief of my *mission* from heaven; I have often told them that I am *God's ambassador*; that I ought to be treated by the best of my parish, with a submission due to so great a person, otherwise it was an affront upon him that sent me: And I have so far succeeded, that the least contempt of me fixes upon any man the name of *fanatic*: A title, which I have taught my flock to dread, more than that of *atheist*, *blasphemer*, *drunkard*, *whoremaster*, or *swearer*.

Thus, Sir, though our office be originally to *preach Christ*, yet you know it is very wholesome and for the good of the church to *preach ourselves* too. And as we can shew no *credentials* for our *embassadourships*, so it will be very expedient for us to keep the laity from making any strict enquiries into them; for which good purpose, let us true churchmen stand by one another; and if any one shall be so bold (which of late ~~too~~ too many of our own order have been) as to question our authority, let us never stick a moment at branding him with the names of *fanatic*, *atheist*, *free-thinker* and *enemy to all revelation*. And as a great *emperor* of Rome led the way, and you have honestly followed his example, let us dress up all our enemies in *wolves and bear-skins*, and then we need not fear their being worry'd and baited
by

by a true *church-mob*, whenever they have an opportunity. And as our own *bulky reputation* will easily weigh down that of another man, when it is crack'd or almost wasted away; so it will not be improper to employ all the hands we can, in raking for dirt to throw at our adversaries, especially those of unblemished characters. In which pleasing task, I can promise you the pious endeavours of many of my brethren here, who have taken indefatigable pains in spreading your works.

I hold it prudence in all cases to follow the advice of the old proverb, and *cry whore first*: for which reason I think we ought to stigmatize all our opposers with the name of *papist* as well as of *fanatic*. For since our denying the *liberty of private judgment* may be demonstrated to be directly opposite to the foundation on which the *reformation* was built, we should not easily get off the imputation of *popery*, had we not been before-hand with our adversaries, and called them *papists* and *enemies to our church*, first. Again our scheme of church government is the same with that which the Jesuits maintain to be their public *theses*, and our doctrine of *possibilities* is exceeding like theirs of *probabilities* *; now lest our great enemy the bishop of *Bangor* should

* *Vid. Lettres Provinciales. Let. V.*

fix upon us the reproach of adhering to *Jesuitical notions*, which we could not well clear ourselves from, we begin with him, and not only charge him with inclining to *Jesuitism*, but likewise with entertaining *one of that fraternity in his house*. It is true the poor refugee has sufficiently convinced us that he is no *Jesuit*, but that shall never satisfy us; whilst he continues under the same patronage, he shall also continue under the same name: and whilst he converses among the seconds of our *grand adversary*, we will admit of no proof of his *conversion*, but deem him as much a *Jesuit*, as † if we saw him officiating at *high mass*.

And here, Sir, though we use the words *Jesuit* and *high mass* to frighten our weak brethren from joining with our enemies; yet I would not have any one imagine that there is any harm in the *things themselves*. I confess had Mr. *Pillonniere* still officiated at *high mass*, he would have found better quarter from us; for 'tis not probable that any set of true *priests* should be real enemies to such a *religion* as that of the *Romish church*, which is so admirably calculated for the power, honour, and grandeur of its clergy. Alas, hath he been one of those quick-sighted fathers, and not

† Snape's second Let. p. 66.

found out, that we long for those onions, sweeter than any that ever grew in *Egypt*: Had he been a man of penetration, he must have long ago found out the drift of all our pious endeavours. He might have observed that when we had a *catholic prince* on the throne, then it was that our famous doctrine of PASSIVE OBEDIENCE and NON-RESISTANCE was most inculcated, as the only medium for a *popish* king to establish his *religion* here by. He might have observed how carefully *we* have propagated the doctrine of *divine indefeasible hereditary right*; which had it taken its desired effect, I leave the world to judge of *what religion our king* would now have been.

The bishops *Jesuit* might have observed what we meant by the word *church*, whose danger (like mercury in a barometer, wholly govern'd by the power of external air) was observed to *rise* or *fall*, just as *popery* lost or got ground here. Thus in king *Charles* the II'd's time, the *church* was very healthy; in king *James* the II'd's, *she* flourish'd exceedingly, till he unwisely began to put our *passive doctrines* in practise upon *ourselves*, which made *our nature* a little *rebel* against *our principle*. In king *William*'s reign, the poor *church* languished under a deep consumption; which was somewhat restored by the two first years of *Queen Anne*: But as soon as ever the *Duke of Marlborough*

borough beat our friends beyond sea, our ecclesiastical weather-glass *rose*, and the church was never in such *danger*: But this was soon over, for the queen at a *touch* cured all our *evil*, by putting an end to the *church-destructive* war, clapping up a *peace*, that had we been beaten, we could not have obtained one more for the benefit of our *church*; and lastly, by degrading the conquering general, and placing one in his room, who was a zealous son of our *church*, for which he now suffers exile with his and our FRIEND. These indeed were glorious times! But alas! our pious queen and our most christian ally died just in the nick of time; what QUALMS our poor *church* has had ever since, must needs be known to Mr. *Pillonniere*. Besides all this, he can never really think we hate him for being one of the *Jesuits*, if he will but farther consider in how many things *we* of the *high-church* follow their steps.

The *Jesuits* in their *theses* of *Lovaïn*, in the year 1645, say *, *It is only a venial sin to calumniate and impose false crimes to ruin their credit, who speak ill of us*. Now can any man that reads the *dean of Chichester's*, Mr. *Law's* or your writings, conclude from them, that any of us true sons of the *church* differ from this tenet of those worthy fathers? I am sure our

* *Lettres Provinciales*. Let. XV.

treatment of the bishop of *Bangor* proves that we are of their mind. And as the good fathers of *Lovain* prove their right of calumniating by their matchless doctrine of † *probabilities*; so we by the help of *possibilities* support our calumnies. As for example, *Pillonniere* may possibly be a *Jesuit* still, ergo, he is a *Jesuit* still. This is our peculiar *church-logic*, and as you say † *every one who understands reasoning* (which indeed none but we staunch churchmen do) will agree with you.

Again, the reverend fathers the *Jesuits* hold it lawful to do evil, provided it be for the good of the church. Now if this were not also our religious principle, how could we justify the many honest church mobs which we have stirred up to burn and plunder *meeting-houses* for the sake of the church: or how could any of our gown have appeared at *Preston*, had not the good of the church been thought to license our breaking our oaths, and sanctified rebellion?

Again, those ghostly fathers the *Jesuits* teach the *direction* of the intention, with that excellent doctrine of *mental reservation*, by which a man may commit any crime, and avoid the sin. Now if some honest men amongst us

† Lettres Provinc. *ubi supra*.

† *Snape's* second Letter, p. 9.

had not some such small *helps*, they could never have swallowed the *oaths* of *allegiance* and *abjuration* HEARTILY, WILLINGLY, and TRULY, as most of us do. But as these *oaths* are taken for the *good of the church*, and for the retaining of benefices in *orthodox* hands, the *uprightness of the intention* atones for the sin of *perjury*, if we should chance any of us to be guilty of so *venial* a *sin*. Pursuant to this principle too; if we find one of the *laity* implicit in his obedience to us (let him be ever so *profligate*, or ever so great a stranger to the inside of a *church*) we pronounce him a *better churchman* than a follower of the bishop of *Bangor*, though he were ever so regular in his life, or ever so constant in going to church: Because these actions can have no true merit in them, while his *intention* is *diabolically directed* to the *destruction* of the true and unlimited *authority of the church*, which is the chief thing that a believer should be attached to.

The *Jesuits*, as well as all other catholicks, deny the *laity* the use of the *scriptures*. And even in this point we do not differ from them, so much as we would make weak brethren believe we do: For form sake indeed we put the *bible* into the people's hands, but then we deny them the *use* of it, as much as any *Jesuit* can. For if any one pretends to read it with
more

more understanding than a boy at a reading-school; if any one shall dare to chalk out to himself from thence *rules of life, of conscience, or of faith*, without consulting *us*, the *saucy Shoemaker* will quickly be told, that he is gone *beyond his last*: *Negative discouragements* and (if we have them in our power) *positive punishments* shall soon teach him that *his soul is not his own*.

To proceed. As the fathers the Jesuits hold it lawful * to murder and assassinate princes, who are not for the *unlimited power of the church*, and can prepare for that purpose *Barrieres, Chastels and Ravilliacs*: So we never wanted our *Perkins, Friends, Fenwicks and Shepherds*, whenever we thought our *church* was in *danger*. Not to run parallels farther, by comparing the *extensiveness* of charity amongst the *Jesuits* with what we practise, which would be only proving one *Sofia* was like another; I am sure I have said enough to convince any hearty *Jesuit*, that it is much more prudent for him to *join with us* of the *high-church*, than to associate with the bishop of *Bangor* and his fanatical companies.

Therefore I beg you to communicate this letter to Mr. *Pilloniere*; a Jesuit he certainly

* See appendix to the *Summary of Religious Houses in England and Wales*, p. 88 to the end.

was, and therefore is so now; and I doubt not but as he is a Jesuit, upon duly weighing what is here urged, he will desert that scandalous cause, which he is now embarked in, to flock with *birds* more of his own feather. And when we have bereft our antagonist of the man who helped him to all his *evasions, equivocations, and mental reservations*; how easy will it be to run down an heretic, that hath nothing but *reason and scripture* left to support his cause: *reason and scripture*, two weak supports, when set in competition with the *engines of this world*, which ought to be employed by us, the *vicegerents of Christ**, for restraining offenders against us, and to keep in awe the disturbers of the church's peace and unity. Let the bishop remember the fate of *John Huss, Jerome of Prague, Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer*, and the rest of the remarkable disturbers of the church's unity; and whatever ill-grounded opinions he may have entertained concerning us, because we wear the name of *protestant*, I can assure him, he would find he had a *woful cause* to defend, were we intrusted with those *engines of this world*, by which our happy brethren beyond sea daily preserve the *authority, peace, and unity* of the church.

* *Snape's first Letter*, p. 20.

Having thus fully confuted the bishop's arguments, and settled the *vicegerency in Christ's kingdom* in the popes till the *reformation*; tho' where it now continues, I neither dare nor will bluntly affirm: In order to put in every honest *churchman's* mouth a defence of our *plan of church-government*, I shall lay down a short specimen of it, founded on the foregoing *church-maxims*. And to do this with more ease (since I have proved that the *kingdom of Christ*, notwithstanding all texts to the contrary, may be *of this world*) I will liken it to something that is actually *now in this world*, and that shall be to your *Dionysian monarchy at Eaton*.

First then, as you sit supreme governor, encompassed round with *secular engines*, and vested with power to set them on work, for the terrifying and keeping in awe all those, who attempt to disturb the *peace* of your *school*: So our grand *vicegerent* (whether he be a pope, a king, an archbishop, or a collective body of clergy) ought to sit supreme in the spiritual kingdom, assisted with *secular engines*, and vested with power to set them at work, as often as the *peace and unity* of the *church* shall be molested.

As you have the *same powers* with the first master that ever taught in your school, which
were

were handed down to you by the preceding master, and which, when you leave the *school*, you will transmit to *another*, who will upon his demission substitute likewise another, thereby to *perpetuate a succession of school masters at Eaton*: So our present spiritual head of the church hath the *same powers* with the first *vicegerent* delegated to him; which *powers*, when he can no longer remain supreme on earth, will be transmitted to *others*, who are to *perpetuate a succession of such vicegerents through all succeeding ages of the world*.

As in your *Eatonian* kingdom it sometimes happens, that when *negative discouragements* are not sufficient to keep your subjects in order, you apply *positive punishments*, and that effectual engine the *rod*: So in our ecclesiastical kingdom, when little *negative discouragements*, such as *occasional and schism bills*, are found insufficient towards preserving *church unity*, a *positive application of fines and penalties*, and sometimes of *fire and faggot* is not a method wholly displeasing to staunch churchmen at bottom.

As none of your children have any right to judge for themselves, or to question your infallibility in expounding the *classicks*, even though you taught that *Bavius* and *Mævius* were

better poets than *Virgil* or *Horace*: So none of those *babes* the *laity* should pretend to judge for themselves, or question the *church's* interpretations of *Scripture*, but receive them as *infallible*; nay, they ought to submit to the *church's* authority, though she taught that *Suarez* and *Bellarmino* were greater divines than *St. Paul* and *St. James*.

As no *boy* ought to plead conscience for being absent from *school*, or refusing to come to *repetition*, or for not performing any *task* you shall set him: So no layman ought to plead conscience for not coming to *church*, or for refusing to join in the *common-prayer*, or for not submitting to all the *impositions* the *church* shall think fit to lay upon him.

Lastly; As you have many *vice-præceptors*, who act under you, and share with you in all the privileges of your government, as well as in teaching and punishing your subjects, who cannot call those *vice-præceptors* to an account without rebelling against your power: So our *spiritual governour* hath us his *deputy governors* to act under him, as well in teaching and punishing, as in all other exercises of dominion over the *laity*, who are not to question us his *baly ushers* for any thing we do.

Thus have I shewn you, learned doctor, that the laity are no better than *school-boys*, whose reason, whose consciences, whose backs, and sides, in short, whose body and souls ought to be under our discipline. This is the glorious *church-scheme* we ought to stand by. This is what the *wise and politic* among us have always been endeavouring to establish. Since the *bishop* of *Bangor* therefore, and a set of *free-thinking laity* pretend that *every man has a right to judge for himself*, which destroys our whole goodly designs at once; let all honest churchmen, such as you and I, join heart and hand in defence of our *church's power*; let us leave no stone unturned to make our adversaries character odious; for which holy purpose, let us run into company, betray conversation, invent scandal, and to support it, print children and *old wives tales*. Nay to serve the *church*, let the saying of *Juno* be written in all our hearts,

Flectere, si nequeo, superos, acheronta movebo;
that is,

*To serve our cause, if heaven should prove uncivil,
We'll humbly crave assistance of the devil.*

So till another occasion, I remain,

Reverend S I R,

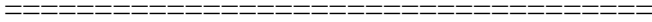
Your most humble servant,

N. B. By *church, clergy* and *churchmen*, I do not mean those of our gown in general, but only those chosen vessels that are chiefly zealous for our *power*, and our *dignity*, and our *riches*. And in this sense I desire you, reverend Sir, to understand these words throughout *my letter*.

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U.S.A.

THE
CURATE of WILTS
HIS
Second LETTER

To the Reverend

Dr. *S N A P E*:

O R,

Reasons against the Bill now depending
in the House of Commons.

B E I N G

A Full Answer to the Bishop of *Bangor's* Late
Book, Entitled, *The Common Rights of Subjects*
defended.

W H E R E I N

The Divine Authority of our Church Establishment,
and the Necessity of Continuing Penalties on *All*
Dissenters from it, are demonstratively proved.

First printed in the Year 1719.

THE
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HIS
Second LETTER

To the Reverend

Dr. S N A P E.

Reverend Sir,

THE lord bishop of *Bangor* having replied to our worthy brother *Sherlock's* most *learned* and *consistent* vindication of those locks and bolts of our excellent church, the *corporation* and *test acts*; and believing that *great man* is now perfectly tired with the *low* and *tedious* work of answering his lordship; I shall, in his defence, and under your patronage, fully confute, not only all his lordship has said in his last book, but all he has at any time said, or shall at any time here-

after say, in *defence* of the *common rights of mankind*; and shall shew that all national churches have and may deprive men of as many of those rights as they think fit; and in order to it, may make use of any means, tho' never so improper, even of what his lordship calls a prostitution of the holy sacrament; and may inflict any penalties on those, who, agreeable to those common rights of mankind, dare to disagree with any such established national church.

I say, *reverend Sir*, I shall do all this, in an address to you; because, how well soever the *master of the temple* may have defended these points, or any other very *foreign* to them, in the course of this debate with his lordship; I know that *modest* writer will readily consent that your character should be most conspicuous in the close of this controversy; and, notwithstanding his indefatigable pains, would gladly be *now* not so much as thought of, that you may finish gloriously what you at first so sagaciously begun. Therefore, that I may not rob you of any applause, at the same time I revive your name in the world, I shall borrow my main argument from a passage in your *second letter* *; and which, I think, continues in every edition.

* P. 60, &c.

Having in the former letter unanswerably made appear that our succession of bishops is uninterrupted from the apostles, and that your position, that they are vested with the *same* powers, is therefore undeniably true: I believe you doubt not of my abilities for the present undertaking; wherein I shall maintain another of your remarkable assertions, and on which, as I shall make appear, the whole stress of the controversy depends, *viz.* ‘That ever since miracles ceased, the temporal powers were commissioned by Christ, in their stead, to aid and assist his spiritual vicegerents, *the church.*’ From whence it will plainly follow, that the religion established by *SUCH* temporal powers, that is, the *ecclesiastical constitution of any realm*, is of equal divine authority, as that which obtained by the power of miracles. [I have dignify’d the word *such* with capitals, that every reader may see I intend to draw no conclusions hurtful to the *church*, when I consider the temporal magistrate as Christ’s commissioner: For I desire here it may be remarked once for all, that his commission is only valid, when ’tis exerted in aid and assistance of Christ’s spiritual vicegerents, *the clergy.*]

I shall not concern myself how far this argument extends, or what influence it will have

on churches established by *Mahometan* or *Pagan* temporal powers; but at present shall confine what I have to say to our own ecclesiastical constitution, established by *Christ's* commissioner, the civil magistrate: And shall shew that the bishop of *B.* has widely mistaken the principle upon which this establishment, which he calls the *reformation*, was settled; which was, not *that* of every man's right to judge for himself; but *that* of the temporal magistrate's right to judge what establishment to settle: And therefore, that all, who are subjects of the temporal magistrate, ought to be the subjects of such his ecclesiastical establishment: The argument, as I have collected from your book, stands thus:

Christ commissioned spiritual vicegerents to act under him; to make *new laws*, &c.

To enforce which new laws, miracles were sometime continued in the church.

But miracles ceasing, Christ commissioned likewise temporal vicegerents to aid and assist his spiritual vicegerents, in putting their *new laws* in execution; and to add *civil sanctions*, by virtue of that commission.

And that civil governors have this commission from Christ, of being *nursing-fathers* and
nurs-

nursing mothers to his spiritual vicegerents, and of punishing *all* dissenters from their settlement; you plainly prove by an *evident* prophecy, and from the *christian* example of *David*, who hated *right fore* the enemies of the church, even as though they were his own enemies.

To apply this your account of Christ's settlement of vicegerents, spiritual and temporal, to the ecclesiastical constitution of *England*.

Our bishops (or clergy) are uninterrupted successors of Christ's spiritual vicegerents, delegated by him to make *new laws*, &c.

At present there are no miracles to support their *new laws*.

Therefore our temporal powers are commissioned by Christ to aid and assist the spiritual vicegerents, the clergy, &c.

Accordingly our temporal governors have added *civil sanctions* and penalties, in aid and assistance of the *new laws* enacted by these Christ's spiritual and temporal vicegerents.

And how conformable our practice is to the behaviour of the *Psalmist*, needs not to be mentioned; for we *hate right fore all who differ from us*.

I know, *Sir*, that many arguments and objections have been brought against the temporal magistrate's power in religion; and that 'twill be said this example of *David's* cannot be urged to christians, who are commanded to *love their enemies*; yet, I doubt not, but you have a sufficient answer to every such little cavil. In the mean time, the reader is desired to observe, that in defending ecclesiastical constitutions, 'tis not so much as pretended that the laws of Christ, (which are the christian religion) but the *new laws* of his vicegerents, (which are the establishment) are to be defended. And how necessary their defence has universally been thought, may be judged from the rigour with which all opposers have ever been treated. For as you say, † *On what would his lordship have our church depend? On God's providence, will he say? On the promise of Christ?* I admire your answer to such defenders of an established church: * *A very glorious encouragement, I confess; a security that cannot fail!* No, my good lord of *Bangor*, we know better the means of securing establishments, than to admit of any rights in common to mankind, which we imagine may endanger

† *Snape's 2d Letter*, p. 62,

* *Ibid.*

the church's: And as our brother *Sherlock* has *learnedly* proved, bolts and bars are a far stronger, and therefore a far better defence, than reason or argument, or any of Christ's promises.

As to what his lordship has urged, that the same methods of defending established churches would as effectually have prevented the spreading of christianity itself, and would have prevented the reformation obtaining at all, and will prevent it where it is not: I briefly answer, that his lordship's objection, with respect to christianity, is entirely foreign to the purpose: For the question is not, What would favour or prejudice *christianity*; but, What will favour or prejudice the *church*? And as to the reformation itself, 'tis plain, and must be so acknowledged by us, that at that time Christ's temporal vicegerents acted too much against the *church*; and might possibly have ruin'd the *church*, if the spiritual vicegerents had not exerted themselves, and prevented its going farther. But however that was, 'tis certain, that the reformation itself was began by the temporal magistrate's power, supported and carried on by the magistrate's power, and carried on no farther than the magistrate's power permitted.

I know, indeed, there were many persons then, as well as before, who claimed a right of private judgment: But that right was so far from being the foundation of the reformation, in *reality*; that, when the civil magistrate had effected the reformation, that right was not only not allowed, but every man, who differed in the least from any established church, was declared, as before, a heretic or schismatic. Nay, at the time of the reformation, when the temporal vicegerents thought fit to take off odium from some, who before were deemed the schismatics, and to declare them Christ's spiritual vicegerents, in the room of the displaced ones; this gave little countenance to the right of private judgment; the men who obtained this favour being only those, whose known principles agreed with the doctrine and worship established by the temporal powers. They knew better things, than to *leave every man to make the best of his bible*; which was only left in fact to be consulted by every man in order to support what was then established, not to discover any thing contrary to it. Which I think undeniably plain from hence, that notwithstanding mankind have generally, by the licentious use of scripture and reason since the reformation, seen the falsity of many doctrines then established, they have not yet

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had power to make their general judgment cancel such established doctrines; for fear lest the right of private judgment being allowed, it might shew many *mysteries* to be only those of iniquity; and prove dangerous in the issue to the power of the priesthood.

And, I believe, *reverend doctor*, we may challenge any one to shew that this foundation-principle, as his lordship calls it, has met at any time, or in any country, where the reformation is established in one national church, with better treatment, than at first: Nay, so far are Christ's *spiritual* vicegerents from at all approving it, that I challenge any one to deny that it has not met with much worse, where the temporal *aiders* and *assistors* have not restrained the hands of the church?

From all which it plainly follows, that ecclesiastical constitutions, however reformed, are so far from allowing this right consistently, or owing their settlement to this right, that they have done all in their power to banish such a right out of the world; which, if once admitted, they have thought might endanger every establishment in it. 'Tis not dean *Sherlock* alone, but every writer in *England* against dissenters, who has ridiculed this right; and most foreign protestants, as well as papists, have

have treated every claimer of this right with the highest reproaches, and sometimes with the severest penalties.

'Tis true, we do not always lodge this right solely, or at all, in the temporal powers, when we argue on this head; but we constantly and uniformly keep it out of the hands of private men, when disputing with schismatics: Nor have any been so weak as to assert this claim equally for all men, but in disputes with the Roman catholicks; which was owing to not considering the reformation as the effect of power, rather than of the prevalence of truth. For however truth might then accidentally prevail, our concern since has been rather for the excellent establishment of bishopricks, deaneries and other emoluments of the church that remained to it, than for any of the doctrines determined to be true at the reformation. Nor have we at any time deviated from this regard; for tho' it is certain, that most of the doctrines then settled, we now disbelieve; yet we have appeared, at all times, with great zeal against every private innovator, who either would not implicitly subscribe our church's articles, and submit to her determinations; or who, after such subscription, has dared publickly to question their truth. This
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behaviour of ours proceeding not from our own approbation of the doctrines, or dislike to the principles avowed by such persons we condemned; but from a fear lest the integrity of those persons should lead them on farther, and thereby lay open the pales of the church, in such a manner as to admit others to enjoy its good things. And I doubt not but I could produce such instances of our zeal on these occasions, as might sufficiently deter others from daring to scruple or contradict any decision of the church. Nay, if our hands were not now tied up, and the temporal powers did not refuse their necessary aid, his lordship of *Bangor*, might feel ~~more~~ more than I shall say at present.

Upon the whole, 'tis manifestly obvious, that all established churches, the reformed as well as romanists, have denied this right of private judgment to all their members: And if enquired into, 'twill be found likewise that all synods and councils have determined at all times against the allowance of this right; and have censured and condemned every man, who has been known to make use of it, contrary to the judgment of any established church: Nay, 'twill be found, upon examination, that even many of those who have contended for it, have
have

have afterwards given it up, and disclaimed it, and sometimes have wrote and acted violently against it. So prevalent is the force of truth—or something else.

I come now to consider the *sacramental test*; which was made for the farther securing our ecclesiastical constitution, when we had the aid and assistance of Christ's commissioned officer, the civil magistrate: And I doubt not but his lordship's account of that will be found equally repugnant to truth, with his account of the reformation.

As to what is said about prostituting an institution of our blessed Lord's to a purpose of this world, which was ordained solely to a purpose of another; I think, *reverend Sir*, it has likewise no place in the present debate: Nor if it had, I cannot see it will answer any purpose of his lordship's in that part of the argument I am about to refute. For admitting such an act of parliament as the *test act* is, to be a prostitution of a law of Christ; I believe his lordship will not deny but the legislators at that time, might pass such a law: Nor can I see that his lordship has proved they could not enact it for one of the *contrary* ends *Dr. Sherlock* has assigned, unless
his

his lordship can prove, that legislators have at all times known the end for which they make laws ; and that they have always seen the laws they make answer the ends they proposed by them. The contrary of which, I think, his lordship has proved in the case of civil penalties. Indeed I do not say, it could be enacted for a proof of a man's affection to our ecclesiastical establishment ; but if his lordship will call it *weakness*, I'll venture to say they were weak enough to enact it, in order to keep out of offices all such who were not so affected to our ecclesiastical establishment, as to prefer it to any other.

The arguments his lordship has brought against such a prostitution of an appointment of Christ to a different purpose, I allow, might have their weight with christians, *as such*. But, I beg his lordship to consider us as settled by ecclesiastical and temporal vicegerents of Christ ; by laws of the land, in making of which the various tempers of mankind were interested ; tho', as I have proved before, exactly agreeable to your scheme of Christ's settlement : I say, let his lordship consider this, and 'twill entirely overthrow all his arguments ; and he will find that what ought strongly to affect christians *as christians*, cannot,

not, by any *power* of his lordship's, at all influence established churches. To be a christian, his lordship will find to be one thing, and to be a member of an established church, another; and sometimes, another very different from even the possibility of being a christian.

However unchristian therefore persecution may be in itself, yet when 'tis thought necessary by an establishment for self-defence; or however profane, the prostituting an institution esteemed by all christians the most sacred: Yet when Christ's temporal vicegerents see either or both of these necessary, for the self-defence, or pleasure, of his spiritual vicegerents; they become commendable, and fit to be defended by such great men as the worthy dean of *Chichester** has shewn himself throughout the present controversy.

I confess while I was writing the above, I was not so fully satisfied in your proof of the commission Christ has given to his spiritual vicegerents, and temporal vicegerents, to make *new* laws so seemingly contradictory to his own: But as I doubt not of your capacity to make that appear, I shall proceed in justifying whatever shall be done by such commissioners.

* *Dr. Sherlock, late bishop of London.*

I shall next *reverend Sir*, consider the necessity of *civil penalties* on account of *mere* differences in religion; whereby all men may see the unreasonableness of repealing any law, which enacts any such penalty; I mean the unreasonableness at present of repealing the *occasional and schism acts*.

To prove the necessity of such penal laws, I need only call them *self-defence*, (as the judicious Dr. *Sherlock* has done;) and 'twill be sufficient. Every man has so feeling a sense of self-defence, that 'twill justify the knocking a heretic or schismatic on the head, as easily as the excluding him from an office: And therefore our dissenters, instead of complaining of the *moderate* penalties now laid upon them, should thank God our apprehensions of self-defence have not made it necessary to imprison or murder them. For what may'nt we fear from those wicked people, who will not submit to Christ's commissioned vicegerents, if they should get power, and fancy themselves vicegerents too, and go on to fancy, that for their self-defence they might persecute us, who would then necessarily dissent from their *new* laws, because we are sure we are now in the right.

The objection against force being a proper means of persuasion, we readily admit. But then this objection is so far from condemning, that it approves our practice. For as our design is self defence, it must be allowed it is very likely to prevent persuasion; and therefore very likely to prevent any heretic's or schismatic's return to the church, who generally are fond of truth and conviction, and who, as I have observed before, if in the church might make mad work. I own the case of those men may seem very hard to *all* who have not a due regard to the self-defence of the church; but *that* duly considered will clear up all difficulties. For at the same time that we shut schismatics out of the church, and punish them for their being so, and use the most probable means of keeping them out; we weigh what dangers might accrue to the church, and for her self-defence *only* we thus punish such malignants.

'Tis to be presumed that a very reverend prelate had well pondered this scheme of church-self-defence, when, instead of consenting to the repeal of any of her securities, he would have guarded her by new penalties, from suffering any of her members to innovate even in the most speculative points. He doubtless well

well considered how much the peace of the church depended upon curbing the unbounded use of reason ; and therefore gravely and wisely proposed to stop all enquiry, thereby to secure her quiet and repose.

In short, *reverend Sir*, all penalties, *negative* or *positive*, if used for the good of the church, are proper means, and fit to be used. By them we keep all the offices, and consequently all the incomes, of the church, in the hands of good churchmen ; that is, of men who know how to value them : Thereby we keep good churchmen in the state ; that is, those in it, who augment rather than decrease our power : And thereby, in way of self-defence, all the blessings of this world are equitably taken out of the hands of others, and secured to those of the church.

I know this last method of denying to others the same rights with us churchmen, and which, as you say, is only a *negative discouragement*, has been ridiculed by our adversaries as impolitic ; and I have lately seen a paper, * (whose continuance may prove fatal to the church ; as it encourages what the church has always most discouraged, *free-thinking* and free en-

* *The Free-thinker*, Dec. 22, 1718.

quiry :) which has asserted this *half-persecution* to be *the height of folly*; and has proved that if that be justifiable, the *inquisition* is more so. To which I reply; that all persecution, as I have proved before, is allowed to be justifiable, if thought necessary for the self-defence of the church. At present *moderate* penalties are thought sufficient; at least no more can be obtained from the *aiders* and *assistors*, the civil powers: But if we should see danger encrease, (and our enemies cannot deny but we see danger, at least as soon as it appears,) the clergy are a watchful guard, and would soon give the alarm; and, if they had interest enough with the magistrate, would not fail to augment their securities, and carry on their self-defence, till they should not be upbraided with doing things by halves.

To prove this, I need but mention the conduct of a vigilant churchman even while our *Sion* sits in tears, and power is kept too much out of our hands. No sooner did he hear of the spreading of latitudinarianism, by condemning the *abuse of confessions of faith*; but he publishes a *letter** to prohibit the author preaching in any of the *French* pulpits: He has

* See this *letter* in Mr. *Rey's* account of *French* persecution, *appendix*.

not recourse to the *low* method of reason and argument; but exerts authority, and gains the heretic. And we have seen, but a few days since, the same great man's care for *our most holy faith*, and for the *peace and quiet* of the *church*, in a *circular letter to his incumbents*: Which being writ with singular perspicuity, I refer the reader to it.

So that those who insult our lenity, may see from hence, and other instances I might bring; that, if we had sufficient authority, they might have less reason to sneer at our forbearance. The disobedient of every kind would then feel the full force of self-defence; and be taught more modesty than to think differently from what is established. For though *mere* opinions can never be hurtful in themselves to any society; yet in the *church* they are equally punishable with the vilest practices; as they betray an opposition in the judgment to the determined sense of the church, and thereby bring her *authority* into question; which, next her *wealth*, is the great thing to be contended for.

You see, *reverend Sir*, the many reasons there are to continue the laws now in force against dissenters: How necessary they are for

the self-defence and security of all that's valuable in the church; and the imminent dangers it would be exposed to, if these laws were repealed. Dissenters would then be thought as honest as churchmen, and as capable of places of profit and trust; and thereby a liberty be given to all men to think differently from the judgment of our ecclesiastical constitution, without their fear of losing any thing by it; and how many doctrines and practices of our church may then be departed from, let every true churchman think of with horror.

We believed indeed, that the old substantial reason *that it is not now the time*, would have prevented even the attempt of a repeal; but seeing that has not had its usual weight, but the bill is gone through one house, I have thought it necessary to urge all the other arguments that can be urged to hinder its success in the house of commons; and I doubt not of your thanks and the thanks of all staunch churchmen, suitable to my service.

Perhaps that part of my letter about the *sacramental test* may be thought needless, as the clause was rejected in the upper house, which related to it: But though nothing should be attempted farther in its repeal, I thought

thought proper to press the arguments on its side, as far as I could, that all persons may see how well the topic of self-defence will bear out any established church, in whatever it shall do for that end.

But let us suppose, that other reasons should prevail with some in the house of commons, and that not only the clause relating to the *sacramental test*, but even another clause of the most extensive nature, should be admitted into the bill; what dreadful outcries might we not raise! That you may the better judge of what I mean, I shall insert the clause as 'tis handed about in print.

“ **W**HEREAS in a late act made
 “ *primo Gul. & Ma.* for exempting
 “ their majesties protestant dissenting subjects
 “ from several penalties, &c. there are several
 “ restrictions and limitations, whereby divers
 “ of his majesties peaceable and good subjects
 “ are left incapable of the benefit of the said
 “ exemption: Therefore for the ease and
 “ quieting the minds of all such his majesty's
 “ good protestant subjects, be it enacted, &c.
 “ that every onewho shall, instead of the several
 “ subscriptions and declarations therein re-
 “ quired, declare and subscribe his unfeigned

“ assent to, and belief of, the holy *christian*
 “ religion, as contained in the scriptures of
 “ the *old* and *new* testament, and of the *creed*,
 “ commonly called the *apostles creed*, and shall
 “ also take the oath, &c. and make the decla-
 “ ration against popery, in the said act requir-
 “ ed ; shall have the full benefit of all the said
 “ exemptions by that act intended, in the same
 “ manner as if he had performed all the con-
 “ ditions and qualifications by that act hither-
 “ to required ; any thing in the said act or in
 “ any other acts to the contrary in any wise
 “ notwithstanding.

You cannot but see to what a dreadful state
 we must be reduced, should such clauses obtain.
 The church would, by the repeal of the *test*,
 be left much more unguarded, than by the
 repeal of the *occasional* and *schism* acts ; because
 many of the schismatics, having too much
seeming conscience, will still be kept out if the
 latter obtains, rather than prostitute an insti-
 tution of Christ's to the purposes we have
 appointed : But by the removal of the *test*,
 and the admission of the *other* clause, our
 church will be so laid open, that *christianity*
 alone will be made the test. There will then
 be an end of the power of *some* over the con-
 sciences of *others* ; and men will be led to form
 their judgments, only by the laws of the gos-
 pel,

pel, and the motives of another world. If such pernicious clauses should be enacted, the disturbers of the church's *repose* would have no other restraint, but the precepts of christianity; and all uniformity in sentiment would be abolished, but what arises from *truth*, and a *sincere* enquiry after it. By these and a few such means, christianity would be reduced to the condition, in which Christ left it; and all the many, and frequently contrary, decisions of the church in all ages given up to the unerring decisions of Christ, of which then every man will be allowed to judge for himself, and not the church for him. Christ's spiritual vicegerents must then submit to Christ; and his temporal vicegerents would then no longer aid and assist them in putting their *new laws* in execution. In short, there would then be an end of your famous scheme of vicegerents.

Let the melancholly consideration of these things, bring you, *reverend doctor*, from your seat at *Eaton*; and make you suspend your arduous application to the *classics* for a while; to attend the sinking cause of the church. I might alarm you and others on this occasion, in your own pathetic manner, awake, ye *Snafes!* ye *Sherlocks!* ye *Canons!* ye *et cetera's* of the *committee!* Are ye all asleep

when your honour and your darling scheme of church-power is at stake? Is there none of your fraternity that have *capacity, leisure* or *inclination* for this necessary work? For shame, let us not sit still; but let all tongues and all pens be employed in the honest purpose of *self defence*; we know all things are lawful, if expedient for the welfare of the church: Let some of us therefore cast calumnies on the great author of this mischief, that enemy of our power, and asserter of the liberties of mankind: Let us endeavour to make him appear solemnly perjured; as injuring the character of our Lord and Saviour; and as destroying all the common notions of right and wrong, if they happen to stand in the way; or else let us exhibit him to the populace, as a whining, complaining, low and tedious writer, fit only to make women and children weep; or else as artful cunning and prevaricating; and all this, only in order to advance his own worldly interest and advantage.

Let us not be weary in well-doing; but let us go on clamouring for the church, and reproaching all we dislike as enemies to it. Let us talk loudly of secret designs among the dissenters; represent them all as schismatics; and all schismatics in a state of damnation; and
then

then when we have shut them out of God's favour, 'twill not be difficult to make them hated by men.

Above all, let the pulpits ring, on the great anniversary of this month, of the mischief perpetrated in the times of confusion; let us charge it all on the dissenters, and on any part of them that we would have appear most odious; and let us charge it upon them, not as accidentally done by them, or as provoked to it by any ill usage; but as necessarily flowing from their principles; which we cannot then render too monstrous: Charge them as hating all government; as enemies to all christians, but those of their own party; but especially charge them with an hereditary aversion to every individual of the church of *England*.

By these and the like means the populace may be wrought up to madness; and we know what effects their madness produced in the late *pious* queen's time, the great temporal vicegerent of Christ; and what devastations followed all over the kingdoms; till at last she was so enlightened as to part with her ministry. But of that I need say no more; it being fresh in every one's memory. Let us comfort and encourage ourselves in

the use of the same means ; and though any bill should now pass prejudicial to our ambitious hopes, we know not what changes we may be able to effect : At least if we are not able to work upon the inflexible temper of the present temporal vicegerent, we shall by these *godly* methods have the pleasure of embarrassing and perplexing his affairs, as we did those of his predecessor king *William*.

You see, *reverend Sir*, I have done all that can be expected from a *country curate* ; I have defended, upon your principle, the divine authority of our established church, as settled by Christ's commissioners the civil magistrates, in aid and assistance of his spiritual vicegerents, the clergy. I have enforced the necessity of submission to such vicegerents upon the same principles ; and have shewn that these commissioners of Christ may make use of any means, however unchristian, or improper, to secure such establishment ; and may inflict what penalties they please on all dissenters from it, especially if they apprehend it necessary for their self-defence : To strengthen this argument, I have shewn it to be the practice of all churches, the reformed as well as popish, whenever they have at any time thought it proper for their self-defence : And have, lastly,

lastly, added what advice I think proper to be taken in the present juncture, drawn from my observations on the practice of all *true* churchmen.

I have only to request of you and our brethren of influence, in return for these my labours, that, for the benefit of my bookseller, you would recommend this small tract to all young clergymen and others, who preach *charity-sermons* in the city of *London* and parts adjacent, as containing proper hints for such composures. Which will not only forward that *laudable* design; but will much oblige

Reverend SIR,

Your humble servant,

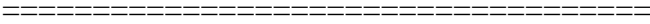
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If every American does his or her best for America and for Humanity we shall become, and remain, the Grandest of Nations – admired by all and feared by none, our strength being our Wisdom and kindness.

Knowledge knows no race, sex, boundary or nationality; what mankind knows has been gathered from every field plowed by the thoughts of man. There is no reason to envy a learned person or a scholarly institution, learning is available to all who seek it in earnest, and it is to be had cheaply enough for all.

To study and plow deeper the rut one is in does not lead to an elevation of intelligence, quite the contrary! To read widely, savor the thoughts, and blind beliefs, of others will make it impossible to return again to that narrowness that did dominate the view of the uninformed.

To prove a thing wrong that had been believed will elevate the mind more than a new fact learned.

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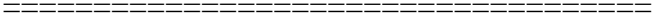
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Emmett F. Fields
Bank of Wisdom

Bank of Wisdom
P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201
U.S.A.

A
L E T T E R

To a Friend in *Lancashire*,

Occasioned by a *Report*, concerning *Injunctions* and *Prohibitions* by *Authority*; &c. *

SIR,

YOUR *last letter* expresseth a much greater *concern*, than I have ever discovered in you on any other account. You tell me, that you have assurances from many in your parts, whose intelligence is very good, that there is certainly a design on foot, amongst the *right reverend fathers* of our church, to procure from the *civil authority*, such *directions*, *injunctions*, or *prohibitions*, as may effectually put a stop to the *debates*, which have been of late revived concerning the *doctrine* of the

* That this tract was written by bishop *Hoadly*, the judicious will see from the style, and manner of pointing, peculiar to the bishop: and I add, Dr. *Bishop* declared bishop *Hoadly* to be the author.

trinity. Upon which, you expostulate with an unusual warmth: You declare the *protestant cause*, (considered as distinct from the *popish*,) to be left destitute of all support; and you conclude, at last, *Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ascalon.*

I do not at all wonder, that you abound in *those* parts with all such *reports* and *stories*, as carry any reflexion along with them upon the *protestant cause*. You are *there*, perfectly surrounded with *those*, whose business it is to invent, propagate, and improve, every thing of that sort: As we have multitudes about this *great city*, to help forward the same work; and to distract the minds of men from seeing or improving the present glorious view of public happiness, which God hath wonderfully placed before our eyes. Nor do I wonder that you, being persuaded of the *truth* of the *report*, should grow warm within at the uneasy thought of such a procedure; because I know you to be a follower of *Christ*, and not of any *master* upon *earth*; and a *protestant* entirely upon that avowed principle of *protestantism*, *viz.* that *all men have, a right to consult the Scriptures, as the rule of their own faith and practice*: Which I have heard you often affirm *they cannot be, unless a perfect liberty be left for debating*

debating their true sense, in all points, and at all times equally.

But you will excuse me, if I do not express the same warmth of concern, upon the same occasion; when I tell you that I am so far from believing the *truth* of the *report*, that I cannot help being confident that it is *one* of those numerous *inventions*, with which our *popish adversaries* are continually at this time loading our *cause*, and keeping up the *spirits* of all in their *interest*: which, I must tell you, would not be at the height they now are at, without the greatest *art* and *management*.

Can I possibly admit it into my thoughts, that my *lords* the *bishops*, than whom no men, upon that *bench*, since the *reformation*, ever more thoroughly understood the *cause* of *religion*; or strenuously opposed every degree of *popery* and *antichristianism*: Can I ever believe that *persons* of such understanding, and such integrity, can possibly be embark'd in such a design, which must in effect destroy the weight of all their own *arguments* against the *church* of *Rome*; and not only weaken, but root up the foundation of the *reformation* itself? Far be it from me, to entertain even the *suspicion* of it. Their *lordships* understand the *grounds* of *protestantism* too well, to think of such *methods*.
And

114 *The Pillars of PRIESTCRAFT*

And the undeniable evidence of such *arguments*, as we have often discoursed over, is too clear to *them*, I verily believe, ever to permit them to attempt the remedy of any imagined *evil consequences*, at the expence of the *christian cause* itself.

If, when we write against the *papists*, it be true, that *points*, tho' settled by all *ecclesiastical authority*, may and ought to be freely discussed and debated: shall it not be true, when *we* ourselves are concerned?

If we are glad, in all our debates with *them*, to fly to the *Scriptures*; and to declare *them* to be the *rule of faith*: Shall we not permit that *liberty* to all others; which *we* can only claim, as it is the *common right* of all *christians*, and not as any thing appropriated to ourselves?

If the *Scriptures* be the *rule* of my *faith*, indeed and not in words only: How can it be so, if I be not to judge for myself, what is in it, and what is not? For, if the *determinations* of others, are to bind me up, or tie me down, to such a particular *interpretation*; then, it is not the *Scripture*, which is the *rule* of my *faith*; but those *determinations* of others.

If the *Scripture* be the *rule* of *faith*, and upon this very account, an *appeal* constantly to be made to it: How can this be done, if *debates* and *enquiries* are suppressed?

If it be the *rule* of *faith*, it must be so equally in *all* points. If not in *all* points; then in *no* point. And, if in *all*; how can any one or more points be excepted, without giving up the whole? or declaring, that it shall be our *rule* or not our *rule*, as *we* think fit?

If we be not *infallible* in *all* things; we are not *infallible* in any *one*. And so reciprocally, if in any *one*; then are we equally *infallible* in *all*. But *infallibility* is laughed out of countenance, in all our disputes with the *Romanists*. How is it possible then, to except any one *article*, or *point*, out of the number; without recurring to that *infallibility*, which we so justly explode? can it possibly be affirmed, that, tho' we are not *infallible* in *all* our decisions; yet in *this* we are: and therefore ordain, that no farther light, can, or shall, break in upon us?

If we be not *infallible*, we may *err*. If we may *err*; we may *err* in all points, equally. If in *all* points;

point; then in any *one* particular point. And so, if we allow debates, and enquiries. in any; there is no remedy: We are obliged, in conscience, to allow them in *all*.

If the whole *protestant cause* be so entirely built upon this, that it would never have subsisted in the world, but by calling all private persons to the *Scriptures* themselves; and persuading them to labour after a right understanding of them: How can this same *cause* possibly be defended, without the same allowance in *all* cases equally, of an *appeal* to them, about the true meaning of the same *Scriptures*? Or, was that *method* only a sort of *scaffolding* in religion; to be pulled down again, as soon as the *fabric* was erected to our mind?

If the *Scripture* be the *rule* of *faith*, in *all* things; then, all *christians* have a *right* to consult and debate about the true meaning of this *rule*, in *any* particular point. And, if so; then, what is it to except *any* particular point out of the number; and to declare that, about *this*, there shall be no farther *debates*, but all shall acquiesce in the *settled interpretation* of the *texts* that relate to it: What, is this, I say, but to say that the *Scripture* is not the *rule* of *faith* to private persons in this particular point?

If it be constantly objected against the *Romanists*, as the greatest evil, that they shut up the *Scriptures* from their *people*; and only dish out to them such *doctrines* as themselves please: How shall *we* ever be able to object this again; or to insist upon the wickedness of it; if we ourselves, as to this *one* point, do the very same? I say, *the very same*. For, what is it to suppress all *debates* about the true meaning of the *texts*, relating to one *article*; but, in truth, to *shut up* those particular *texts*, as effectually, as if they were not in being? And what is it to *shut up* any particular *texts*, but to declare in effect that we have a right to shut up *all*, whenever we see fit?

When *texts* of *Scripture* are in words proposed to us, with such a particular interpretation affixed to them; and such a particular *doctrine* deduced from them; and no allowance for *debates* about them: Can they be said, any more properly, to be *texts* of *Scripture* for our use; than if these *interpretations*, or *doctrines*, were given out to us, without *them*? And, do not the *words* of *Scripture*, in this method, become only a *form*, for *decency* and *ceremony* sake?

If the *papists* decree you shall not debate the meaning of those words, *this is my body*; but take them according to the *determinations* of their *church*, to signify a *change* into *Christ's natural body*, without any farther *enquiries*; and the *protestants* declare this to be *unchristian* and *unwarrantable*: With what grace can they themselves afterwards decree, that tho' this be so *unchristian*, in *this* point, or any other that we ourselves do not admit; yet, in the *doctrine* of the *trinity*, it is very just, and right, and very *christian*, to ordain, that no one shall dispute about any particular *text* relating to *this*; either, whether it be found in any *manuscript*; or, supposing it genuine, what is the true meaning of it? Let the things be placed together in the *light* of *comparison*; And then, let the *difference* of *procedure* be found out, if possible?

Is it *truth*, or *falsehood*, we desire to preserve? If it be *truth*; it stands not in need of such *methods*. If *falsehood*, it ought not to be taken care of.

Is it *truth*, or *falsehood*, we desire to guard against? If *falsehood*; this *method* is rather likely to make it pass for *truth*, when it is not permitted to shew itself. If *truth*; then we are self-condemned. Or rather, remove all
debates;

debates; and *truth* and *falsehood*, are only so many *syllables* put together, signifying no more than *established*, and *not established*.

If it be said, that it is reasonable to suppose *such points* well settled after so many years possession; the *papists* must have the advantage, in this argument; who have so much greater *length of time*, to justify their most absurd *tenets*: besides that they must be now, *true* or *false*, just what they *were* at the beginning of the *reformation*, when they were settled: unless *time* can alter those *two* properties; or turn *fallible* men into *infallible*. It is allowed that no one *interpretation* of any *text*, or doctrine drawn from it, can be *settled infallibly*. And therefore, whatever it be, it *may be false*: and therefore, it is always certain, it may and ought to be examined. Especially, this must hold good in all *points* of a *nice* and extraordinary nature, settled all at once, before there could be opportunity for exact and diffusive *enquiries*.

Is it all at last to be resolved into *peace*, and *quiet*? This removes *truth* or *falsehood*, out of the *question*. And, if this be a good *argument* for *civil discouragements*, and *prohibitions*; then blessed be the *inquisition*, which most effectually keeps all things quiet: and blessed be that

Stupidity

stupidity and ignorance, which flourisheth under such discipline. Let us recall *these* into the world: and all will be as silent, as *desolation* itself. But, indeed, we know how to give a *substantial answer* to this, when the *papists* urge this. We can reply to *them*, “ This is a false
 “ notion of the *peace* of the *church*: which
 “ consists not in the *unity* of *profession*, but the
 “ *unity* of *affection*. God requires of us, to
 “ search into his *truths*: and we are to be
 “ judged at last, by our own judgments. We
 “ have a *right* to be borne with, in our differ-
 “ ences of opinion from one another. For
 “ the *event*; we leave it to God. But we
 “ think nothing can preserve a true *peace*, but
 “ the *allowance* of *mutual debates*; and the
 “ *exercise* of *mutual forbearance*. This ends in
 “ *charity*. The other *method*, besides the
 “ making *truth* and *falsehood*, and all *religions*
 “ equal, promotes *peace* only by promoting
 “ *ignorance*; and consults *quiet*, at best, no
 “ otherwise, than as the destroying all *civil*
 “ *liberty*, prevents tumults. The *remedy*, be-
 “ sides the *scandal* to *religion*, is worse than
 “ the *disease*. Nay, it is but a partial unequal
 “ *remedy*. It could not prevent the *reforma-*
 “ *tion*, (which was a terrible breach of the
 “ *peace* of the *church*, in the *Romanists* opi-
 “ nion;) nor many other lesser efforts. It
 “ falls

“ falls hard upon none, but such honest souls
 “ as will still dare to speak what they think
 “ *truth* and *right*. But it is a glorious advan-
 “ tage to all, who are more concerned about
 “ *preferments*, than about *true religion*.”

This, and much more, can *we* say, when the *papists* preclude us from all *religious debates*, under the poor pretence of *peace* and *quiet*. Let us apply this to ourselves, in God's name : or, let us give up our cause : which must have sunk in its very infancy, if this *argument* had been good in itself ; or thought good by *us*.

How much more might be added ? And, can you possibly imagine, that my *lords* the *bishops*, who have the clearest view of what is of importance to the *protestant cause* ; and, what is more, who are truly *christians*, not to be moved to promote *truth* itself by any method, which *Christ* himself never pointed out to them : Can you possibly think, that such men ; *protestants*, and *christians*, with that *venerable good man* at their head, whose life hath been worn away by his unwearied *zeal* for the *protestant cause* ; will ever consent, either to give to *popery*, in any *one* point, a fresh strength, by inculcating an *implicite faith* ; or to recede one step from the *spirit* of that

VOL. III. F *gospel*,

gospel, by which they firmly expect to be judged.

No, my friend, I hope *better things*: I believe *better things*: I am confident of *better things*. My *lords the bishops* are as sensible, as any men living,

“ That the *protestant cause* must suffer exceedingly in the world; when it is still observed that their *main and boasted principle*, is maintained and celebrated by them, only when they are writing against *popery*; but upon any other occasion, is utterly forsaken and forgot by themselves. They know perfectly well,

“ That if we be not *infallible*, we are *fallible*;

“ That if we be *fallible*, we are *fallible* in all points;

“ That if we be *fallible* in all points, we cannot possibly claim an *indisputable authority* in any;

“ That if the Scripture be the *rule of faith*; it must be so, in all points, at all times, to all persons, equally.

“ That

“ That if it be so ; it must *lie open* equally,
 “ at *all* times, to *all* persons, to be enquired
 “ into in *all* points.

“ That, if *debates* be not allowed in any
 “ one, or more, particular *points*, about the
 “ right *sense of it* ; it is in those *points, shut up,*
 “ as an inaccessible *arcanum*.

“ That no answer can be given to the *pa-*
 “ *pists*, by those, who, in any instances, or any
 “ degree, deny *that* to others, which they
 “ themselves claim from *them*, as the *common*
 “ right of *christians*.

“ That any sort of *indisputable authority*,
 “ call it what you please, is the same, in effect,
 “ with absolute *infallibility* ; and every degree
 “ of *submission* to it, as *such*, is the very same
 “ with *implicite faith* and *subjection*.

“ That the *peace* of the *church*, in any good
 “ sense, can never come in competition with
 “ the *common right* of *Cristians*, or their *liber-*
 “ *ty* of debating *points of religion* : But, in a
 “ true sense, is *then* at its heighth, and in its
 “ glory, when *mutual forbearance* flourisheth ;
 “ and not, when a *profound silence* is esta-
 “ blished.

“ That all *parties*, and all *persons*, see and
 “ own this to be the *truth* of *God*, when they
 “ themselves are *undermost*: And therefore,
 “ that they must acknowledge it to be so,
 “ when they are *uppermost*.

“ That *religion*, and every thing relating to
 “ it, is a matter of *choice*; and not of *force*.

“ That the *reformation* was wholly founded
 “ upon our *common right* to debate about the
 “ *sense* of *Scripture*.

“ That the *christian religion* can approve
 “ of no method of propagating *truth*, con-
 “ trary to this.”

These things, I say, are perfectly well known to my *lords* the *bishops*. And that is enough to assure you, that your neighbours the *papists* have no reason to insult you, upon what you will, I trust, find to be a *calumny* raised, and propagated, by their own friends.

Believe me, their *lordships* have good sense, learning, integrity, zeal for the honour of christianity, as well as the protestant cause, in a most desirable degree. They are *christians*; they are *protestants*; they are *Britons*; they are

are the supporters of *true liberty*: Which is but a word in *jest*, if the chief and most desirable *liberty* of a *reasonable creature*, be either taken away, or broken in upon. And, therefore, I say, depend upon it, it is not conceivable that men of such *characters*, can espouse a *design*, of which I will say no more than I have already said.

I am,

Your most sincere friend,

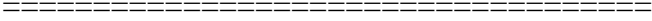
and humble servant.

London, Dec. 15,
1714.

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Emmett F. Fields
Bank of Wisdom

Bank of wisdom
P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201
U.S.A.

A

TRUE CHURCHMAN'S
REASONS

For Repealing the

Corporation and Test-Acts,

As they now stand a necessary Qualification for

Civil and Military OFFICES.

With an humble

PROPOSAL

FOR MAKING

A proper Test in the room thereof.

In a LETTER to a Member of Parliament.

First printed in the Year 1732.

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Bank of Wisdom
P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201
U.S.A.

A
TRUE CHURCHMAN'S
REASONS

For Repealing the
Corporation and Test-Acts, &c.*

S I R,

IN compliance with your request in yours
of the 13th instant, I have under-
written given you my deliberate thoughts
on our brethren the protestant dissenters,
who, you tell me, are endeavouring now to
obtain a repeal of the acts above-mentioned,
which I shall give you with the utmost plain-
ness, freedom, and sincerity, and as fully as
my other affairs and this short letter will allow
me to do it; and as one that considers, and

* Dr. *Hoadly*, when bishop of *Salisbury*, gave the manuscript of this tract to Dr. *Avery*, with his leave to publish or suppress it, as the doctor thought fit. The title shews the bishop to be the author.

ought to remember, that my advanced age will soon bring me to give an account (among all my other actions) for what I now say to you, and that before the most righteous judge of the world.

I need not spend a great deal of time to remind you of the narrow views of those who got those acts pass'd, nor of the dreadful consequences of the vile profanation of the highest and most sacred institution of the only Son of God, and the only innocent Son of Man; who commanded, that till he comes to judge the world, it should be done (not as a qualification for a civil or military office) but in remembrance of him, and of what he did and suffered for us: in which solemn remembrance is necessarily implied, and required of us, the strongest love, the greatest gratitude, and the most exact obedience to our glorious Redeemer, and to all his commands, that we are capable of. Now, my friend, can you suppose that our great Lord and Saviour ever intended that this high and most solemn feast with himself, should be laid in common to his declared enemies, as well as to his professed friends.

You tell me *Judas*, that betrayed him, was one who received the sacrament with the
other

other eleven, which eleven were our Lord's profess'd and real friends: I answer, I grant you that, and more, even that *Judas* at the same time was known by our Lord, (who, as he was God, knew all things) to be his enemy. But it is plain, by the solicitous examination that the disciples made of themselves, upon our Lord's assuring them, that one of them would betray him; that *Judas Iscariot* was a professed lover of his Lord, whom he knew, by his astonishing miracles, by his holy life, and heavenly doctrines, was God and Man, and, in that capacity, came to pay a most perfect obedience for us to the laws of heaven, which the first *Adam*, and all his race then in him, had rebelliously broken; and to lay down his life for all that ever had, did then, or should thereafter believe on, and accept of him, as their liege lord and sovereign. In all probability, if *Judas's* villainy and hypocrisy had been known to the eleven, (as it certainly was to our Lord) *Peter* and the rest would have endeavoured to have defeated his intention of betraying him: but then how would that prophecy of him be fulfilled, that his own professed and familiar friend should lift up his heel against him? And how could his being betrayed by a professed friend be such a part of his humili-

ation for us, as was before-hand told us was to be a mark of his being the true Messiah? Who, though his heel was to be bruised by the old serpent, yet was he to break the devil's head or power, and so gloriously and triumphantly to deliver, by his life and death, all that believe on him, and accept of him as their king, out of Satan's kingdom, and to restore them to the favour of God, and put them into a much happier and securer state for ever, than they would have been, if their first father and common representative had never joined with the apostate angels in rebelling against heaven. Though I do not believe that infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, could ever be at a loss to find out a way to save a rebellious world, (with a salvo to his own justice, which had declared, that man should die if he rebelled) yet since the offended majesty of heaven thought fit to take this method, and to accept of an equivalent, that he might honourably save us, I cannot help believing that it was the best way that even infinite and united wisdom, power, and goodness, could contrive, most expressive of his love to his enemies, who had once borne the image of their maker, and the most likely method to turn our fixed enmity of God into love, admiration, and gratitude. The Al-

mighty

mighty himself seems to speak thus when he says, *What could I have done more than I have done?* But did any of the apostles of our Lord ever encourage or force openly profane swearers, drunkards, whoremongers, lyars, covetous persons, (or idolaters) and the like, to partake of the sacrament of the lord's supper. Are not all such declared to be children of the devil? Do not such as are thus openly wicked carry the mark of the devil in their foreheads? And did ever Christ, or his apostles, make the table of the Lord the table of devils? Did the greatest king that ever was on earth, the king of kings, ever make a law, that if *Judas* would not partake with him of that his supper, he should no longer hold his office of treasurer? No! far from it; even *Judas's* then eating and drinking with our Lord and his disciples, were (in him) voluntary actions, though foreseen by the God that made him, and whom he betrayed: and having no Test-act to extenuate his crime, his wickedness was the greater, in betraying his very best friend with a kiss; for he made the same profession of love, gratitude, and obedience, that the eleven did. If you will but seriously and impartially consider this thing, I am sure you will conclude (as I have done for many years)

years) that the prostituting the most solemn and sacred supper of our Lord to secure places of profit or honour, to those who, though ever so notoriously wicked, will (by complying with the said act) intitle themselves to be called church-men, is a high affront to God, and a foul blot upon any christian church that encourages such a corruption, of which church I profess myself an unworthy member: but one that mourns for all our imperfections, and would rejoice to see all christian churches firmly established and flourish, upon the doctrine and practices of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself (and no other) being the chief corner stone. I hope our stability will never depend on the prostitution of the most sacred institution of our Lord, to serve secular and unjustifiable purposes. But you suggest, that you believe the protestant dissenters, in their present endeavours, (or at least many of them) are not so much aiming at the honour of their and our great lord and master, and at removing this blemish from our church, as at being capable of having civil and military offices. And you seem to fear, that if the king's hands should be untied, and he should have liberty to employ as officers protestant dissenters, as well as churchmen, (as all our
kings

kings ever, by the aforefaid acts, have had to employ a few of them in the navy) that, generally fpeaking, they being (in appearance at leaft) foberer men than the generality of our officers that pafs for churchmen, by receiving the facrament as the faid Test-acts require, though they are feldom to be feen in a church at other times, it will put very great difficulties on many who are of our church: they muft either make great friends, and grow fober and diligent, which is not very agreeable to many of them, or they cannot get into an employment fo eafily as they can, now there are fewer competitors; I have obferved (you fay) by many of us, who have liberty to employ what fervants we pleafe, that we chofe to truft a proteftant diffenter, that we are well affured is an honeft, fober, diligent man, rather than one who cannot have fuch a recommendation, though he tells us he is a true churchman: and they are frequently chofen as conftables, yea, as wardens of our churches, or any other troublefome office, provided it has no profit attending it.

To this I reply, that I will not anfwer for all the diffenters; that their chief views are at the honour of our Redeemer, and at the removing of a blemifh in our church. It is probable

probable many of them aim chiefly at being upon a level with us in civil and military affairs; and, for my own part, I cannot see any reason to depress them. They agree with us in all the substantials of our holy religion; and as to lesser and indifferent things, that we all agree are so in themselves, I wish to God they were left so in their use, and that none would take on them to lord it over God's heritage. They are as good friends to king *George*, and his faithful ministers of state, as you or I, or the best churchmen can be; and they are the only friends that the true church of *England* have, and can depend on. We all profess we are journeying towards heaven; why then should we fall out by the way? Is it any detriment to us to have our truest friends able to assist us with their persons and purses? Do they not readily join us in all elections, when our civil and religious rights depend on such elections? Did they not stand firmly by us in our greatest distresses, when popery, slavery, and all sorts of debauchery, threaten'd to invade and destroy us, and our religion? Did we not then promise, in our danger, that we would come to a temper with them? And what have we ever done for them, except giving them leave to worship God in
the

the manner that they believe in their consciences is most pleasing to him; which is giving them nothing but what their Lord and ours had given them before: for, as they always preached Jesus Christ, and him crucified, though they did not follow us, our passionate predecessors erred as much in silencing and persecuting them, as our Lord's disciples did, who were for silencing and ejecting all who cast out devils in his name, only because they did not follow them. If the dissenters, in their turns, have been guilty of the same fault towards us, their faults will not excuse us in continuing to do that which we own was a fault in them: for their Lord and ours has strictly commanded us to do by all men (not as we are done by) but as we would be done by; to love one another as we love ourselves, and as he loved us, and by his great apostle *Paul*, to give no occasion of offence; to lay no stumbling-blocks in the way of our brethren: if we are strong, not to offend our weak brethren, even by eating of meat; though that is a thing undoubtedly lawful in itself, much less have we any power to force our doubting weak brethren to eat meat, which they scruple, or cannot digest, or to abstain from it, when they think it lawful and expedient; or to make such things

terms of communion with us, which our Lord and Master has not made so, as the church of *Rome* take upon them to do by the laity. Woe be to any that shall add to his words; I mean, that shall lay any stress, or occasion any schism, by their own additions, or weak and doubtful illustrations or explanations of God's laws. Our blessed Lord, and his apostles, never refused to own any as members of the visible christian church, who repented of their sins, and professed their belief on him, as the great Messiah; and such and their families were baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: and dare we cast such out of our church whom God has received and owned? Let the enemies of christianity unchurch them if they please; for my part I never will, but will always endeavour to do by them as I would have them do to me. But you ask me how shall the state be secure? And shall we not endanger the protestant interest if we lay aside this sacramental test, and so put *Papists, Atheists, Deists, Muggletonians, Antinomians, Arians, Socinians, French* (or false) prophets, and the like enemies to christianity, into places of power and profit. I answer, much better than the government or the church are now secured against them, by pre-
ferring

ferring none but such as produce a certificate, signed by one of the ministers and three or four principal and noted worthy members of the church or congregation of which he is a member, (without fee, gratuity, or reward) testifying that such person is a profess'd protestant, and attends the worship of God in such particular protestant congregation when in health, and his affairs do not call him abroad; that they believe him to be a good protestant, and a sober, diligent, religious, and honest man. A severe penalty may be laid on the counterfeiting and altering such certificates; and also on any that shall subscribe any of them, whereby they give any person a character contrary to what they know such person deserves. Such a method as this would soon empty our taverns, ale-houses, brandy-shops, and fields, and fill our churches and protestant congregations on *Sundays*, and other days, when our Maker is to be worshipped: and many a poor wretch, that now never goes into a church, but to get or keep his qualification, may, while he is seeking for loaves and fishes, be caught in a net, which our Lord has commanded to be spread for men. And, in a little time, our armies and navies would not be terrible to sober religious men, as they have been for
many

many years last past, by reason of the most horrible, execrable, and new-invented oaths, curses, imprecations, and other abominations, that are now heard and seen in our armies, navies, cities, towns, countries, villages, rivers, &c. where wickedness is generally and very easily learnt, by the examples of men in power and authority. This repeal (in all probability) will sooner reform the manners of such as have any hopes of ever being more than what they now are, or that would not be always servants, than a thousand reformation-fermons, while there is nothing more required to qualify a man for an office, than his receiving the sacrament of the Lord's supper three or four times a year, whether he be fit for it or not. If he neglects, he must lose his place, and be put under other very severe penalties. If he eats and drinks unworthily, not discerning the Lord's body, he eats and drinks damnation to himself: and if a poor minister, that knows the officer that offers to receive it is a devil, or a child and slave of the devil's, and trembles at the thought of profaning the Lord's table by admitting him, should dare to refuse him, while in this deplorable condition; this poor minister (as the law stands at present) may be ruined by such refused officer: therefore
whatever

whatever views some may have in reforming what is amiss, it can never be too soon to amend whatever dishonours God, and the holy religion he has instituted, and which we profess.

As to the last question you ask me, viz. Whether I think this is a proper time to address for an amendment of this law, which has kept so many out of our churches, and embittered their spirits against us for treating them, as we should not like to be treated by by them, if the tables were turned. I answer, That in my conscience I think it a proper, and the most proper time, for the following reasons.

1. That none but the present time can properly be called our own: the time past is not, nor will it ever be ours again; the future is not, and never may be ours: and we are commanded to work while it is day; and whatever our hands find us to do, to do it with all our might.

2. We have now a most excellent king on the throne, and, blessed be God, he is happy in a faithful ministry: and it must certainly be a very pleasant thing to him to make all his dutiful and loving subjects easy, by bestowing

stowing favours with an impartial hand to those who equally, or most, deserve them, and are fittest for them. And we have no reason to doubt that such a prince will, with pleasure, strengthen the hands of his truest friends of the established church, who have been found, ever since the happy revolution, to be too powerful for all his majesty's enemies among us, (though very numerous and mighty too) when we are joined by the hearts, purses, counsels, and hands of our protestant dissenting friends. We are not so vain as to imagine that we, who are his majesty's best friends of the established church, are (by ourselves) numerous, rich, and strong enough to gain a majority of hearty friends to his majesty, in our approaching elections, if our enemies have art enough to breed a misunderstanding between us, by making our only friends believe, that we of the established church, who are true friends to his majesty, would fain continue the greatest blemish in our church, on purpose to keep them out of their natural and civil rights, who cheerfully and equally contribute, by their persons, purses, and labours with us, to support that happy establishment in the state, that God has blessed us with, and to render his sacred majesty easy in the administration of justice.

And

And therefore, if we had no other motive, but our own true interest and preservation, we ought to do our utmost to enable and oblige our brethren, the protestant dissenters, to join us in our common defence against our common enemies, which I have before-named. I wish there were no other names or distinctions among christians than that of Protestants and Papists; but then there would not be so many exercises for charity or love, and mutual forbearance, as there are: and if we have not those graces, and shew (on all proper occasions) that we have them, whatever we call ourselves, and whatever other angelic qualifications we may be possessed of, we are nothing, but as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

I believe, there is not a true churchman in *Great-Britain*, either clergyman or layman, that soberly considers the mischief and dishonour the misconstruction (or misapplication) of the said Test-act has done, and will do, to the church of *England*, but heartily wishes (as I do) that it were restrained to what was said to be the true intention of it, when first enacted; (or rather exchanged for a much better test; whereby no man will be allowed to witness for himself, as he does by the present

sent

sent test) I mean, to keep out of places of trust and profit, only those who are enemies to the protestant religion.

P O S T S C R I P T.

BEFORE any of my brethren or adversaries undertake to reply to what I have said on this subject, I desire they will will duly consider and answer the following queries.

1. Is our Almighty Saviour (the Lord Jesus Christ) supreme head of his church, or not?

2. Will he at last most righteously judge the world in his united nature, as true God and true Man, and punish all the obstinate transgressors of his laws, or no?

3. Has he wisdom and authority sufficient to institute ordinances and sacraments in his church, and to declare the sacred ends for which he institutes them, or does he stand in need of the assistance of any mere creature, to add any thing to his appointments, or designs, and to make those, their additions, essential thereto.

4. Will he not severely reprove, and add all the plagues that are written in the Book of God, to them that shall add any thing of their own to his word ?

5. Has not our Lord, in his last supper, told us the end of our sacramental eating and drinking his body and blood, viz. that we are to do it in remembrance of him ?

6. If we receive that sacrament once, twice, thrice, or oftner, in a year, to qualify us for any civil or military employment, or to save 500 l. that may otherwise (if we have it) be torn from us, for any one omission, and to preserve our natural and civil rights, of being capable of suing for our just dues, of receiving and enjoying a legacy, and the like. Are not these additional ends to the only end our Lord has told us we ought to regard, when we come to eat and drink with him at his table ? Or can it be a sufficient excuse to tell the great judge of the world, in the last day, that notwithstanding we made bold to prostitute his institutions to serve our secular purposes, when men commanded us so to do, yet we did not wholly forget him at such times, though we cannot deny but that the chief design we then had was to serve our temporal interests ?

7. Is it not persecuting the ministers of our own established church, to compel them to administer that holy sacrament to such as they know are unfit or (if left to their liberty) unwilling to receive it, by such penalties as they are not able to bear; which penalties the person refused has always in his power, by the Test-acts, to bring them under, to the utter ruin of the conscientious ministers and their families?

8. Is it not too severe upon our civil and military officers, to subject them to utter ruin, if they happen to forget receiving the sacrament so often as the Test-acts require? Or if they, for want of their pay in due time, have not money to satisfy two witnesses, who must be able to testify their receiving it, as often as the said acts require?

9. Did the corporation and Test-acts ever preserve our established church from the dangers and invasions we were threatened with, by a popish king and a popish pretender?

10. Can it be supposed that a papist, who knows the pope will sell him pardons for any sins, especially if they are committed to serve holy church, will make any scruple to receive
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the sacrament in our established churches three or four times every year, if he can but thereby secure to himself a profitable office, and be screened from utter ruin by informations and prosecutions on the acts before mentioned ?

11. If the corporation and test-acts are not grievances to those who have no more than the bare name of churchmen, and desire no more than the name ; are they not very great grievances and persecutions to every conscientious member of the church of *England*, that has always been a constant and worthy communicant at the table of our Lord, and is, in all respects, fitly qualified to serve his king and country in some civil or military employment or other, but dares not accept of any public office, because he thinks in his conscience (as I do) that he would sin against God if he should receive it for any other end than what our great Lord has appointed, viz. in remembrance of him ; much more if his secular end should eclipse or annihilate the sacred and only end our Lord had in that solemn and sacred institution ?

12. Whether those members of our own established church, who have (since the Corporation and Test-acts were in being) accepted

of civil or military employments, and till such their acceptance, were constant communicants in our church, and received the sacrament of our Lord's supper, only in remembrance of him, but to keep such their offices, and to preserve themselves and families from utter ruin, have been overcome (contrary to their judgments) to receive the sacrament three or four times a year, in obedience to the said acts, as well as in remembrance of their Lord; and, while they have been so receiving, have doubted that they offended God, by prostituting the most sacred things to secular and common uses: I say, would they not (if they had any fear of God before their eyes) have rejoiced, in being delivered from such temptations and snares, as those acts were to them?

For my own part, I always thought, that in the worship of God, whatsoever I do, if I believe I ought not to do it, it is a sin in me; and that if I do that, which I do but doubt is a sin, I expose myself to damnation.

Read what bishop *Hadly* has writ on this subject: read what the great apostle *Paul* has writ on this head: read the Corporation and Test-acts: and read some Considerations on repealing the Test act, printed in the year 1732.

A
L E T T E R
T O T H E
Right H O N O U R A B L E
T H E
Earl of N O T T I N G H A M.

Occasioned by a late M O T I O N
made by the *Archdeacon of London*,
at his Visitation for the *City Clergy*
to return their Thanks to his Lord-
ship for his A N S W E R to Mr.
Whiston.

By a C U R A T E of *London*, D R. S Y K E S.

First printed in the Year 1721.

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E a r l o f N O T T I N G H A M.

M Y L O R D,

AS your lordship's great name commands a particular regard to be paid to whatever your lordship thinks fit to publish, no wonder that most men were pleased to see your lordship engaging yourself in a controversy of so much consequence to christianity. Persons of your lordship's station have this advantage above other writers, that they always speak *with authority*. I was not therefore much surpris'd to see our famous *university of Oxford* returning to your lordship their *public thanks* for the service you have done in relation to the controversy concerning the trinity; because principles or doctrines

recommended to the world by a person of your lordship's *quality*, and with that *seriousness* and *gravity* with which your lordship has wrote, are always embraced so readily, and are assented to with so little hesitation, that 'twill be deemed presumption by many to make doubt of any thing maintained in your lordship's book.

When the university of *Oxford* had set the example, it could not be thought absurd or unreasonable to attempt to bring the clergy into the same measures. How far 'tis *usual* for the *London Clergy* to address their thanks to any person who has vindicated any doctrine of christianity, I know not. But as I could not come into the motion made by the *arch-deacon* of *London* on that occasion, I must beg leave to lay before your lordship and the world, the grounds upon which, I think, those are to be justified, who refused compliance with him.

'Tis not my design to enter into the merits of the controversy concerning the trinity with your lordship; but only to point out some natural consequences of several principles in your lordship's book, which they must avow and approve, who return your lordship their *thanks* for your *answer to Mr. Whiston*.

When

When such great bodies declare their sentiments of any *book*, the impression is stamped so deep, that few can resist the weight of such authority. Yet who would imagine that in the very book so much recommended, the lawfulness of persecution should be asserted; and such notions maintained, as are inconsistent with the propagation of that christianity which your lordship has defended?

The *first* thing, in which I am forced to differ from your lordship is this, that you approve of the *advice* of *Mæcenas* to *Augustus*, and recommend it to the world as right and good. ‘It was the advice of *Mæcenas* to *Augustus*,’ says your lordship, ‘never to suffer any *innovation* in *religion*, because the *peace* of the *state* depended upon it: that prince had peace in all the world; but what *disturbances*, what *miseries*, *innovations* in *religion* have caused in *this* nation, the *history* of the *last* age informs us sufficiently; and how fatal the *feuds* and *animosities*, occasioned by pretenders to religion, in this may be, no man can *foretel*, every good man *fears*.’ p. 157,

I readily acknowledge that this was the advice of a very great *statesman*; and I cannot but observe, that *statesmen* and *politicians* of

all religions generally espouse these notions and regulate their practices accordingly. *Mæcenas* (who was a *heathen*) gave the advice to *Augustus*, "That he should follow
 " constantly the *established religion of his country*,
 " because all innovations in that would foment
 " sedition in the state, and be a means to
 " subvert his government:" and as if this were an *axiom* in *politics*, that *statesman* is scarce to be found in the world, who does not embrace *this* notion. Mr. *Hobbes* (who found mankind bad enough, but left them much worse) has worked up a system of *state-religion*, whereof the main principles are, that 'the interpretation of all laws as
 ' well *sacred* as *secular* depends upon the
 ' authority of the *supreme power*' That 'the
 ' civil powers have a right to command the
 ' manner of honouring God.' That 'obe-
 ' dience is due to the sovereign in all things,
 ' as well *spiritual*. as *temporal*.' And *lastly*,
 that 'whatever is commanded by the sovereign
 ' power is commanded by God himself.' Now admitting these for *principles*, it plainly follows, as Mr. *Hobbes* has more than once deduced, that 'the supreme power has a right
 ' to prohibit such doctrines to be taught as
 ' he judges improper:' that 'every one com-
 ' mits a crime, and may be justly punished for

‘ the same, who persuades men to receive a
 ‘ new religion:’ that ‘ dissentions in religion
 ‘ are the causes of war, and therefore the
 ‘ *established religion*, (or that which the su-
 ‘ preme power commands) ought to be fol-
 ‘ lowed.’ Such are Mr. *Hobbes’s principles*,
 and such the *consequences* drawn from them !

Statesmen and *politicians* seldom pay too great a regard to religion; and as seldom to the truth of things: ’tis usual therefore for *them* more particularly to condemn men as *factious*, and their writings as tending to *disturbances*, if they recede a hair’s breadth from common opinions. Right or wrong, true or false, is frequently not so much the point, as how it suits with a particular interest. Whether this conduct answers the end proposed, (tho’ I cannot but think that the continuation of sects and factions in religion is entirely owing to these *political artifices*) whether this conduct, I say, answers the end proposed I shall not inquire; since ’tis not my design to consider this advice in a *political* view, but whether it be *right* or *wrong*, fit or unfit in itself to be given.

In this light I must observe,

I. That if this advice be good and right in itself, it plainly follows that all, who at any

time by the reformation of any errors seem *innovators* in religion, ought to be punished, as *disturbers* of the peace of the public. Now this advice being given but a little before our Saviour came into the world, 'tis very unfortunate that it should be given at such a time, when it must have entirely *prevented* the spreading of his doctrines, and the teaching mankind that the gods which the heathens worshipped were no gods. Our blessed Lord ought, in consequence of this advice, to have been punished as *perverting the nation*, as *innovating in religion*, and as sowing sedition and discord among the people, such as it seems 'no man could foretel, every good man might fear.'

2. This advice must necessarily have prevented the *reformation* from popery had it been followed at *that* time, because that was a remarkable instance of *innovation in religion*. Suppose that any statesman had advised *Henry VIII.* or *Edward VI.* or queen *Elizabeth* in that manner, and they had admitted it, must not the superstition and idolatry of *Rome* have continued the *established religion of this country*? Must not we have been kept in the dregs of corruption still? And must not the light of the gospel have been shut from our eyes?

3. If this be right, then all those princes that have followed this advice, have acted a righteous part in *persecuting* to the utmost all that have attempted to *innovate* in religion. The late king of *France* did right to dragoon his *protestant* subjects; and the duke of *Savoy* justly drove out the *Piémont:ise*; and every prince that is most barbarous and cruel, acts an upright justifiable part, and what is most acceptable unto God, when he refuses to suffer any such under his government, whom he may charge with disturbing the peace of the state by not complying with the *established religion of the country*.

4. Every nation in the world thinks, or pretends to think, that the religion established amongst them is acceptable unto God; and that the way in which they pay their honour and worship is such as is *fit* and *proper*, and will draw down the blessings of heaven upon them. Every nation too has its peculiar orthodoxy, and a set of tenets, the truth of which it asserts as the words of God himself. 'Tis impossible that *all* these can be *true*, nay that every particular christian church can hold opinions contradictory, perhaps to their next neighbours, and yet be in the right. Or were this possible, sure we are that the *heathen* and the

the *mahometan* nations, are in the grossest errors. If therefore it be a duty incumbent on every man to keep his mind open to truth, and to receive it when offered to him, the advice *never to suffer innovations in religion* must be *abjurd in itself*, because it would be to prohibit a great part of mankind the knowledge of truth; and it would be to prevent the reception of the gospel in all such places where the benefit of it is not at present known.

Your lordship, I am sure, would not on any account propose a scheme so destructive to truth and to common christianity as this. But under a plenary conviction of mind that your lordship's notions are *true*, and that we of this nation are so happy as to have the truth *established* here; and that in consequence of that, *every innovation here* necessarily being for the *worse*, you think the advice to be just and right.

But then your lordship knows, that hitherto we have in vain been searching for a sure and infallible criterion of truth; that every nation, and every man, how erroneous soever, is orthodox to himself; and that those who are under the misfortune of error, are as positive and confident, as those who have truth on their side. 'Tis therefore of little consequence

quence in the present case, and in our present inquiry, whether one or another has the truth on his side; for whilst every body is fully assured of the truth of his notions, every body will plead the same right; and in the consequence, error will reap every privilege which truth itself can claim.

But your lordship not insisting on this, but on the evidence of fact for the reason why *innovations of religion* are not to be *suffered*; and *Mæcenas* (who was an *heathen*) pretending that an *innovation of religion* was the means to *subvert the government*, this will deserve our most serious consideration. And here,

It must be granted that *usually* innovations in religion have been attended with disturbances in the state. But then the reason why innovations in religion have been attended with feuds, and animosities, disturbances and miseries in the *state*, is, because the *state* intermeddles in that sort of property to which it has no right. The people always assert and vindicate *this*, as a first principle, that *'tis better to obey God than man*; and whilst that is allowed to be true, (which no body I think will *deny expressly*, tho' they may explain it away) whatever the consequences of it are, they will assert and maintain it. A man can

no more refuse his assent to truth, when it appears clear to him, than he can refuse to see the light at noon-day when his eyes are open. If therefore any state refuses to suffer men to change their sentiments, or pretends to hinder them from *obeying* what they think to be the *will of God*, opposition must be expected; and if disturbances ensue, they are not to be imputed to *change of religion*, which has nothing vicious or evil in it, nothing that is disorderly and inconsistent with the public peace,) but to the ill conduct of such advisers as that heathen *Mæcenas*, who refuse to permit men to follow their own consciences in things pertaining to God and not hurtful to any man, and will have them obey *men* rather than *God*.

Innovations in *religion* have no natural or necessary connexion with disturbances or disorders of the *state*: and 'tis just the same absurdity to impute the one to the other, as 'tis to pretend that to alter a man's notions of worshipping God must *destroy* his private property, or at least must cause confusion in it. 'Tis evident that the one has no relation to the *other*, but let what changes you please happen in property, *religion* is the same; or let the ways of honouring God be altered, *property* is the same, except in the case where

a man thinks to please God by parting with his property. But this does not affect the civil government, nor make the magistrate less able to do justice, or to secure his subjects in the enjoyment of their civil interests. When indeed the magistrate refuses to tolerate any who dissent from the *established religion*, oppression that instant begins: but as the cause of all disturbance is removed when oppression is removed, innovations in religion, where there has been no *persecution*, nor any attempts to enslave the subjects minds, can never affect the state, or *cause* any disturbances. When any state assumes a power over the consciences of its subjects, they are forced into a state of war with their civil government; and they continue so long in that state, as they are injured in a property over which the civil government never had any power. In this case the peace of the society is broke: but then 'tis not broke by those who *reform* from any *public error*, but by the magistrate, who assumes a power which never was committed to him. Nor are these evils, these disturbances, feuds, or animosities, chargeable on *innovations in religion*, but on *tyranny*, and *usurpation*, on unjust pretensions to power, and arbitrary dominion over the minds of men.

At most therefore, innovations in religion, are but the *occasions*, not the *causes*, of disturbances to the state; and a man can with no more justice impute to them, as to the *cause*, the breach of public peace, than he can impute to christianity all that hatred and variance that has abounded in the christian world. Suppose a man should warn any one against the doctrines of the gospel, because they have unhappily occasioned much hatred, much dispute, and many abominable practices, which otherwise would not perhaps have been heard of. Would such advice be good and fit? Or ought any man, notwithstanding these accidental inconveniencies, to refuse his submission to it purely on those accounts?

There is not a greater, nor a more common imposition on mankind, than to assign a *wrong cause* of any event, and to argue from thence as if it were the *true* one. *Mæenas*, I beg your lordship to remember that *Mæenas* was an *heathen*, imputed to *innovations in religion* the great *disturbances of state*; whereas the *cause* of disorders in the public was something very different; either the persecutions which men had undergone, which upon occasion given they resolved to retaliate; or else some selfish interest which the pretence of religion served to cover. *Mæenas* confounded therefore,

therefore, either artfully, or ignorantly enough, the *cause* with the accidental *occasion* of disorder; which is, as if any one now-a-days, should lay the hatred of nearest friends upon christianity itself; or charge enmity, malice and revenge upon that very gospel that designed to root those evils out. His advice therefore is wrong in every view; 'tis founded upon a very false principle; it naturally tends to prevent the propagation not only of truth in general, but of christianity in particular. It will justify all the persecutions for religion which have been in the world; and after all, it supposes innovations in religion to be the *causes* of evils, of which they are not the *causes*. Your lordship will judge if such advice is fit to be either given, or taken, or recommended.

A *second* point your lordship argues for is this, that because severe laws were made against *idolatry* and *blasphemy*, words which had then one clear and determinate signification in the *Jewish* dispensation, therefore the laws of any particular country may punish as idolaters or blasphemers, men who according to the different notions that prevail in different countries, may on different and perhaps contrary accounts be called by these names.

For this your lordship thus argues ‘ If the
 ‘ Lord Jesus be a creature and you worship
 ‘ him, ’tis *idolatry*: if he be God and you
 ‘ deny him, ’tis *blasphemy*: and what punish-
 ‘ ment Almighty God ordained for both these
 ‘ sorts of offenders you know,’ p. 159.

The punishment in the *Mosaic* law for
 idolatry was *stoning to death*, and the same was
 inflicted for blasphemy, *v. Lev. xxiv. 10—23.*
 and *Deut. xiii. 1—10.*

Upon this your lordship proceeds, and
 asks this question; ‘ *What texts have you to*
 ‘ *quote for an exemption from those penalties, or*
 ‘ *at least such as the laws of the land inflict?*’

I answer, all the same texts which any
 religious and good man has to quote for an
 exemption from the penalties to be inflicted
 on the greatest of criminals. The *blasphemy*
 against which the penalty of death was de-
 nounced in the law of *Moses*, was a presump-
 tuous, irreligious, contemptuous reproaching
 or reviling of God. The *idolatry* against
 which the like punishment was denounced in
 the same law, was, the departing from the
 worship of the known true God to the wor-
 ship of the heathen idols or fictitious deities.
 Does your lordship now think, that because
 under

under the *Jewish theocracy*, God Almighty thought fit, by an exprefs and particular command, to punish in fuch a manner thefe crimes, about the nature of which there was no room for difpute, and into the commiffion of which no Jew could poffibly fall by a mere error of the underftanding, that therefore the *civil government* in other nations, (affixing thefe names according to their own particular notions in difputable queftions upon perfons and things which have no fimilitude to thofe mentioned in the law of *Mofes*;) may juftly inflict by their own authority the like penalties with thofe commanded in the law of *Mofes*? One man thinks *Jesus Christ* to be himfelf the *One Supreme God*; and worfhips him as *fuch*: another thinks *Jesus Christ* not to be himfelf *the One Supreme God*, but the *One Mediator between God and man*, and worfhips him as fuch a *Mediator* to the glory of the *One Supreme God and Father of all*. Does your lordfhip now fincerely think, that by virtue of the law of *Mofes* againft *blasphemers and idolaters*, one of thefe men has a right to put the other to death for worfhipping *Christ* only as a *mediator*; and that the *other* has a right to put this firft man to death for worfhipping *Christ* as the *One Supreme God*? Each of them thinks he has an equal right

right to call the other an *idolater* and *blasphemer*. One for giving *any worship at all* to a person who is *not* the One Supreme God and Father of the universe; and the other for worshipping as the One Supreme God, Him who is only the Mediator between God and Man. Your lordship easily sees what room here is for uncharitableness and persecution. By what methods shall this evil be prevented? The only remedy I can see is, that men would be careful not to *practice* themselves, much less to *impose* upon others, any thing in the *worship of God*, founded upon any particular hypothesis of their own, beyond what is very clearly and expressly commanded.

By this method, and by *this only*, might be cut off the very root and foundation of all uncharitable censures and wicked persecutions upon this head.

The *next* thing your lordship proceeds to, is to shew that those whom you call *Arians* can have no pretence to toleration considering the conduct of some heretofore called by that name.

“ With what face, says your lordship, can
 “ *Arians* ask such favour from any who have
 “ ever read the history of their *barbarities*.—

“ They

“ They have taught us a lesson against themselves.” p. 159.

1. Allowing it, my lord, to be never so true, that some in former ages called *Arians*, have been persecutors, and as *barbarous* as 'tis possible; yet the argument is no better, nor other than this,—Some monarchs have been tyrants, therefore monarchy is not to be endured. Or,

2. If this inference be true, some of those whom your lordship will call *orthodox*, have been at least as *barbarous*; therefore they also have taught us a lesson against themselves. And thus the circle may be run in accusing and condemning *all* sides, without any justice, or without any reason.

But this must not be passed over thus slightly. Not that it is of any consequence, who were the *first* persecutors, or who not, since the real debate is, whether *any* of either side have *any* right to persecute another: whether those that have the truth on their sides have more right to persecute those who are in *error*, than those who are in error have to persecute those that enjoy the benefit of truth. Yet because this evil is usually thrown upon those, who are *for the time being* called *heretics*,

heretics, I cannot but take notice, that if we consult the *ecclesiastical historians* we shall find that those whom your lordship esteems *very orthodox* were the *first* that taught the world the method of persecution; 'twas these that *first* brought in the *secular power* to drive those whom they called *heretics* out of the church. As soon as the *Nicene council* had condemned *Arius* and his opinions, the emperor *banished him*, and *Eusebius*, and *Theognis*, and *others*. He issued out an *edict*, that “if any book of *Arius's* could be found, it should be *burnt*: that if any one concealed any book, and did not produce it that it might be burnt, he himself should be put to death instantly.” After this we find the emperor resolving to root out all sorts of *heresies*; and accordingly he issued out an *edict* ‘against the *Novatians*, *Valentinians*, *Marcionists*, *Paulians*, and those called *Cataprygians*, and in general all *heretics*, first, that they should not *dare* to have any *public meetings*: and that all the *houses* where they were wont to assemble should be taken away; then, that they should not *meet together privately*; and lastly that their *churches*, if they might be called such, should be given to the *catholics*. Their books likewise were to be searched for and taken away.’

Thus

Thus did the *orthodox* begin this detestable method against the *heretics*; which some of them perhaps when they grew in power, returned; and from that time to these *last days* has that impious course been prosecuted. But the *first* breach was made by the *orthodox*; 'twas they *began* to employ the *secular arm*; 'twas they *began* to *banish*; 'twas they *began* to hinder the public meetings of those whom they called *heretics*; and what wonder then when the tree of evil was planted, if it took root downwards, and shot forth upwards, and brought forth its natural fruit. If therefore the *lesson* be to be learnt against men of any denomination from this, that some of *them* also have been *barbarous* when in power, 'tis a *lesson* that all parties have taught those that have been *undermost*, and if some of them who were called *Arians*, behaved themselves in a cruel manner under *Constantius* and *Valens*, and afterwards in *Spain* and *Africa*, let others look into the *Theodosian Code*; and upon the persecutions of all that have had any odious name affixed upon them for 1300 years together, and see if they have any room to boast upon this head. Still this is certain, that persecution was *begun* by the *orthodox*; and one very remarkable difference appears throughout all our

church historians, that whereas the *creeds*, which those that were called *orthodox*, proposed and insisted on in all their *councils*, were always made the *tests* of parties; and in order to this they *always* contained some human doctrines, some particular inventions of designing men, some notion or other that was unscriptural; yet in the *creeds* proposed by those on the *other* side this temper was constantly observed, that nothing was ever put into them but what all might subscribe and assent to; the very terms were generally *scriptural*; nor did they attempt to put on a level the doctrines of men with the revelation of God.

Give me leave to add one remark more here; and that is, that as *Mæcenas* was a *heathen*, and gave his advice to a *heathen*, it must have been to persecute *christians*, so had *Mæcenas* lived in *Constantine's* time, and been what was called *orthodox*, his advice had been to persecute *Arius*; had he lived in *Constanus* or *Valens's* time, when the power was entirely in hands called *Arian*, (tho' there never was any *Arianism* imposed in their *creeds*) his advice to suffer no innovations in religion must have pushed on those princes to have destroyed the *orthodox*; and had he lived under *Lewis XIV.* not a protestant

testant must or could have been suffered in France.

The *next* thing in your lordship's postscript which I think myself obliged to consider is, the declaration which your lordship has, in effect, made against an *open toleration*.

Your lordship begins with an intimation that an "*ill use has been made of the text for suffering the tares which were sown by the enemy, to grow up with the wheat,*" and you add, "*surely we are not to lay ourselves to sleep on purpose to give the enemy an opportunity to sow them.*"

I will not presume to guess at any particular exposition of this text which your lordship may perhaps have met with; but how far it relates to the present debate, I'll endeavour to shew. As in the exposition of the parable of the *sower*, Matt. xiii. 23. the *seed* is explained to mean the *word preached*; so here likewise, v. xxiv. *good seed* is that doctrine which really produces virtue and goodness. *Tares*, here opposed to *good seed*, and which were *sown by an enemy*, represent *false doctrines* which are taught by *an enemy*, i. e. evil men. Good and virtuous persons, when they see such *false doctrines* and evil men suc-

ceeding, would rejoice to have their *false* opinions rooted up, and would rejoice that the *field*, *i. e.* the *church*, might consist of only good members; but our Saviour determines, that the *rooting out* of the tares, *i. e.* the violent casting out of false notions by extremities, ought not to be practised; but that good men should take heed, lest while they *gather up the tares, they root not up also the wheat*. Our Saviour has so explained this parable, that it cannot be much mistaken, when he tells us the *time when the righteous shall shine*, viz. not at present, but *then, when the son of man shall send forth his angels*, v. 43. plainly determining, that the *tares* should grow up with the *wheat* till the end of the world. Our Lord does not tell us that 'tis our duties to give *opportunities* to the enemy: he does not say that we ought to *lay ourselves asleep*, or that we should not guard against the enemy as much as possibly we can: but that we must use all such means, and only such, as are *right and just*, to prevent the growth of false doctrines; that we must not *tread down* the wheat in order, as we perhaps imagine, to root out the tares. A wise man will not take such measures to destroy a *weed*, as necessarily must destroy his corn; and this is what our Saviour only aims at.

Now persecution for opinions is what must necessarily destroy the *wheat* as well as the *tares*, the truth as much as it can do falsehood. Where there is so much falsehood in the world, and that too in so much power, by this way of proceeding the *truth* must necessarily be rooted up. The *Mahometans* imagine, no doubt, that they are in the *truth*, and that christianity is a *tare* in their field; therefore they upon this principle are obliged to root it out. Amongst christians, the *papists* ought to root out the *protestants*, and the *protestants* to root out not only the common enemy, the *papists*, but likewise to arm each particular sect against its neighbours. What a scene of woe and desolation must this produce? Whilst such contradictory orthodoxy every where appears, every where must appear, store of *tares* to be gathered up and burnt, till at last *orthodox*, and the longest survivors of cruelty, must signify the same thing. But then upon the scheme of open toleration nothing is more natural and easy;

For here our business is not to *lay ourselves asleep*, but to watch; 'tis to *reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long-suffering and patience*. Every man has the right, which your lordship has used, to endeavour to convince gain-fayers. Reason is the weapon of rational

agents, and never fails to be revenged on those who are enemies to it, that is, who either maintain an error, or even hold the truth in unrighteousness. With this fence we are to guard ourselves. And if the enemy surmounts this, and cannot be convinced, or is obstinate and will not, 'tis *out* of our powers to hinder the growth of these tares: we must do ~~all~~ that is *in* our powers to convince him, we must pray for him, but not treat his person ill; nor must we, to ruin him, make use of such arts as in consequence must ruin our own selves.

Your lordship will call this, perhaps, *giving an opportunity* to the enemy to sow the tares. But is it *giving an opportunity* when you watch and oppose him? When you spread the truth as fast as the enemy does his errors? When you refute or endeavour to refute his principles? But if you will not admit this for sufficient watchfulness, but think it necessary to make use of *force*, and the *secular arm*, 'twill be giving an opportunity still, or may be called so, till you come to the use of racks and gibbets; nor can any stop be put, till that effectual one of death itself is applied.

One reason which your lordship has made use of in your *prefatory* discourse for the printing

ing this book is, ‘ *because it is not enough to believe with the heart, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation; and not confessing the Lord Jesus before men, is next to the denying him.*’ p. 3.

Your lordship, I dare say, will conceive a man, however erroneous, to give the *best* marks possible of his *integrity*, who suffers great temporal inconveniencies, (such as imprisonment, or the loss of a very creditable and handsome support of a family) for thinking, that *not to confess the Lord Jesus before men*, such as he conceives him really to be in himself, and in office and relation to us, *is next to denying him*. But notwithstanding *their integrity*, and *their fears* lest they *should be thought proselytes* to what *they think* an error of the utmost consequence, yet your lordship conceives, that the want of inflicting punishments on those you call *Arians*, for their notions, is *giving an opportunity to the enemy* which we ought not.

But my lord, the opportunity which your lordship fears should be *given to the enemy*, has been carefully guarded against; and *moderate penalties* have been applied, tho’ these wholesome severities, as they have been called, have proved ineffectual. Mr. *Emlyn* was sentenced

to suffer imprisonment for a year and a day, and to pay a thousand pound fine; (that is, many hundred of pounds beyond the prisoner's utmost abilities) and to give security for his good behaviour during life. Mr. Whiston's case is more universally known, and especially to your lordship, who is acquainted with his expulsion from his professorship, and from a lecture in Cambridge, and turned a starving with a wife and a numerous issue. But still it may be said that the opportunity is given to these enemies to sow the tares, notwithstanding these attempts: and accordingly both these gentlemen write; and write so well, that they have great weight with many that read them. If fines, imprisonments, and deprivations are not sufficient to put a stop to them, I see not what can do it but greater extremities still, that is, death; which surely not any one principle of reason, or any one doctrine of Jesus Christ can justify.

Your lordship goes on thus: '*The Jews*
 ' reckon they are forbid even by the law of Moses
 ' to revile the gods of other nations which were
 ' no gods: but that the Son of God, whom we
 ' and all Christendom adore as the God of our
 ' Salvation, should be reviled, trampled on,
 ' and put to open shame by these of our own
 ' nation,

‘nation, in contempt of the laws of the land,
 ‘as well as of God, uncontrouled, without
 ‘any animadversion—is unaccountable, both in
 ‘prudence and religion.” p. 158.

The reader is here told (with what justice your lordship will consider) that those whom your lordship is pleased to stile *Arians, revile, trample on, and put to open shame the Son of God*. Whence such a charge could arise I cannot conceive. Do they *revile*, whom they *adore*? Do they *trample on* that person whom they daily *praise*? Do they *put to open shame*, him, whom they *thank* for his kindness, condescension, love and benefits towards them? Surely this must appear very shocking, to say that a man *reviles* the being whom he daily *praises, and prays to*; for whose sake he daily *suffers, and is ready to undergo the severest trial that can be inflicted*. What are the marks of love, of gratitude, and of the most profound respect; if a readiness to submit to any temporal inconveniencies for any one’s sake is deemed *reviling and contempt*? Should Mr. *W.* retort this charge on his adversaries, and openly assert that in consequence of their scheme, they *revile and trample on* the peerless majesty of the God and Father of all, sure I am, that every serious christian would detest the imputation, and think that religion suf-

ferred more from such uncharitable censures, than it could do from the denial of any point, in which the Scriptures have determined nothing clearly.

There is but *one* point more that I shall trouble your lordship with, and that is on account of the suggestion which your lordship has made, that those who *are in authority have the real guilt of being* partakers of other mens sins, if they do not provide a speedy remedy to the evils your lordship complains of; for, *qui non prohibet, cum potest, jubet.* p. 158.

That a just and proper remedy ought to be applied to every *real* evil is readily acknowledged; and therefore I declared for the *only* remedy that appears to me to be consistent with reason and with revelation; and I as heartily desire that every man may be brought to see the errors of his ways, as your lordship does. But I hope I am not a *partaker of another's sins*, if I cannot come into a scheme of *persecution*; or if I cannot but think that the only proper method of dealing with reasonable men is conviction, and the pressing them with arguments from reason and revelation. This makes me admire at what your lordship alludes to, when you intimate that
there

there is not at present given to the proper champions of our faith an opportunity to refute and reclaim [men] from their errors, p. 158. Are the clergy, my lord, now restrained from searching into Scripture, or from searching into antiquity, in order to find proper materials to refute any error? Are they restrained from writing or from publishing their thoughts? Or what way of refuting and reclaiming men from error is prevented by his majesty? True it is, that 'Defender of the faith is not an empty title,' *ibid.* Yet permit me, my lord, to express my wishes, that if the faith can no way be defended but by fines, imprisonments, or deaths, that it may ever continue an empty title. 'Tis better that that should be an empty title, than that ever it should be maintained by that which is antichristian; and which if prosecuted by every crowned head, must make the christian world a scene of blood and cruelty.

But by comparing what your lordship says here, with what you have said p. 156. 'tis easy to see that your lordship blames 'those who are in-authority, that do not advise his majesty to give the fathers and pastors of our church leave to speak for themselves, and in deed for the king.' i. e. that the convocation should determine this controversy. That

“ *That should be permitted to sit and act in taking care of that flock of Christ, of which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers, and which the laws of the land have committed to them,*” p. 156—7.

Before I consider the *thing* proposed by your lordship, I cannot but observe, that your lordship in the former passage wanted the *convocation to REFUTE* errors: here 'tis to *sit and act*. I think the usual method in *convocation* is not to *refute* errors; 'tis not to *convince* mens judgments, or to produce *reasons* for what they do, but to determine the truth or falshood of a notion *authoritatively*. *Synodical* affairs are always transacted in a *judicial* manner; whilst *private persons*, i. e. men in their private capacities, usually attempt to *refute* any error that happens to arise.

As to the method by your lordship proposed, that *Those who are* in authority are partakers of other mens sins because they do not suffer the convocation to *sit and act*, I will lay before your lordship the sentiments of *two* very great men, who have been reputed ornaments, the one of the *antient* church, the other of our *own* church.

The *first* is, *Gregory Nazianzen*, that dear friend of *Basil*. Many bishops being met at *Constantinople*,

Constantinople, and summoning this great man, who for his exactness and skill in scripture was called the DIVINE, to that *synod*, he refused to come; " Experience having taught
 " him how little good could be expected
 " from *synods*; they usually widening more
 " than curing differences. Nor will I (says
 " he) be present at any *synods*, where they
 " cackle like geese or cranes: in those assem-
 " blies there is contention, and squabble;
 " and shameful actions, which were hid be-
 " fore, are there made public, men of hostile
 " minds towards one another being assembled
 " together?" These reflections were oc-
 casioned by those meetings of the clergy at *Constantinople* a first and second time; and at other places; from whence this great DIVINE found so little comfort, that nothing could persuade him to come near them at last. So little did he expect from *synods* towards the curing of controversial evils.

The other, is our present primate*, whose judgment in synodical affairs every man must value and pay a wonderful deference to. ' There is scarce any thing in *antiquity*, says
 ' he, that either more exposed our christian
 ' profession heretofore, or may more deserve
 ' our serious consideration at this day, than

* Dr. Wake, then archbishop of *Canterbury*.

‘ the *violence*, the *passion*, the *malice*, the *false-*
 ‘ *ness*, and the *oppression* which reigned in most
 ‘ of those synods that were held by *Constantine*
 ‘ first, and after him by the following *em-*
 ‘ *perors*, upon the occasion of the *Arian* con-
 ‘ *troversy*. Bitter are the complaints, which,
 ‘ we are told that great emperor made of
 ‘ them.—And what little success other synods
 ‘ have oftentimes had, might easily be made
 ‘ appear, were it needful to enlarge upon so
 ‘ known and melancholy a subject. Now
 ‘ this, as it has obliged not only the best
 ‘ men, but the wisest emperors, to be very
 ‘ careful, how they either called, or encou-
 ‘ raged such assemblies, unless they had some
 ‘ reason to hope for a *good effect* of them, so
 ‘ may it suffice to convince us still, that neither
 ‘ are *all times*, nor *all causes*, either proper
 ‘ for, or worthy of, such meetings: and that
 ‘ the expediency of them ought to be very
 ‘ clearly made out, before it can with any
 ‘ reason be expected, that the prince should
 ‘ consent to their assembling.’ *Authority of*
Christian Princes, p. 307—8.

Your lordship most certainly will say, that
 the *present time*, and the *present cause*, are most
 certainly *proper for*, and *worthy of*, such meet-
 ings. ‘ A time when the *doctrines* of our
 ‘ most holy faith, and the *apostolical institution*
 ‘ of

‘ of the *government* of our church are so viru-
 ‘ lently attacked, and in so open and insolent
 ‘ a manner.’ p. 157.

Permit me, my lord, to reply to this in the
 words of that *great* man, our present *metro-*
politan. ‘ There may be some *times* in which
 ‘ it would be altogether *unadvisable* to assemble
 ‘ it [a convocation.] When mens *passions* are
 ‘ let loose, and their *minds* disordered; when
 ‘ their *interests* and *designs*; their *friends* and
 ‘ their *parties*, nay their own *judgments*, and
 ‘ *principles*, lead them *different ways*; and they
 ‘ agree in nothing so much, as in being very
 ‘ *peevish* and *angry* with one another: when
 ‘ their very *reason* is depraved; and they
 ‘ judge not according to *truth* or *evidence*, but
 ‘ with *respect* of *persons*, and every one opposes
 ‘ what another of a *different persuasion* either
 ‘ *moves* or *approves of*: what good can the
 ‘ *prince* propose to himself, or any *wise* man
 ‘ hope for, from any assembly that can be
 ‘ brought together, under the unhappy in-
 ‘ fluence of these, and the like prepossessions.

‘ It was the sense of this, made a *wise* man,
 ‘ in the last age, tell *Charles* the Vth, *That it*
 ‘ *appeared by experience*, and might from *reason*
 ‘ *be demonstrated*, that those affairs seldom suc-
 ‘ ceeded well, which were to be done by many.

‘And if such be the inconvenience to which
 ‘*number* alone, exposes such meetings, in the
 ‘best times; sure I am, both *reason* and *ex-*
 ‘*perience* will much more convince us, that in
 ‘times of *doubt* and *discontent*, this will be the
 ‘more likely to be the case; and that under
 ‘such circumstances, there is little good to be
 ‘expected from them.’ *Authority of Christian*
Princes, p. 316—17.

As to the *cause*, upon which your lordship
 thinks it fit for the convocation to *sit and act*,
 I must still reply in the words of our *most*
reverend archbishop.

‘It would be not only *needless* but *absurd*
 ‘for a synod to be called to debate over again
 ‘the fundamentals of piety.—All that they
 ‘would gain by doing it, would be only this,
 ‘that they would see their authority and de-
 ‘finitions despised by them; and might pro-
 ‘bably give offence to good men, as if they
 ‘had so much reason on their side, or there
 ‘were so much difficulty in this case, as to
 ‘need the solemnity of a convocation to inter-
 ‘pose in it.’ This his *grace* speaks concern-
 ing *sceptics*, and *libertines*, who deny the truths
 of christianity. But then his *grace* goes on to
 affirm, ‘that neither there is any need of a
 ‘*new synod* to declare the doctrine of the
 ‘church

' church in such points, in which it has, by
 ' *as great, or even greater* authority, been
 ' before declared. A convocation may sit,
 ' says he, and draw up what *creeds* and *con-*
 ' *fessions* it will; but if they expect that those
 ' who despise the authority of the *antient*
 ' *general councils* of the church should be con-
 ' cluded by their definitions, it will, I doubt,
 ' appear that they have but flattered them-
 ' selves with vain hopes: and they will find
 ' too late, that those, who are not to be re-
 ' strained by what has already been deter-
 ' mined, will much less regard any *new*
 ' *decisions* that can be made against them.'
ibid. p. 313.

'Tis not, my lord, a crime I hope in me,
 to desire that the *royal supremacy may get the*
better of the spiritual jurisdiction. ' If the
 ' meeting and acting of the convocation does
 ' depend upon the *grace and pleasure* of the
 ' *prince*, so that they can neither assemble,
 ' nor consult, without his permission, nor is
 ' he any farther obliged to allow of *either*,
 ' than he is persuaded their meeting and acting
 ' will be for the public benefit of the church
 ' and kingdom'—perhaps ' his majesty may
 ' have as good or better reasons against their
 ' sitting under the present circumstances of
 ' affairs,' than can be offered for it. *ibid.* p. 3.
 The

The charge of *partaking in other mens sins* is certainly very severe: it deals about a heavy reflection upon all the *ministry*; and how far his *majesty himself* may be concerned, I know not. Every reader, I believe, will be apt to conceive that the charge is pointed *there*, as well as upon others, when your lordship says, That ‘*Defender of the faith is not an empty title: the defence of the church of England is —the foundation of the revolution, and of his majesty’s succession to the throne,*’ p. 158.

But what is all this grounded upon? Because a *synod* is not permitted to *assemble*, where ’tis ‘very likely to fly into *heats* and *parties*, and after much contention, nothing to be done. And then the enemies without, will smile, and tell the world, that when it came to the trial, the convocation itself could not agree, about this matter; and from thence draw an untoward consequence against the very doctrine itself [of the trinity.] *Authority of Christian Princes*, p. 330.

I would willingly, my lord, cast a veil over this unaccountable behaviour of *councils*, ‘where *pride and ill-nature* commonly *domineer* ;’ that I may still keep to that *great man’s* words. *Appeal. Pref. p. 24.* When one sees the arts that have been used to condemn.

demn or to acquit a person, the intrigues, the corruption, the malice and oppression, which appears in the very first *assemblies of the clergy* under *Constantine*; and by what tricks their points were carried *then*, and have been too often since, I am borne down by the weight of his *grace's judgment*, and cannot but acquit his *majesty* and all others of all imputation of sin, in not permitting, in our present circumstances, the *convocation to sit and act*.

Pardon me, my lord, for the trouble I have put your lordship to on this occasion. But when the humour of addressing, begun at *Oxford*, encouraged and promoted by the *London clergy*, and 'tis said (I do not pretend to say for what end) that 'tis to be carried on in many *visitations* over *England* this summer, — when this humour of addressing *thanks* for a *book*, which contains the very essence of *persecution*, is promoted, I cannot but openly *protest* against such proceedings. It seems to me an artful method of some to catch the unwary, that under pretence of declaring *against* heresy, they may declare *for* persecution. Your lordship, no doubt, is not accountable for any actions of other men. I therefore propose it to the consideration of all those who are so zealous for these *thanks*,

that

that if this public approbation of your lordship's book be thus testified, whether it be not in all those that are concerned, as that *great prelate* so often quoted, expresses it, to arraign the government for not suffering the *CONVOCAſION* to meet, and to tell the world, that both the honour of religion, and the good of the church, are concerned in it, and cannot be preserved without it. *Authority of Christian Prin.es*, p. 5. Is not this to make as *invidious a suggestion* against our sovereign lord king GEORGE, and against *all in authority under him*, as 'tis possible to make? Is this suggestion *fit and right at this time*, when a spirit of faction is raised and promoted over the nation on *other accounts*; and when discontents have clouded in a great measure mens understandings?

But if thanks must be voted, as I perceive the *university of Cambridge* likewise hath just now done, yet let the doctrine of *persecution* be excepted; let the *heathen's* advice, which must have prevented christianity's coming into the world, and must hinder the *reformation of public errors* in all countries, be excepted; let the *charge upon the government* be excepted; and let the *errors of the book*, whatever they be (for which I am sure your lordship would not accept any one's *thanks*) be excepted, that
those

those who vote their thanks may not be chargeable with *them*, and then I think the *sincerest thanks* are due to your lordship; nor would any man more readily concur in giving them, than,

My LORD,

April 28th,
1721.

Your Lordship's

Most obedient Servant.

P O S T S C R I P T.

TH O' in the preceding *letter*, a sufficient answer is given to what your lordship had said concerning punishment for *blasphemy*, yet I have judged it not improper to suggest a few things upon *that* topic more particularly.

Blasphemy is an irreligious, presumptuous, contemptuous reviling of God. When therefore your lordship says, p. 159. *If he [Christ] be God, and you deny him, 'tis blasphemy*, your lordship confounds an *irreligious, presumptuous, contemptuous reviling of God*, with a *mistaken notion or conception of God* which has *no contempt, no reproach, no reviling of God* designed or intended in it.

There

There is not a more mischievous abuse of words, than to apply a term, which always in its *proper* sense stands for a *designed presumptuous* reviling, to cases where *no* designed reviling is intended. To execute therefore laws, made against *real blasphemy*; and under the cover of that *word* to draw in, as *guilty*, those who *by consequences and construction* only, can be deemed *blasphemers*, is to *ensnare* and to *entrap* men; 'tis to punish persons for crimes which they never *thought* of, and from their hearts abhor; and therefore with equal justice, they might be treated as *felons*, or *murderers*, as they can be *blasphemers*.

Let *blasphemy*, my lord, that which is *really* such, be punished as severely as your lordship wishes; but let not men be deemed *blasphemers* by *consequences*. I know not where this evil can stop, if once this practice should take place; every *Calvinist* is charged with *blasphemy* by his adversaries, for making God *the author of sin*; and he in his turn charges them with the *same crime*, for maintaining *freedom of will*. 'Tis just the same betwixt *protestants* and *papists*: each of *them* dealing about the word *blasphemy*, upon the other, by a horrible abuse of the word, for a *consequence*, which is utterly denied, and detested, by those that are charged with it.

When

When the word, *blasphemy*, is applied for, *attributing to God what does not belong to him*, or for, *denying what does belong to him*—In these cases, and such like, which are infinite, it does not signify any *vice*, but a *mistake*; it does not relate to any thing strictly *evil* in a man, but to any *error* or inconsistency of notion about God: 'tis taken not in its *proper and eminent* sense, but in a *large* extent, for whatever, *any way*, by *consequence* remote or near, hurts the name and reputation of any one. To punish men for *blasphemy*, in this sense of the word, is to punish men, in effect, for being *fallible*, and because they are not able to see all the consequences, that those of the most *exalted* understandings really, or in imagination, do see. A punishment which where 'twill fall “*no man can foretell, every good man fears.*”

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Bank of Wisdom

There was a time, known as the Golden Age of Freethought, from about 1865 to 1925, when it was thought that the Higher Religions -- Rationalism, Secularism, Deism, Atheism and other “thinking” religions (as opposed to the lower “believing” religions) would be the main religious force in Western Civilization within 50 years. The failure of this great upward religious movement was no fault of the new and elevating religious ideas; these new progressive religious ideals were forcefully suppressed by the political power of the old beliefs.

During this period of rapid intellectual progress there was a large number of Scholarly Scientific, Historical and Liberal Religious works published, many of these old works have disappeared or became extremely scarce. The Bank of Wisdom is looking for these old works to republish in electronic format for preservation and distribution of this information; if you have such old, needed and scarce works please contact the Bank of Wisdom.

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Bank of Wisdom

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ANIMADVERSIONS
ON A
REVEREND PRELATE'S
REMARKS
UPON THE
BILL

Now depending in

PARLIAMENT:
ENTITLED

A bill to prevent suits for tythes, where none, nor any composition for the same, have been paid within a certain number of years.

By a member of the *House of Commons.*

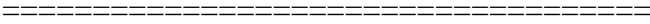
To which are prefix'd the REVEREND PRELATE'S Remarks.

First printed in the year 1731.

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If every American does his or her best for America and for Humanity we shall become, and remain, the Grandest of Nations – admired by all and feared by none, our strength being our Wisdom and kindness.

Knowledge knows no race, sex, boundary or nationality; what mankind knows has been gathered from every field plowed by the thoughts of man. There is no reason to envy a learned person or a scholarly institution, learning is available to all who seek it in earnest, and it is to be had cheaply enough for all.

To study and plow deeper the rut one is in does not lead to an elevation of intelligence, quite the contrary! To read widely, savor the thoughts, and blind beliefs, of others will make it impossible to return again to that narrowness that did dominate the view of the uninformed.

To prove a thing wrong that had been believed will elevate the mind more than a new fact learned.

Emmett F. Fields
Bank of Wisdom

Bank of wisdom
P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201
U.S.A.

REMARKS upon a BILL now depending
in PARLIAMENT, entitled, *A bill to
prevent suits for tythes, where none, nor
any composition for the same have been
paid within a certain number of years,*

By a Reverend PRELATE*.

THE law concerning *exemption from
tythes* as it stands at present, is thus :
If tythe be demanded by the incum-
bent, and the proprietor of the lands pleads
an *exemption*, the incumbent insists upon *com-
mon right* as the general rule of law ; and it
rests upon the proprietor to prove the exemp-
tion. And there is great reason it should be
so ; because in all cases, whoever pleads *exemp-
tion* from a general rule, is bound to assign the
special grounds and reasons, of such exemp-
tion : And because in this particular case, it is
supposed that the proprietor of the lands has
the evidences in his hands ; and it cannot be
supposed that he or his ancestors would pay for
an estate as tythe free, without clear evidence.

* Dr. Sherlock, then bishop of Salisbury.

that it was so ; when they knew the law to be such, that an incumbent would have it in his power at any time to demand tythe of common right, and must prevail, if legal evidence of the exemption could not be produced.

But by this new bill, the proof shall not rest upon the proprietor of the lands, who is supposed to have the evidences of it in his hands, and he and his family concerned in interest to preserve them ; but the proof that payment has been made within the term of years to be fixt by this bill, if it pass into a law, is to rest upon the incumbent ; who comes a stranger to the parish, unacquainted with what was done in the times of his predecessors, and not like to be assisted by the parishioners, considering the interest they have, and the influences they are oft times under.

In this way, exemptions may easily be set up for all lands, the tythe whereof has not been taken in kind, but (which is the most usual method) paid in money, whether as a *modus*, or upon the foot of a private agreement between the incumbent and proprietor. For the receipts for the money are in the hands of the proprietor, and the succeeding incumbent may know nothing of any agreement made ; or if he do, he cannot oblige him to produce the
receipts

receipts in proof of it. Whereas the law, as it stands at present, by which he is enabled to sue for tythe of *common right*, and prevails, if the proprietor do not prove the exemption, effectually secures the clergy against all such frauds and impositions, and nothing else can effectually secure them.

Many of the rectories impropriate belonging to bishops, deans, and chapters, and other ecclesiastical persons, and to the colleges in the two universities, are, and have long been, in the hands of lords of manors, or other proprietors of lands within the same parishes; which leases descend from father to son, and enable them to let their own estates tythe-free. And all lands, which by reason of such unity of possession, shall have paid no tythe within the term to be limited by this act, are exempted by it from paying tythe *for ever*.

Some of the religious orders, particularly the *Cistercians*, were privileged from paying tythe of lands *while they continued in their occupation*, and not otherwise. And though all the lands of the religious came into the hands of the crown, and from the crown to the grantees, in the same *manner* as the religious enjoyed them; yet by this bill, if the grantee of the

crown shall have kept such lands in his own occupation, during the term therein to be limited, all incumbents are deprived for ever of the right they had ~~to~~ tythe, when such lands should be occupied by a *tenant*.

Warrens, woodlands in particular countries, and lands that have lain waste, from all which tythe would be due, if converted into arable or pasture, will be entitled to a *perpetual exemption* by this act; and it may have the like effect in many other cases, not now foreseen.

If it be candidly considered, by how many undue ways exemptions may and do grow, we shall see no reason to take from the clergy any advantages against them, which the law gives as it stands at present. Some difficulties have been mentioned already, which cannot be avoided by incumbents, though never so careful, and wholly free from restraints and influences of all kinds; I mean their coming strangers to their livings, and the difficulty of procuring evidence among the parishioners. But besides these, the clergy who come in unaccustomed to secular affairs, are more liable to be imposed upon than others; and some of them are not so careful of the rights of their church, as might be wished, for want of reflecting that they are
not

not barely concerned in interest for their own time, but are moreover the guardians of those rights for the use of their successors. Some are unactive and sedentary, and care not to enter into enquiries, which may lead them into troublesome law-suits: Others are not in need, and foreseeing the uneasiness they shall raise to themselves by contesting exemptions, sit still and acquiesce: Others are poor, and have not money to support contests with rich men, and so *must* acquiesce: Many are known to come in under the restraint of general bonds of resignation, with heavy penalties, and must either go on to indulge the estate of the patron, or be ruined: Many livings are given to the sons or near relations of patrons, who are naturally disposed to be respectful to the estate of the family; and if others also did not the same, they are sometimes thought very ungrateful for the favour of their presentation. Many of the poorer livings all over *England* are held by sequestration, without either institution or induction; and the clergy who officiate in them, not being properly incumbents, cannot bring suits for the *right* to tythe; and if an incumbent come in, who is willing and able to do it, he will be wholly precluded by this act after a certain number of years.

It is easily seen, how discontinuances of payment may have grown by any one or more of these ways; and it would be very unreasonable, that such discontinuances, to which *all the tythes in the kingdom* are exposed, should be turned into perpetual exemptions, for no other reason, but because it may now and then be doubtful, and need the determination of the law, whether a *particular* parcel of land is really exempt or not. And it would be extremely hard, that the livings and the successors in them, should be made to suffer without any possibility of remedy, by the poverty, indolence, or unhappy compliances of their predecessors; who may have satisfied their minds with this, that it would be in the power of their successors, *at any time*, to do right to themselves and their church against pretended exemptions, by exerting their claim to tythe of *common right*; little suspecting, that this ancient right would be extinguished by any future law, when the standing rule of all courts, civil and ecclesiastical, since the *reformation* as well as before, had been, that no plea *de non decimando* ought to be admitted; and when it appeared not, that the *justice* and *equity* of that rule had at any time been called in question by the legislature.

Tho' the present bill goes no further than to establish a perpetual exemption upon a *past* discontinuance of payment of tythe; yet as the several *causes* and *occasions* of those discontinuances hitherto, will still remain and have the like effect, (particularly, the insisting upon general bonds of resignation, is well known to be far more common, and more openly and avowedly practised, of late days, than ever;) so will there be the same pretence *hereafter* for new acts to establish exemptions, under colour of loss of evidence, and preventing law suits, and quieting possessions; and, in this way, there must be a gradual diminution of the maintenance of the clergy in every generation, if they be deprived of the benefit they now have, of claiming tythe by *common right*.

From these considerations, and from the manifest disadvantages the clergy lie under in being far less able to *know*, and *prove*, and *assert* their *rights*, than those who enjoy estates by *inheritance*; no statutes for *limitation* of suits have ever been extended to the revenues of the church, but the successors have hitherto been left at full liberty to *assert* their rights, at any time. So that it is very groundlessly insinuated in the preamble to this bill, that the statute of *Edw. 6th*, on which it pretends to

found itself, had created a prescription of forty years, so as to debar the clergy of those days from claiming tythe in any *other* manner than they had been paid within that term, and from *claiming* any at all, if lands had not *paid* any at all for so long a time. For the words of that act are, that all prædial tythes shall be paid, *in such manner and form as hath been of right yielded and paid within forty years next before the making of this act*, OR OF RIGHT OR CUSTOM OUGHT TO HAVE BEEN PAID. The meaning of that retrospect of *forty years* was plainly this; that in the infancy of the *reformation* many of the people were unwilling to pay tythes to the protestant clergy, and did not believe they had any title to them; as is plainly intimated in the preambles to two former acts for the payment of tythes, 27 *H. 8. c. 20.* and 32 *H. 8. c. 7.* Against whom it is plainly the intention of this act, to provide that they shall be obliged to pay tythes to the *protestant* incumbents, as punctually, as they had paid them to the *popish*; and if they do not, that they shall be liable to temporal coercion, as well as ecclesiastical censures. So that the act of *Edw. 6.* was made wholly in *favour* of the clergy, and to facilitate the recovery of their tythes; and then, as to the right, though no tythe at all had been actually paid within that term,

the

the power of suing for it is fully reserved by the additional words, OR OF RIGHT OR CUSTOM OUGHT *to have been paid*—And, in a subsequent clause (sect. 4.) all exemptions and discharges from tythe, are left to stand or fall according to the laws in being, before that act; provision being only made, that if they were really exempt before, they should not be made liable to pay tythe by any thing in the act. Whereas the present bill is wholly in favour of the parishioners *against* the clergy, and takes from incumbents the known and established privilege of claiming tythe of *common right*; and, after a discontinuance of payment for a certain time, utterly *deprives* them of their right, even though they should be able to prove it by records and evidences of undoubted authority.

But if that retrospect to the forty years *before* the act of Edward the VIth, had been made the *only* rule of the clergy's right; it had been a much more favourable rule, than the like, or even a larger term of years before the making of this act, would be. Every one knows in what view tythes were considered in the times to which that retrospect reaches, and how religious the people were in paying them to the full. But it is to be feared, that in later days that antient principle has lost much of

its force. There is one whole sect among us, who plead conscience for refusing to pay any tythe at all. Another sort, however conscientious in not converting tythes to their own use, do certainly think them better employed towards the maintenance of popish priests than protestant incumbents. And the people, in general, are not easily brought to feel the force of that unanswerable argument for the clergy's right to tythe, that they or their ancestors purchased no more than *nine* parts.

One great pretence for this bill, is the *loss of evidence*; namely, original grants from the crown, and other evidences relating to them. Concerning which, it may well be supposed in general, that families are very *careful* in preserving the evidences of their estates; and what preserves the evidence of the estate exempted, preserves also the evidence of the exemption. These are, of course, transmitted from father to son, and, being grants from the crown, were to be recorded and preserved in chancery, and may probably be found there; and in many cases, sufficient evidence, whether lands are exempt or not exempt, may be had from the office of *augmentation*, which is open to every subject, and contains the state of the lands and impropriate tythes of many religious-houses (as they came to the crown, and
by

by consequence to the grantees) under the names of the houses to which they belonged, and with accounts of their being in lease or manual occupation at the time of the dissolution; upon which circumstances, the point of exemption or no-exemption chiefly depends.

All such records, in what hands soever, if fairly produced, may be proofs *against pretended* exemptions, as well as proofs *for real ones*; and yet this bill not only puts the proprietors of the lands under no obligation to declare in a legal manner that the evidences are really lost, or to produce them, if not lost; but, after a term of years in which no tythe has been paid, the successor of one or more incumbents who were indolent, or ignorant of their rights, or under undue restraints from claiming them, is utterly debarred by it from claiming tythe, tho' he should be able to prove never so clearly from records to which he can have access, that there *could* be no legal exemption.

As to the other pretence for this bill, *viz.* the preventing differences and law-suits, a freedom from them, and a quiet and peaceable enjoyment of our own, are certainly very great blessings; and the greater the blessings are, the greater is their guilt, who will not suffer their neighbours to enjoy them on any terms, but
the

the giving up their just rights, and the necessary subsistence of themselves and their families. But on which side the breach of peace and friendship, as occasioned by suits for tythes, does chiefly lie, appears from calculations that have been made by practitioners in the court of exchequer, which show that the instances wherein the prosecutors for tythes have *failed*, bear no kind of proportion to the number of instances in which they have *prevailed*; and, as to the *number* of suits, many of them have been the suits of lay impropiators, and not parochial incumbents. So far are the clergy from being justly chargeable either with multitudes of prosecutions, or with bringing such suits as have been deemed vexatious or frivolous: The truth lies on the other side, that thro' the unwillingness or inability of some to engage in troublesome and expensive lawsuits, and thro' the restraints and influences which others have been under, the rights of their churches have greatly suffered, and by degrees been lost.

Animadversions on the preceding

REMARKS.

THE *reverend prelate* first lays down the LAW as, he says, it stands at present; I wish that he would vouchsafe to lay down REASON. When a bill depends in parliament, the legislature are to consider *what ought to be law*, and not *what is law*; for if they were bound by customs or statutes, they would be useless to the people, who often find themselves aggrieved by the usage and institutions of former times, against which they can have no relief, but from the legislative power.

The *bishop* observes, that as the law now stands, “ If *tythe* be demanded by the incumbent, and the proprietor of the lands pleads an exemption, the incumbent insists upon *common right*, as the *general rule* of law, and it rests upon the proprietor to prove the exemption.” And he thinks, there is great reason it should be so; “ because in all cases, whoever pleads an exemption from a general rule, is bound to assign the special grounds and reasons of such exemption.” But he ought to have told us, not that the incumbent insists upon *common right*, which we all know; but *why he should* insist upon common right, which

which the *wisest* of us cannot account for. What is admitted in courts of judicature, ought not to determine us. The question now is, *What should be allowed by a British legislature?* And though it is certain that when a proprietor of lands pleads an exemption in *Westminster-Hall*, it rests upon him to prove it, yet it may well be considered in a *house of commons*, whether that proof *ought* to rest upon him.

If the *case of tythes* be fairly and justly considered, many objections will arise against its being a case of common right; which must in parliament be *tried*, not by *common law*, but by *common sense*. There can be no right in the world but that which arises from nature, and the reason of things: Shew us from *thence* that the clergy have a right to maintenance from the laity, and we will then allow that the laity ought to maintain them. No obligation can be laid on any one, unless an equivalent really received creates it. We do not owe the king himself allegiance, but on the terms of equal protection; and we cannot owe the clergy *tythes*, but on the terms of an *equivalent*. Where then is this equivalent? Or, why should the clergy *exact tythes*, as arising to them of *right*?

No man by conscience, or for his own happiness, or for the public good, is obliged to conform to any church, or advise with any priest, but such as himself approves. On the contrary, to compel his conformity against his opinion, is against all conscience, against his own happiness, and the public good. If he does conform to that church of his own choice, it is for some advantage; and so far as he conforms and enjoys that advantage, so far is he under an obligation, and owes a maintenance to that clergy, from whom he receives an equivalent. But if he cannot and does not conform, what advantage does he receive? What obligation is he under, or what maintenance does he owe to any one? It may be necessary that *priests*, as well *physicians*, should be provided, for the cure of *souls* as well as of *bodies*. But would it not be very unreasonable that the law should oblige us to give physicians *retaining fees*, and compel us to maintain them, by paying them when we do not want them, as much as when we do want them? Is it not sufficient that they are paid when they are applied to? And is there any difference between *physicians* and *priests*, which creates a greater obligation to the latter than to the former?

Men having a natural right and a legal toleration to choose their own religion, do often associate themselves in particular churches, and dissent from the national sect, or established church. Every member of a *separate* church stands obliged to support *his own* pastor, whilst he resorts to him; and shall he also stand obliged to support a *parochial* pastor, whom he never resorts to? Shall he not only pay the priest whom he applies to, but likewise one whom he never applies to? By the same rule, he might not only stand obliged to see the physician who attends him, but also one who never attends him. And might not the same pretence be laid claim to by the physician as by the priest, that he whom the *state* shall choose, is as ready to undertake the cure, as he whom the *patient* shall choose?

If this be the case, I do not see how the clergy can sue their parishes for *tythe* of *common* right, any more than that physicians can sue for *parochial* fees. And therefore why should this be suffered to continue *common law*?

If then the clergy have not from reason and nature a common right to *tythe*, the laity have a common right to exemption; and therefore when a priest shall sue for *tythe*, if the parish plead

plead an exemption, the *general rule* of justice will be on their side, and the *priest* stand bound to assign the *special grounds* and *reasons* of his pretence to *tythe*.

The *reverend prelate* imagines, that “ It cannot be supposed that the proprietor or his ancestors would pay for an estate as *tythe-free*, without clear evidence that it was so; and therefore he at all times ought to prove that it is so.” But every man knows that in any other case, a long discontinuance of an incumbrance will legally be an avoidance of that incumbrance; and therefore it is, that quiet possession, enjoyed for a considerable time, is a good title in law, whatever ancient claim shall be renewed. This is well known, and is very reasonable; whereas the power of the clergy to demand and recover *tythe* of common right against a long enjoyment of discontinuance, is neither well known nor in any degree reasonable. So that men may very easily pay for estates as *tythe-free*, in case there hath been a long discontinuance; and such a purchase ought to be entitled to exemption, just as it is in the case of *quit-rents*; if they are long discontinued, they cannot be legally laid claim to; for the law supposes reasonably that they were discontinued, either
because

because they were not due, or else by agreement. And after a long course of time, evidence naturally grows dark or deficient, in which case the law will not disturb possession.

If the law in *any case* does allow exemptions from *tythe*, as it does in many, *why not in all?* Since if it is not an injury to *one* incumbent, that his parishioners are exempt, it cannot be to *any*. And if it is a *common good* done to one parish, it is of *common right* due to *all in the kingdom*; which may well be considered by the legislative power.

All this having its due weight, gave rise to the bill now depending in parliament, by which the proof of exemption shall not rest upon the proprietor of land, who in many cases hath no title to the land itself, much less to enjoy it *tythe-free*, other than that which arises from *long* and *quiet* possession: An evidence sufficient at all times; and indeed no better is demanded in any case, *except where the clergy are concerned*.

Instead of obliging the *land-owners*, as by the laws in being they are obliged to prove a special exemption, the bill now depending enacts, that the *clergy* shall prove a special right to *tythe*, it having been proved, beyond contradiction,

diction, that they have not a *common right* by reason or the nature of things.

The *reverend prelate* pretends that this proof ought not to lie upon them, “Because they
“come strangers to their parishes, unacquainted
“with what was done in the time of their
“predecessors, and not like to be assisted by
“the parishioners, considering the interest
“they have, and the influences they are oft
“times under.”

This will not by any means bear the test of examination; for a clergyman must come into a parish with a very odious character indeed, that no man will give him assistance. It is very easy to know by *living witnesses*, what hath been done within *forty years* past by his predecessors. And let the general interest or influence be ever so much against him, some persons will certainly adhere to him. If he be a worthy man, he need not despair of *sufficient* friendship and assistance. If he be the worst man alive, he will find *some persons* for their own profit, assiduous to give him informations, and to court his favour; nay, if deserted by all men, still he may file a *bill of discovery* in the *court of exchequer*, against whom he pleases; and can never want *evidence*, if he is not without *right*: An advantage which the *prelate* prudently

prudently concealed, when he set forth their pretended difficulties.

It is therefore *poultry stuff* which hath dropt from this *prelate's* pen, to say, that *receipts* which incumbents give the *land-owners*, where there is a *modus* or an *agreement*, remain in the hands of those *land-owners*; and that succeeding incumbents cannot have recourse to such receipts. He very *untruly* says, that incumbents cannot compel such receipts to be produced: If they are minded to sue for *tythe*, they may at the same time sue for *evidence*; and on the discovery of the latter, they effectually may recover the former. But where the *tythes* are paid in kind, the *church-wardens* or *officers* who collected them, may be summoned on any trial, and give an account upon oath, *viva voce*, what hath been the usage: All which the *reverend prelate* conceals, nay *denies*; which in one so well acquainted with these affairs is inexcusable, and in one of his *holy character* is much to be lamented.

As to *reſtories improprieate*, leased by *colleges*, *bishops*, *deans* and *chapters*, which may continue by such leases in particular families more than *forty years*, and by the *lessees* may be let to under tenants *tythe-free*, in which case there will arise a *perpetual exemption*: I dare under-

take to answer for the wisdom and circumspection of those bodies or persons thus possessed of *impropriations*, that if this law shall pass, they will never grant any lease allowing the lessees to let them *tythe-free* forty years together, or in any manner whatever which may create an exemption. Ecclesiasticks are not used to be either so *negligent* or so *disinterested*, nor are they likely to be so, especially after *this bishop* hath favoured them with so timely a precaution.

Some of the religious orders, particularly the *Cistercians*, were, it seems, privileged from paying tythes of lands, *whilst those lands continued in their occupation*. When the crown resumed those lands, they were granted to be held *in such manner* as those monks enjoyed them; and yet *the bishop* complains that if this bill take place the exemption will not cease, tho' the grantees do not occupy the lands *themselves*, but the lands are occupied by a tenant. Neither can I see *why it should*, it being much more due to *industrious landed men*, than ever it was to *lazy, idle, superstitious monks, the vermin and locusts of mankind*.

“ Warrens, woodlands, and LANDS THAT
“ HAVE LAIN WASTE, *says the bishop*, from
all

“ all which *tythe would be due*, if converted in-
 “ to *arable or pasture*, will be entitled to a
 “ perpetual exemption by this act.

Is this then an argument *against* the law proposed? In my humble apprehension there can be none stronger *for* any bill whatever. It is well known, that the WASTE LANDS of this kingdom would be of infinite value, if converted into *arable or pasture*. They would be an addition to the wealth of the kingdom, of greater value than the *present national debt*. And can there be too great encouragement given to improve them? Or can a greater discouragement be in the way, than that, after so much labour and expence to improve them (wherein the *clergy* bear no share) they shall in a *few years* time, just when they become of any value, fall under the heavy incumbrance of *tythe*, and pay a *tenth part* of their *neat produce* to the clergy, which is a *perpetual LAND TAX* on the kingdom of TWO SHILLINGS in the *pound*, and, without improving *waste lands*, amounts to above a *million per annum*? Who would improve *waste lands* on such conditions?

This *charitable prelate*, who thro' the whole argument is so kind to the *laity*, as every where to suppose them *rogues and thieves*, continually and unanimously *cheating* the *poor clergy* of their
rights

righteous dues; I say, this very *charitable prelate*, comes now to bespeak our candour for the clergy, and exhorts us to believe, “ That
 “ *they are unaccustomed to secular affairs, are*
 “ *more liable to be imposed on than others, and*
 “ *some of them not so careful of the rights of the*
 “ *church, as might be wished. Some, he says,*
 “ *are unactive and sedentary, and care not to*
 “ *engage in troublesome law-suits: Others*
 “ *are not in need, and foreseeing the uneasiness*
 “ *occasioned by contests, sit still and acquiesce:*
 “ *Others are poor, and not able to carry on*
 “ *contests, and so must acquiesce: Many come*
 “ *in under the restraint of general bonds of*
 “ *resignation, with heavy penalties, and so must*
 “ *go on to indulge the estate of the patron, or*
 “ *be ruined: Many livings are given to the*
 “ *sons or near relations of patrons, which*
 “ *creates a natural disposition to be respectful*
 “ *to the estate of the family; and if others also*
 “ *do not the same, they are sometimes thought*
 “ *ungrateful for the favour of their presen-*
 “ *tation.”* This is the general case of the
 clergy, in the *candid* bishop’s account.

Those who have nothing to gain by *flattering the clergy*, may possibly give another account of them. Who, in the name of *Modesty*, would think them *unacquainted with secular affairs*,

that sees them so busy in shoals at *Westminster-Hall*, so constant at levees, so assiduous in *drawing-rooms*, and so ambitious for *power*? Is the presentation to a living to be considered as a *spiritual* or a *temporal* call? And when we see the whole body study the gospel for the sake of *so much a year*, who can say that the *good men* are *wholly unacquainted with secular affairs*?

Would any man imagine from the argument now under consideration, that *the bishop* who framed it is *one* of the *heads* of an order, *unacquainted with secular affairs*? I cannot but do him the justice to say, that it is hard to decide, whether he shewed more acuteness in defence of the *christian religion* or the *great case of tythes*?

No man would think from the *clamour* and *out-cry* which *all* of them make against this bill, that *they are more liable to be imposed on than others*. No man would think it who runs over the *lists* hanging up in the *exchequer-office*, of causes to be heard in that court. Nor did any man ever come among *two* or *three priests* at any time, but their *tythes* and their *dues* made a part of the conversation. Let any one go to *Chil's* or the *Chapter coffee-house*, whenever he pleases, and he will constantly experience
the

the truth of this observation. If gentlemen recollect the behaviour of the clergymen in their several countries, they will find that the *necessities* of some, the *avarice* of others, and the *luxury* of many, continually put them on *rack-ing* and *squeezing* their parishioners: that those who seldom reside on their livings, are out of the reach of uneasiness occasioned by exactions and contests: That those who haunt levees, and follow great persons, and aim at preferment, cannot otherwise support the expence of coming to town, and living far distant from *their cures*, but by *extortion* and *law-suits*: That *young clergymen* in small livings hope for great ones, and do not much regard the ill will of parishioners: That they have *all* the same appetites which other men have, and having more power, do more to gratify their lusts: That having been bred expensively in universities, they *will* frequently live above their incomes; and spending all and more than all, make their parishioners eternally uneasy, and leave their families *certain* beggars. There is no man alive of any experience, but hath seen numberless instances of these practices. And how such men as these can be described as *as wholly unacquainted with secular affairs*, or *more likely to be imposed on than others*, cannot

possibly be done, without the help of this bishop's astonishing candour.

I will be so just to the *reverend prelate* as to admit, that *some* among the *clergy* are *sedentary* and *unactive* men; nay, I will allow with pleasure, far from being unduly prejudiced against their order, that *some* among them are likewise *disinterested* and *humane*. Such may sometimes *wave* their *legal rights* rather than *engage* in *contests*. No man of sense will misrepresent any man, or body of men; but to say that this order hath a greater proportion of such persons than falls to their share, compar'd with the mass of mankind, is *gross* and *fulsome* flattery; I might say *downright falsehood*, had I not some concern for the *episcopal character*.

We all know what *human nature* is, and that the *unactive* or *sedentary*, the *disinterested* or *humane* are very *few* in number, compared with the *multitude* of *ambitious*, *mercenary*, and *oppressive* men: indeed most men are such, if favoured by *power* or *opportunity*; neither is there any way to make them otherwise, but by allowing them as *little power* and as *few opportunities* as possible. Wherein doth the *popish* and *protestant* clergy differ but in this, that the former, being allowed by law greater scope for *knavery* and *thievery*, do much more *cheat*
and

and plunder the people, while the latter, having *less law* on their sides, are *honest*, at least *harmless*, in proportion to the restraints upon them; as indeed are the bulk of mankind, which all will allow who have much conversed among them.

This being the nature of *men*, and consequently of *priests*, who are at no time *better*, but are very often *worse than other men*, having greater *latitude* of doing wrong, having their *holy orders* to command respect, and their *sanctified character* to cover much reproach; having also the *awful name and word of God Almighty* to make use of for the advancement of *worldly interests* and *selfish views*; with what pretence of *candour* or of *honesty* can any one describe them to be men *wholly unacquainted with secular affairs*, and *more likely to be imposed on than other people*? Or how can it be suggested, that thro' this *excess of grace and virtue* their legal rights are in greater danger of being lost, by the limitations of *suits at law* designed in the bill depending, than those rights belonging to the rest of mankind are, under the same restrictions.

This *reverend prelate* imagines, that many *incumbents of livings* neglecting their own

interests thought that they did no wrong as they surmised that their successors would have an easy method to recover their rights on the *general rule* of common law, never suspecting that the *legislative power* would at any time question the *equity and justice* of that rule, which he says, was *part of popery* itself, and was never once struck at since the *reformation*.

Must then the *folly and dotage* of a few supine *ecclesiastics*, who never imagined that we should question what was *equal and just*, debar us from the enquiry, and foreclose the question *for ever*? If a *general rule* is not built on *equity and justice*, it is against the *general interest*, and ought no longer to be a general rule, whoever have been mistaken in their *simple conjectures*, or whatever *private men* may be damaged in *personal interests*. Let it also be considered, that custom and usage, the more *ancient* it is, the more liable it is to be *corrupt*, and therefore more fit to be *examined*. The *reformation*, however happily obtained, or beneficial to us, left many errors and enormities unreformed: Besides, new crimes and corruptions naturally arise in the course of time, which may make reformation as necessary now as it was two hundred years ago. And which corruptions, if they continue or spread, will

one

one day make it just the same thing as if no-reformation had ever been at all.

Those who reflect on the rise and progress of the *reformation*, must know, that the passions of *Harry the eighth* had a much greater share in that work than the interests of the people; and however the latter demanded it, yet it was done to gratify the former. No wonder then that a prince, whose principal view was to establish himself in the place and power of the *pope*, should suffer so many grievous parts of popery to continue. And tho' a due regard to the general interest would have induced our first *reformers* to abolish *tythes*, yet the political views of the prince prevented it. He meant to make the clergy as useful and subservient to *himself* as they had been to the *Roman pontiffs*. Besides, he had many *voracious favourites* to gratify; and instead of remitting these *tythes*, or this *decimation tax*, to those on whose lands it was raised, which indeed was the *just* and *equal* measure that ought to have been pursued, he still left the *tythes* subsisting; some whereof were given to *laicks*, others to *priests*, *colleges*, *chapters*, *deanaries*, and *bishopricks*, whilst those which were given to *laymen*, have since been made liable to become *ecclesiastical endowments*, notwithstanding the statute of

Mortmain; which is effectually taken away, as a *corporation* is established with perpetual succession and a revenue which will in time buy up all the impropriations in the kingdom, in which case we shall be very little the better for the *reformation*.

The *reverend prelate* hath, by the most laboured account he could possibly devise, endeavoured to shew how the *right of tythe* may be universally lost to the clergy by the operation of the law proposed. He imagines that some are *supine* and *indolent*, others *clogg'd* and *restrained*, as also, that many are *byass'd* by their family relationships, dependencies and friendships; which, if it were all true, would be far from proving the point he advances; for very few men enjoy a living *forty years* together, the *indolent* give place to the *active*, the *disinterested* to the *avaritious*, a whole generation is changed, and the face of the world altered in *thirty years* or less. So that things are likewise varied, and the right of tythe will *often be asserted*, very *seldom neglected*, and probably *never lost* through any operation of the bill depending.

But supposing what he surmises was really true; supposing that there would be in consequence

quence of such a law, a gradual diminution of the maintenance of the clergy in every generation, if thus they be deprived of claiming tythe of common right, as in truth they cannot ground their claim upon common right, whatever they may do by *fiction of law*: Why, what then? How would this affect society, but by lessening the numbers and reducing the power of the clergy, very much to the advantage of a people who desire to improve their freedom and happiness? It would draw great numbers of lazy, idle, unprofitable men into the ways of industry, and make them useful to their native country. It would ease the landed-interest of a grievous and oppressive burden. It would make these clergymen, who should administer the gospel, more *faithful* to the charge, and *dependent* on those from whom they ought not to have *separate* interests.

Yet, if the clergy must be maintained in a state of *independency* and *domination*, if they are to have established revenues for their maintenance, why must these be exacted in *tythe*, the most grievous of all impositions? Why must they take from the poor industrious farmer, who hath but one hundred pounds *per annum* (the neat produce of his land) to live on; why must they *annually* take ten

pounds of the money, which, in a few years, if the use of it was allowed him, would provide for a *child*, and thereby give a *useful member* to the commonwealth? This is the more intolerable grievance, considering that *some bishops*, who *cant* and *whine* for the maintenance of their clergy, do at the same time possess *immense revenues*, more than sufficient for the *apostles successors*, and much more than *any apostle*, or indeed *all of them put together*, would ever have pretended to. Let them shew examples of care for the clergy, not *in words*, but in *real acts* of charity. Let them propose the augmentation of *poor livings*, by the division of *exorbitant church endowments*. Let them quit their *anti-christian cures in commendam*, and live with but half the *humility* and *modesty* of the *holy apostles*, they need not *tax* the *industrious landed men*, on account of *clergy maintenance*.

Suppose a *bishoprick* of 5000*l. per annum* (and such there are in this kingdom) should be *reduced* to 500, how many parishes would the residue, duly distributed, honourably endow? Throw also into HOTCHPOTCH, *deanaries*, *chopter lands*, *prebends*, and *fine cures*; what a *fund* would this raise for the *cure of souls*, without one *farthing* raised in *tythe*, only *some thousand* per annum *abated in spiritual luxury*?

It may be said, how could *bishops* in this case support the expence of following *courts*, and coming up once a year to *London*? But may it not be asked, *What they have to do there*? Does the *Holy Ghost* call them thither? Besides, if *episcopal offices* were not worth more than 500 l. *per annum*, we should seldom see *bishops slaves and tools*, the *dudges* of government, or *attendants* on great men.

Some *prelates* may think it very hard, that they should contribute to the maintenance of their *inferior* clergy, who, perhaps, are not below them in any kind of merit; yet this will be much more reasonable than some things which have been talked of as practised, even *since the reformation*. Particularly, suppose it ever happened that a *governing prelate* was *quartered* upon *bishopricks* which he had recommended to, and received *simoniacal pensions* from those whom he had raised to the *mitre*, by way of acknowledgment for their promotion; I believe that such *ungodly stipends* would better have been employed to support *the cure of souls* than to gratify such *prelatical avarice*.

However, if nothing but *tythe* will please the clergy for their maintenance, I am sure

that it ought to be considered, whether we and our posterity are to be *always at strife* with *these messengers of peace*, and, whether it is not worthy the care of a *British* parliament to lay some *restraint* on *suits for tythe*, as well as on *actions* arising from *civil contracts*, whether they respect lands or money, real or personal estates, all which are already under the *strictest limitations*.

It hath not been from any *visible* disadvantage which the clergy lay under to *know* and *prove* and *assert* their rights, that the *laws of England* have left their suits without limitation or restraint. No men more diligently study, or more vigorously assert their *pretended* rights than the clergy have always done. But it hath been owing to the *interests which they cultivated in the courts of princes*, the *vile drudgery* formerly done for men in power, and the *influence* which they thereby gained upon them, that the clergy have been favoured in a manner which ought not to be approved, and that they have not hitherto been placed *on the same foot with the laity*.

The *reverend prelate's* objection to the preamble of the bill, for that the *statute of Edw. the sixth*, on which it is *in part* founded, doth

not really create a prescription of *forty years* as a limited time to sue for tythe in: I say, this objection amounts to nothing at all; for it is *eternal truth* and *good sense* on which we would found this bill, as indeed all laws can have no other good foundation. And in case that the *ancient statute* created no prescription, yet the *reasonableness* of such a prescription will be the same as if it had been created a *thousand years ago*.

And allowing the meaning of the retrospect in that statute of forty years past, allowing it to be as he would have it understood, *That in the infancy of the reformation many of the people were unwilling to pay tythe to the protestant clergy, and did not believe they had any title to it, on which account this and other acts were made to exact tythe.*

Let us consider this matter freely: Does it not shew the *good sense* of our ancestors; and that as they were promised a *reformation of religion*, they justly looked for it in a *deliverance from religious burdens*? Else, in what were we the better for any reformation at all? The clergy might have still gone on with *thousands of Pater-nosters*, and with *ten thousands of Ave-Marys*: They might have burnt *wax candles*,
and

and have worshipped *consecrated wafers*. These did no body any great harm; but it was the *exaction of money* from the people, with *spiritual censures* and *temporal coercion*, which this bishop is so fond of, that were the *very essence* of *papist tyranny*; and if these were still to be continued, the *reformation* was *all mockery*, and the *protestant religion* *very little worth*. So that the *bishop* hath done no great honour to the *church of England* by explaining the *meaning* of those laws.

He then tells us how *religious* the people were in *paying tythe to the full* before the *reformation*. This was owing to their *ignorance* and *superstition*; but he himself allows a very *different* turn when their *eyes were opened*, which is the *misfortune* he complains of; and thus the point he drives at is, that amidst the *blessings of light and knowledge*, we should be the same *religious dupes and bigots* as we were in our state of *darkness*, and under *spiritual bondage*.

One grievance to *this prelate* is, that the *quakers* plead *conscience* for *not paying tythes*, which, I think, they have much better ground to do than the *clergy* have to plead *divine right* for *exacting* them: Again, it seems that *Ro-*

man catholicks think them better apply'd to *popish* pastors than to *protestant incumbents*; which surely is but reasonable, since the *first* are their *spiritual guides*, and the last are men, whom they have nothing to do with, as also men who do nothing for them. Now, if *this bishop* will shew, why *popish laymen* ought to pay tythe to *protestant priests*, I will shew him by the same demonstration, that the *protestant laity* ought to pay tythe to the *popish clergy*, and that the *high priest* of the *Jews* may as well claim tythe from all the people of the gentiles.

But the *bishop's master-stroke* is still to come. He says, "That the people are not easily brought to feel the force of that unanswerable argument for the clergy's right to tythe, that they (the people) or their ancestors, purchased no more than nine parts." In which the *reverend prelate* is most amazingly acute; though he ought to have considered, that with the *nine parts*, which were the original purchase, the care of a *tenth* came to our hands to till and manure, to sow and to reap, for the sole use and benefit of the clergy, without any adequate consideration received; and thus the clergy have not only the neat produce, but the sweat of our brows gratis; not only the crop, but also the toil and expence of producing the crop. So

that

that here is an article which runs away with *some of the parts which we really purchased*, making *our* share less than *nine*, and the *clergy's* pretended *tenth* about a FIFTH part of the estate; for the expence of cultivation is always, at least, equal to the value of the land, and very often more in value.

The *bishop* therefore might indeed observe, with much propriety, *that the people cannot easily feel the force of his unanswerable argument*, whilst the *culture* of the *clergy's tenth* is such a *dead weight* on *their own nine parts*, which the *bishop* himself allows that they or their ancestors purchased. I mightily love *this bishop* for his *unanswerable* arguments.

Besides, if this is considered as an incumbrance, taken along with the bargain; if it is looked on as a *customary service* attending the tenure of lands, and that they who take the one, do also consent to the other: Yet if this be the case, what a blessed condition are the *people of England* in, that the clergy who bear no proportion in number to the poor industrious laity, that these worthy disciples of the meek, the humble, and the suffering Messiah, that they have no less than a FIFTH PART of all the *lands of England*, which they modestly

call by the name of *tythe*; and expect should be allowed them to hold and possess, even *without the just limitations and restrictions*, which all other lands whatever are subject to by *law*; thereby making their *fifth* part devour the *fruit* and *produce* of our four parts, through the plague and expence of *everlasting* law-suits, which are, for want of limitation, entailed upon us and our innocent children?

If the *reverend prelate's* argument be allowed, that the clergy's *right of tythe* is no grievance to the people, because that they or their ancestors, *as he says*, paid for *no more than nine parts*: Why then the *land-tax* is no burthen on the people, for since that tax hath been an *annual rent-charge*, there have been no purchases made wherein it hath not been allowed for. And thus those persons who bought their lands under this consideration, have no right or pretence ever to be discharged from it. Infomuch that if it should continue till all our lands have changed their owners, in the way of bargain and sale, why then the LAND-TAX must become, by *this bishop's RULE OF RIGHT*, an *everlasting incumbrance on ALL the lands of England*, and never ought to be taken off or released by the legislative power; which however it be a doctrine of equal weight with the

reverend

reverend prelat's unanswerable *argument*, yet notwithstanding this should any man advance it among us, I leave it to the people to consider how such a man ought to be treated.

In *popish* countries where the *rights of the clergy*, as they are called, are a still *greater* rent-charge on the people, there is still the same *unanswerable* argument for their allowance. And thus whatever incumbrance or burthen, however grievous, unjust, or oppressive, obtains upon the lands of the people, whether by *usurpation* or by *consent*, induced either through the necessities of times, or the fraudulent arts of deceivers, such impositions, by this rule, are never to be removed; because, in a course of time it will be objected to the people, that they or their ancestors paid for *no more than the unincumbered parts of their lands*. Hence in *all* the parts of *Europe* where *superstition* prevails, property is become wholly *engrossed* by a few *contemptible miscreants*, and the *greatest* part of the people *eaten out of their estates*, nay excluded from ever retrieving them, by a *succession* of *ecclesiastical caterpillars*, who impiously call themselves, *successors to the apostles*. This too will one day be *our own case*, if we allow of such *spiritual usurpations*,

and of such *unanswerable arguments* for their *perpetual* establishment.

One great pretence of this bill is, he observes, *loss of evidence* to prove exemptions. Now, he says, that *families* are generally supposed to be very careful to preserve such evidences; which is not true, neither is it possible that they should be preserved, considering the *infinite accidents* which have happened since the *reformation*. How much evidence did the devastations of the *civil war*, the *fire of London*, and other *public calamities* deprive us of? How *deficient* are the *records* in the public offices? Even *corporations*, where the care of estates is carried on in *perpetual succession*, have lost many of their grants; and what can *private families* be supposed to save, with all their care and good management? Look into the *two universities* themselves. In *Oxford*, the lady *Margaret's professor of divinity* is paid his *stipend* out of the *king's civil list*, though it be no *royal* institution. Grants of lands, and even lands themselves, are lost in the course of time: And thus the foundations of *private persons, lectures, professorships, &c.* which had no relation to the crown, throw themselves at last on the royal bounty for their support, when their evidences are lost, and time hath destroyed their best titles.

How many estates of mighty value have no other title in the world to produce, than *ancient* and *quiet* possession? How many *churchlands* are at this day in wealthy families, who have held them ever since the time of *Harry the eighth*, yet cannot find an *inch of parchment* in the world to prove a grant from the crown, notwithstanding that the *candid bishop* will allow the laity no consideration for their *loss of evidence*?

The *bishop* allows, a freedom from law-suits, and the enjoyment of peace, to be very great blessings; but it seems that the *laity* are such *guilty wretches*, that they will not suffer the *poor clergy* to enjoy them, without giving up the subsistence of themselves and their families. This he proves by such *worthy witnessses* as the *practitioners* in the *court of exchequer*; who it seems, on a nice calculation, have found that the suits where prosecutors for *tythe* have *failed*, bear no kind of proportion to those instances where they have *prevailed*. Now if this was ever asserted by those practitioners, which I very much doubt, it is manifestly calculated only for *private ends*; and is in truth an *artful snare*, to draw the clergy into *that court*, and make them *run mad* with the thoughts of *increasing their tythe*. Nor is it to be wondered

at, that these *ingenious practitioners* can sometimes make use of their invention for the good of their calling, when their *spiritual clients* so frequently give them such *laudable* and *right reverend* examples.

Thus it seems that all the *broils*, and *breaches* of *parochial peace*, are the fruits of *lay-perverseness*; so far are the *clergy*, in the *bishop's account*, from being justly chargeable with *multitudes* of *prosecutions*, or with those which have been deemed either *frivolous* or *vexatious*; I suppose that he means that *his oracles*, these *honest practitioners*, never deemed that to be *frivolous* or *vexatious*, which they found *very profitable* to themselves: And I dare answer for *their candour* in every case of this nature.

However that be, I must still take leave to make use of *my own* observation, and I appeal to the experience of all who are *less interested* in ecclesiastical suits than the *bishop*, or the *able practitioners* of the *court of exchequer*, whether every gentleman of the *long robe* hath not seen *numberless* prosecutions brought by the *clergy*, where they *shamefully miscarried*: And I myself have made one remark on many of their *orphans* whom I have known, that they often became *helpless* through the *luxury*, but much more often thro' the *law-suits* of their fathers; which

which gives the *church of England* no great credit from *her off-spring*, as the wisdom of *modern* zealots hath mightily affected to call them.

Doth not every one remember *Doctor* BENNET, late of *Cripplegate, London*? In how great esteem was this *orthodox divine* among his *reverend brethren*? And what was he ever remarkable for but *suits for tythes* and *endless strife*, with a parish where his yearly income was many *hundred pounds*, which he wanted to augment only to *two or three thousands*? If he had succeeded, what would have been the consequence? Why, the living would have afterwards been tacked to some *lean bishoprick*, and held in *commendam* by some *lazy, luxurious prelate*, to the equal benefit of the *parish*, the *reputation* of the *church of England*, and the *glory* of the *christian religion* *. As he did not succeed, he became a *beggar* in the midst of *plenty*; and his *poor widow*, like too many other *spiritual dowagers*, lives on the *alms* and *hospitality* of her friends and relations.

* This practice of holding livings in *commendam*, which those who hold can never take care of, and sometimes never set their eyes on, hath given so much just offence, and been so highly resented, that the HOUSE OF COMMONS have provided special clauses in all the acts to endow the *new churches*, expressly enacting, that none of those churches shall ever be held in *commendam*.

I have thus examined the whole argument against the bill; an argument *greatly laboured*, not a little *artful*, very *fallacious* in its most plausible appearances, and grounded on *notorious falsehoods*, where its foundations are boasted to be impregnable.

The *clergy* have so long sculked behind the *law*, that it is time they should now come to the *fair test of reason*: They have often told us, that they claim their right from *law*, and that *the law* gives it to them; let them now shew with what *equity* and *justice* the law should give it to them, or else the *legislature* that gave may possibly *take it away*.

I am not so *sanguine* as to think that the *success* of this bill will be equal to the *justice* of it; especially at this juncture, when, to use the *bishop's words*, the *interest of some*, and the *influence of others*, are so well understood: But there may be a season, when those persons shall be laid low who are now most concerned in this affair; a season, perhaps, better suited to such a design; nor shall it be said, that the spirit of those gentlemen who brought in this bill died with them, if I am *alive* at that time, and *any ways able* to revive or to promote it.

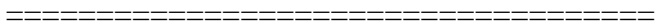
What I now have offered is very little meant to determine the fate of the bill ; we know, *I fear*, where that hath been fixed already ; but what I have here undertaken, was for the glory of truth, and for the detection of fraud. And so long as the one is understood, or the other seen through, *those gentlemen* who formed this bill, will share *those honours*, which neither the *power of courts*, nor the devices of *prelatical iniquity*, can ever take from their characters in life, or from their memories in the minds of posterity. This bill, whatever its fate shall be, will ever be looked on as their *illustrious legacy*, not to those *hireling slaves*, who *profanely* call themselves the *church*, but to that which is much more worthy of tender regard, even our *dearest country*.

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L E T T E R

T O T H E

REV. SAMUEL CHANDLER, D.D.

CONCERNING THE

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

O F

FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

By SAMUEL BOURN, dissenting Minister at NORWICH.

Shall not the judge of the whole earth do right?

GENESIS xviii. 25.

Illa suspicio intolerabili dolore cruciat, si opinamur eos, quibus orbati sumus, esse cum aliquo sensu iis in malis, quibus vulgò opinantur. Hanc excutere opinionem mihi met volui radicitus.

CIC. Tusc. Qu. Lib. i.

M. *Hæc fortasse metuis, & idcirco mortem censes esse sempiternum malum.* A. *Aleone me delirare censes, ut ita esse credam?* M. *An tu hæc non credis?* A. *Minime verò.* M. *Malè bercule narras.* A. *Cur, quæso?* M. *Quia disertus esse possem, si contra ista dicerem.* A. *Quis enim non in ejusmodi causa? aut quid negotii est, hæc poetarum & pictorum portenta convincere?* M. *Atqui pleni sunt libri Philosophorum contra ista ipsa differentium.* A. *Ineptè sanè: quis est enim tam excors, quem ista moveant?*

Ibid.

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T O T H E

Rev. SAMUEL CHANDLER, D. D.

REVEREND SIR,

Norwich, Sept. 24, 1759.

HAVING heard you publicly assert some time ago, "That the doctrine of *annihilation*, or, that the souls of wicked men shall be totally destroyed in the future state," is utterly inconsistent with the christian scheme; and as you did not at that time produce any argument of reason, or authority of Scripture, to prove what you had asserted; it raised in me a curiosity to know by what proof you are able to support your assertion; in hope of receiving such satisfaction, as may be expected from a gentleman of your known abilities, and study of the christian revelation.

I am more ready to gratify my own curiosity in making you this public request, as I am persuaded, that there is nothing more conducive to the discovery of truth, than if those who studied the same subject, yet are of contrary opinions, enter into a mutual disquisition of each others arguments, and, with an amicable spirit of free inquiry, examine the strength of what may be alledged on both sides.

That I am of an opinion directly opposite to yours, you need not to be informed: Nor do I see the least reason to avoid either a public declaration, or defence, of my opinion. For, as long as I remain fully convinced, as I am at present, that that doctrine which you asserted, more than once, to be absolutely inconsistent with the christian scheme, is the *very doctrine of christianity*; it will not affect me in the least, whether the opinion which I maintain, be thought old, or new, common, or singular, popular, or unpopular.

That men who apply their minds to the study of religion and the Holy Scriptures, should be of different and even contrary opinions, is certainly no new thing in the christian world. But that such should conspire, by a
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joint examination and friendly controversy, to investigate truth for themselves and others, in a subject concerning which they totally differ; is (I am sorry to say) something new and uncommon. But as the author of the epistle to the *Hebrews* exhorts them *To provoke one another* (as our translators have rendered it) *to love and good works*; so I do not doubt, but you, as well as every other reader of this pamphlet, will approve my conduct, in inviting and urging you in this public manner, to a friendly discussion of so important a subject as this before us.

The importance of it will, I apprehend, be readily allowed; especially, by those who have a real concern for the credit of the christian religion: At least, it appears of so much consequence to me, that if it should be proved, that the final punishment threatened to wicked men in the new testament, is not a total destruction, but an endless preservation in a state of misery and torment; this would, in my opinion, fix a greater odium upon christianity, and raise a stronger objection to it, than all its adversaries have yet been able to produce: And, I will venture to assert, that there are many persons in this nation, of no inconsiderable understanding, who would be strong-

ly disposed to reject the new testament as a divine revelation, if they were convinced that it contains such a doctrine.

For, that any doctrine should be true, and have the real stamp of divine authority, which ascribes to the supreme governor of the universe, a conduct unworthy of any prince, or governor on earth, and repugnant to our best conceptions of the measures and ends of good government; cannot easily be admitted by persons of a thoughtful and ingenuous mind. To overcome the antipathy of a good heart, and the remonstrance of a reasoning mind against it, will require an immense weight of external evidence.

A limitation of punishments is essential to all good government: To extend them beyond the limits of reason, or of law, which is the public reason, is one characteristic of tyranny. Where punishments are extended, or increased so far as the public safety and welfare require, and no further; *i. e.* where they are always limited and directed by a view to the happiness of the whole; there is good government: But where they are increased, either in degree, or duration, beyond what is requisite to that end; there is tyranny: Where they are unlimited, or infinite; there is the
greatest

greatest tyranny: For to punish a criminal in an excessive degree, and beyond what the ends of good government require, is as real injustice and cruelty, as to inflict a lesser degree of punishment upon an innocent person. For in both cases, it is equally inflicting misery, not to answer any necessary, or useful end, but for the mere sake of increasing misery; which is the *worst end* that can be conceived.

There neither is, nor can be, any other difference, between the best and the worst government possible; than that the former is administered with a view to produce and maintain the greatest virtue and happiness, and to prevent, or extinguish, as much as possible, wickedness and misery; and the latter with a view to prolong and encrease wickedness and misery. Now, whether the *endless* preservation of wicked spirits, in order to inflict upon them *infinite* miseries, be more consistent with the *former*, or the *latter* kind of government; is not difficult to be determined. Their wickedness, or their misery, may be a reason in the mind of a good governor, for destroying them: But the contrary, *viz.* preserving them for ever in a state of wickedness and misery, appears more conducive to the ends of the *worst* government, than of the *best*.

To alledge that human ignorance is so great, and our ideas of what is fittest and best so imperfect, that we can form no judgment of what the ends of divine government may require; and that therefore, for ought we know, *infinite* punishment, and the *endless* existence of some beings in the *greatest* misery, may be made subservient, by the incomprehensible wisdom of providence, to the greatest virtue and happiness of the universe;—is only arguing from a *supposed possibility* against the greatest *probability*; and endeavouring, under color of human ignorance, to screen a doctrine apparently most injurious to the character of the Supreme Being.

In human governments, extreme and lingering punishments are a certain mark of barbarity, and a criterion by which to distinguish a *tyrant* from a *just and good prince*. In the best constituted governments, punishments are the mildest, in the worst, the severest. For a perfect *tyranny*, is supported solely by *fear*; but a just and legal government, by *better* principles and affections. And whether, the *best*, or the *worst* governments on earth, are most like the *divine*; whether the greatest *tyrants*, or the most beneficent and *merciful princes*, most resemble

resemble the perfect governor of the universe; nor one will hesitate in deciding.

But, indeed, in all human governments, even the worst, *death* (which is *annihilation* in respect to human society) is the ultimate punishment: And all that is added, by those judges who proceed to the extremest rigor is an augmentation for a short space of time, of the horrors and agonies preceding, or attending the execution. And it is hardly to be conceived, that any prince, though absolute in power, tyrannical in disposition, and both injured and incensed to the highest degree, would not, in length of time, think justice satisfied, if not feel his own resentment satiated, by the extreme and lasting miseries of the criminal: And the idea of making these miseries everlasting, was this in his power, would be found too abhorrent to reason and humanity, to be long entertained in a human breast.

How then can we think of imputing a procedure exceeding the severity of the greatest tyrant, and of the worst of governments on earth, to that Being, whom we stile the best; whose tender mercies are over all his work; whom we ought to love with all our hearts, and to contemplate with the greatest delight;

and in whose designs and measures we ought to place an entire confidence? Why do we stile him *most merciful*? Why address him as **THE FATHER OF MANKIND**?—A *father*, indeed, may punish a wicked and disobedient son: *i. e.* May withdraw his favour from him, may disinherit him, may inflict stripes, or other penalties upon him; nay, acting as magistrate and judge, may put him to death. But what should we think of that *father*, who acting in the capacity of a judge over his offending offspring, would not be satisfied (be their crimes ever so great) either with their total destruction, or their suffering for any limited duration, or the addition of the former to the latter; but who would rather judge them to *live for ever*, than to *perish for ever in fire unquenchable*?—How could such a judgment consist either with the equity of government, or the clemency of a judge? How much less with the disposition of a *parent*?—How vain is it to compliment the Almighty with the titles of *most just* and *most merciful*; if at the same time we ascribe to him a conduct, not only inconsistent with the *paternal* character, but irreconcilable to our clearest notions of *justice as well as mercy*?

Nothing is of greater importance to religion, than to preserve the character of the Supreme Being inviolate: For without this foundation it cannot be supported; but will be apt to degenerate into slavish superstition, or a blind and savage enthusiasm. Yet, perhaps, no character in the world has been more mistaken, or traduced, and, consequently, suffered more reproach and injury from the tongues and pens of men: Whilst not understanding the nature and end of government in general; nor having formed any clear and consistent notions of justice and mercy, or of that public utility, which ought always to be intended and answered, by punishing as well as by rewarding; they have erected, in their own imagination, a scheme of government, according to their own narrow, partial, arbitrary, or enthusiastic conceits; and have fondly imputed this scheme, to the most sublime Being, whose wisdom and goodness are infinite, whose thoughts and designs excel those of the wisest and best of men, *as the heavens are above the earth.*

Nothing then can be more becoming those, who are appointed to be ministers of religion, and guardians of its truth and purity, than to vindicate God's government of the

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world,

world, and to rescue that most sublime and sacred character, which we should always contemplate with the highest veneration and affection, from those unworthy notions, which men are apt to intermix with their belief of a deity; and especially, from those black calumnies, by which he is represented as no better, in effect, than the greatest tyrant, instead of being the most just, beneficent and merciful governor. For the influence which religion has upon the dispositions and morals of mankind, will be useful, or hurtful, in proportion as their sentiments of the Divine Nature and government are good, or evil. The worst evils of superstition and enthusiasm have their source in an unjust, or partial opinion of the deity. Nor can the belief of his existence, or almighty power, produce many good effects, separate from a belief of his perfect justice and goodness. A just esteem of the deity, therefore, is that spring of true religion and virtue, which ought to be preserved, as much as possible, pure and untainted in the minds of men.

It is more curious and difficult than necessary, to account for the propensity of mankind, to receive, and retain such ill impressions of the deity, and his government of the world. Whether they may be ascribed to those fears
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and horrors, which are apt sometimes, especially in some persons, to seize and wholly possess the imagination, and thereby disturb and over-power their reason:—Or, to their violent resentments against those who offend and injure them, which tempt them to avenge themselves in proportion to their own power, rather than to do justice in proportion to the offence; and hence lead them to imagine, that the greater power the person offended is possessed of, the greater punishment he will consequently inflict:—Or, whether they may be owing in some instances to the strength of any other passions;—so much is certain, that human passions and affections, either separate or united, have a great influence upon their understandings, and contribute both to form and confirm their particular sentiments of the character and disposition of the Supreme Being.

It may be equally difficult to trace out with any precision, how such opinions have actually arisen and spread in the world; particularly this barbarous notion of a state of never-ending misery and torment. The heathen poets adopted the vulgar fables, in regard to the different species of the infernal torments. And *Virgil* assigns a perpetual duration of misery to some

some criminals; — “*Sed t æternumque seletbit infelix Theseus:*” — though to others he is so favourable as to allow, in process of time, a release: So that this doctrine has a remarkable conformity to the popish hell and purgatory. — But it was the business of the poets to affect the imagination: And to this end, they made the like use of the fabulous traditions of their times, as *Shakespear* does of his witches and apparitions. — These were the *poetarum & pictorum portenta*, which *Cicero*, as a philosopher, speaks of with so much contempt, as to say “Who can be so senseless as to give any credit to them?”

Mahomet seems to adopt the doctrine of eternal torments in good earnest; and thunders it out, not only against criminals, but against all who do not receive his *Koran*. His language is, “They shall undergo the rigours of an infinite pain. — They shall never be eased in their torments. — They shall be eternally confined in the fire of hell. — They shall dwell there eternally. — God will change their burned skin into a new skin, that they may suffer the more. — He hath prepared hell for them, where they shall remain eternally. — The infidels shall be encompassed with flames of hell. — They shall

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“ have

“ have shirts of fire.—Boiling water shall flow
“ in upon their heads :—The fire shall burn
“ what is in their bellies, and shall roast their
“ skin.—They shall be beaten with clubs of
“ iron.—When they think to go out of this
“ fire, they shall enter further into it.—They
“ shall *not die* in those torments, and their tor-
“ ture shall never be asswaged.—They shall
“ in vain implore succour of God.—They
“ shall demand of the keeper of the fire,
“ Will thy lord never deliver us from these
“ pains ?—He shall answer them, Ye shall
“ abide there eternally.—They shall never get
“ out of this fire, neither be able to repent.—
“ Their pains, shall be augmented, and pains
“ upon pains.”

It appears then, that this doctrine of eternal torments, is certainly a *Mahometan*, if not a *Heathen* doctrine. But whether it be a *Jewish*, or a *Christian* doctrine remains a subject of inquiry.

I have not yet been able to discover any thing like it, in the writings of the *Old-testament* : And am fully convinced that *those passages* in the *New*, which have been thought to imply it most strongly, do directly, and in the strongest manner imply the contrary.—And
for

for proof of this, I beg leave to refer you to a discourse, now going to be published †.

If the expressions of *being thrown into a furnace of fire—cast into a lake of fire—into everlasting fire—into hell, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched*;—do not import a total destruction, or annihilation; I must confess myself to be utterly at a loss; and must beg your kind assistance, in order to find out the meaning of them.

If I tell a man whose house is on fire, that that fire is *unquenchable*; the meaning is the same, as if I told him, that his house would be entirely destroyed. If I tell a gardener, whose plants, or the blossoms, are infected by the worm, That he cannot kill that worm, or, that *it will not die*; it is the same thing as if I told him, that his fruit will come to nothing, or his plants die. Or, if a patient is afflicted with a distemper, which is supposed to proceed from worms, and he is told that *the worm will not die*; the meaning of the phrase must be, that the disease will end in the death of the patient. And if such phrases be considered as proverbial among the Jews, and that when any person fell into any distemper, or calamity, that would certainly end in destruction, it was usual for

† See the Author's Sermons, vol. 2.

them to say, "That is a worm that will not die;" or, "That is a fire that will not be quenched;" the sense is perfectly intelligible: They meant that it was a lost case; that there was no possibility of preventing the destruction of the person, or thing, to which they applied the proverb.

Besides, there is something absurd and *contradictory* in the image made use of, if we suppose chaff, wood, or other useless materials, thrown into an unquenchable fire, and yet not to be consumed and destroyed in that fire; or, a living creature cast into it, and yet preserved alive for ever in it: For, throwing into the fire is always understood, to be the most effectual way to *destroy* a thing: And the *less extinguishable* the fire is, the *more certainly* will the subject thrown in be *consumed*. And the original term, κατακαειν, properly translated, is, to *burn up*, or *utterly consume by fire*: which is directly contrary to a being preserved in the fire. *Who shall burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.* John iii. 12. The expression here is probably borrowed from Malachi iv. 1. *For behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the lord of hosts, that*

it shall leave them neither root nor branch.—

Similar to this is the expression in the epistle to the Hebrews: *Our God is a CONSUMING fire, καταναλισκων*: Which signifies, utterly destroying; the very reverse of preserving.—

There is, indeed, so direct a contradiction between the idea of preserving any creature alive, and that of throwing it into a fire, a fire that cannot be extinguished; that if duly considered, it is amazing how men came to join so opposite ideas together, or imagine them to be consistent. This inconsistency *Mahomet* ridiculously attempts to reconcile by saying, “That God will change their burned skin into a new skin, that they may suffer the more.”

Fire is, indeed, an instrument of *torture*, as well as of *destruction*. But why men should think it more becoming the most just and merciful governor of the world, to make it an instrument of *everlasting torment* to his offending creatures, rather than of their *everlasting destruction*; or why, they should be disposed to take the words of Scripture in a sense contradictory to reason, justice and humanity, when they will not only admit of, but are *most naturally* understood in a different sense, agreeable to justice and clemency; is to me inconceivable.

The subject is reducible, as far as the christian revelation is concerned, to this single question: Whether the afore-mentioned expressions are intended to convey to us the idea of everlasting torture, or of everlasting destruction, *i. e.* annihilation?—Perhaps some may be inclined to think, that they serve to convey ideas, both of torment, and of total destruction. With such persons (if there are any) I desire to have no controversy. Because on this supposition, the torment or misery cannot be infinite. And it is only that Mahometan, Pagan, and (as I must confess it appears to me at present) most absurd, cruel anti-christian, and diabolical doctrine of *infinite*, or *never-ending* misery and torment, which I am opposing, and endeavouring to eradicate: “*Quam excutere opinionem (to use the words of Cicero) mihi met velui radicitus.*”

That there are passages in the New Testament which imply, that the sentence of eternal death shall be executed upon criminals with circumstances of ignominy, horror and pain, *proportionate* to their guilt, I readily allow and affirm: Yet am not of opinion, that the figures of being *cast into unquenchable fire*, and the like, are intended to convey to us *any* idea
of

of torment, but *solely* that of total *destruction*, or annihilation, or ceasing to exist. And the passage in the book of Revelations, where it is said, that *death and hell* (i. e. *Hades*) *shall be cast into the lake of fire*, seems to me decisive in this point. For certainly the meaning there is, not that *death and Hades* shall be *tormented* (which is ridiculous) but that they shall be *abolished*.

But it is not my design, either to trouble you with a superfluous repetition of what hath been suggested in the discourse referred to, or to *exhaust* the subject: But only to represent to you in few words, the view which I have of it at present; and to intreat your friendly assistance, in further explaining the subject, and either rectifying, or confirming my sentiments.

And give me leave to say, Sir, that it is a subject worthy of your pen: That according as the doctrine of future punishment is differently explained and believed, it will very differently affect mens opinion of the Supreme Being: And that in a cause, in which the honour of God, and the credit of the christian revelation, are so immediately concerned, you cannot find yourself unconcerned.

For my own part, I am persuaded, that the vulgar notion of eternal torments has been productive, not of virtue and happiness, but of wickedness and misery in the world, where it has been most seriously and steddily believed. However, consequences are not the subject of our enquiry, but the truth of the doctrine. The proper question is, what is the doctrine of our Saviour?—When that is determined; if any man, after allowing the doctrine to be *his*, yet shall impute ill effects to it, or assert that it ought not to be preached, or published; he pretends to be wiser than our Saviour, and is guilty of an arrogance inconsistent with his christian profession.

That you bear a more free and noble mind than to be influenced by vulgar prejudices, or infected with an itch of popularity, or biassed by any mean considerations; I am most willing to believe. And therefore hope, that you will favour myself and others, with a public explanation of your sentiments; and, if you think proper to take pen in hand, cannot easily doubt of your doing ample justice to so important and interesting a subject.

I am, with sincere esteem,

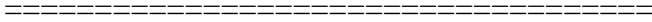
Your's, &c.

SAMUEL BOURN.

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Emmett F. Fields
Bank of Wisdom

Bank of wisdom
P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201
U.S.A.

T H E

Merciful Judgments

O F

High-Church Triumphant

On offending

C L E R G Y M E N,

And others

In the REIGN of CHARLES I.

Better it were there were no reveal'd religion, and that human nature were left to the conduct of its own principles and inclinations, which are much more mild and merciful, much more for the peace and happiness of human society; than to be acted by a religion that inspires men with so vile a fury, and prompts them to commit such outrages.
Tillotson's Serm. Vol. 3. p. 19.

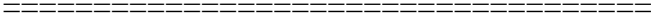
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*The Merciful Judgments of High-Church
Triumphant, &c.*

THE High-church clergy, ever since one of their brethren * has been under a parliamentary prosecution for his seditious sermons, talk in a very unusual strain for liberty of speech, and of the injustice of punishing men for their opinions; and cry, if they are not permitted to discharge their consciences in the pulpit, and to tell the people without any restraint their duty, especially in matters of the highest consequence, the great use of preaching will be lost: for who will regard what they say, when they dare not speak their thoughts, but must be forced to suit their doctrine to the humours, passions, prejudices, or designs of great men? Nay, the boldest among 'em don't scruple to surmise, that if the power of preaching what they judge to be the truth, be derived to 'em from a divine commission, they can't see how they are

* Dr. Sacheverel.

accountable to the laity for what they say or act in execution of such a commission: and that if they are subject in this respect to powers infinitely inferior to God, from whom alone they receive their commission, they can have no pretence of being independent in any other point, by virtue of a divine commission.

After they have urged this, and all they can think on for an uncontrouled liberty of venting what they please in the pulpit, then they cry, if they must be punished for discharging their consciences there, it ought to be with all due reverence, regard and tenderness to their sacred character, as they were treated in the reign of that pious martyr *Charles I.* who at his coronation, to shew what a regard he was resolved to have for their holy function, and how he would exalt them above the nobility and gentry, caused this exhortation to be read to him by the archbishop, in the presence of the peers and all the other great persons who attended the solemnity*: *As you see the CLERGY come nearer to the altar* (which was afterwards rail'd in, to exclude the laity from approaching it too near) *than others, so remember that in all places convenient you give them greater honour; that the mediator of God and man may establish*

* Hist. of Engl. in fol. vol. 3. p. 13.

you in the kingly throne, to be a mediator between the clergy and the laity. Such a blessed reign, say they, when the reformed religion did so much flourish, and the church was maintained in its genuine purity, free from all popish and fanatical superstition, ought to be a precedent to all future ages.

The talking after this rate ill becomes those, who are for manacling and shackling the clergy with early subscription to certain creeds, articles, and canons; and are not only for depriving them of all their preferments, but otherwise punishing them, if they presume to preach contrary to such creeds, &c. tho' in the most speculative points.

The utmost for which men of the greatest freedom contend, and which makes them to be called atheists by these highfliers, is, that in such things wherein neither the public nor private is injured, but which relate only to God and a man's own self, liberty of conscience ought to be preserved inviolate to all persons, and the pulpit as well as the press left intirely free.

But 'tis the papists, and such other rigid fanatics, who maintain that preachers are not at all accountable to the lay-powers for whatever they

say in the pulpit : But certainly sedition is as much sedition in the pulpit as out of it ; nay, 'tis more criminal for being spoke so publicly, and from a place where 'tis like to have a greater effect ; and from one whose business it is to preach all that tends to the peace and welfare of human society. Whoever therefore is guilty of this crime, most grossly abuses that liberty the government allows him, of talking without interruption for an hour together : and the proper punishment for men who have so publicly vented seditious doctrines, is for them to be as publicly exposed, that the pillory may expiate the crime of the pulpit ; and the nearer that is placed to this, the same persons who heard him aloft in one, have the better opportunity of viewing him on the other : by which means, their being blindly led into a belief of his doctrine by too great a reverence for his person, may be happily prevented.

I don't see how that profound reverence, which the priests pretend is due to them, can serve to any other end, than to impose on the people, and make them swallow the most absurd doctrines which they dogmatically dictate from the pulpit. The preachers indeed can't well treat the people with too much reverence, since the word of God not only makes them

the judges of their doctrines, but obliges them, if they judge them to be *false teachers, seducers, deceivers* (and certainly common beautefeus and incendiaries are the greatest) *to fly and shun them*, as they would the most poisonous and infectious animals, or as even the devil himself, the great seducer and deceiver of mankind. And he who is to be treated thus by every body, can pretend to no character, which may exempt him from the most infamous punishment, if it be otherwise proper.

The chief business of a clergyman is to set a good example to his congregation; and if he discharges his duty in that matter, he acts honestly in his profession: but if he takes a contrary method, he acts like a witness who perjures himself, or a retailer who uses false weights or measures; because they are alike guilty of a breach of trust in their own proper callings, and therefore ought to be alike subject to the same punishment.

But since high-church refers us to the reign of a prince, who was ambitious of the honour of being thought the mediator between the clergy and laity (tho' in truth he acted more like a party-man) we will see whether the treatment which clergymen as well as others

met with in his reign, when they were so unhappy as to fall under the displeasure of high-church, which then rid triumphant, are fit precedents for this reign of gentleness and moderation. And in doing this, I can't but let the reader see, whether those who then governed the church, were for preserving it free from superstition, and maintaining the reformation in its native purity.

And the first instance I shall give of the tender regard which was had to clergymen, shall be the treatment of *Alexander Leigh*, D. D*. who for reflecting on the prelacy, and charging the bishops with persecution, and calling the queen a daughter of *Heth*, with such-like expressions, in a book intitled, *An appeal to parliament*; was sentenced to a perpetual imprisonment, to a fine of 10000 *l.* to be degraded, to be pillory'd and whipt, to have his ears cut off, his nose slit, and his face branded: all which sentence was most severely executed upon him.

The next instance I shall give of high-church moderation, is the pillorying of the three professions of divinity, law and physick, all at once †: For in the 13 *Car.* 1. there was an

* *Hist. of Engl.* vol. 3. p. 60.

† *Russw. collect.* abridg'd, vol. 2. p. 273, &c.
infor-

information in the star-chamber against the reverend Mr. *Burton*, a divine of the church of *England*, and a *London* minister; Mr. *Prynn*, a barrister of *Lincolns-inn*; and Dr. *Bastwick*, a physician; for writing seditious schismatical books against the hierarchy of the church, to the scandal of the government. The defendants tendered their answers themselves to the court; but because all their council had not signed them (which none but very bold men would then venture to do, and Mr. *Holt* was threatened to have his gown pulled over his ears for drawing *Burton's* answer) the court took the advantage of this, and without more ado ordered each of them to be taken *pro confesso*; and the pillory, loss of their ears, their * faces and foreheads branded with hot irons, perpetual imprisonment, and a fine of 5000 *l.* each, was their sentence: nay, Mr. *Prynn* was not only to lose the remainder of his ears, but to be stigmatized on both cheeks with the letter *L. S.* signifying a seditious libeller; and the reverend Mr. *Burton* was deprived of his benefice in *London*, degraded from his function, and degrees in the university, where he had proceeded batchelor of divinity. This barbarous sentence was most barbarously executed: for *Burton's* and *Bastwick's* ears were

* *Clarendon*, vol. 1. fol. p. 73. *Rushw.* *ibid.*

pared so close by the high-church executioner, that he cut their arteries, and thereby caused a great effusion of blood; and he not only seared *Prynn's* cheeks with an exceeding hot iron, but in taking away what was left of one of his ears, pared off a piece of his cheek, and left a piece of his other ear hanging on for some time, after he had barbarously hacked it. But this inhuman usage of Mr. *Prynn* did not satisfy father *Laud*, but he moved the court then sitting to have him gagged, and some farther punishment inflicted on him, for saying, 'If all the martyrs that suffered in queen *Mary's* days, are called schismatical heretics, factious fellows, traitors, and rebels, condemned by holy church, what can we look for? Yet so they are stiled by Dr. *Pocklington* in his *Altare Christianum*, licenced by the archbishop's own chaplain;' for which Dr. *Pocklington* and the archbishop's chaplain were both afterwards censured by the lords. But tho' the merciful archbishop could not prevail on the rest of the judges to inflict greater cruelties on Mr. *Prynn*, yet to gratify his revenge, he caused several who at *Chester* * and other places had shew'd civilities to Mr. *Prynn*, as he was carrying prisoner to *Carnarvan* castle, tho' his keepers were not forbid to let

* *Review*. abr. vol. 2. p. 295, &c.

any visit him, to be fined some 500 l. some 300 l. others 250 l. But Mr. *Prynn* was not long at *Carnarvan* castle (which, tho' a nasty hole, was thought too good for him) ere he was removed to *Mount Orguile* in the island of *Jersey*; where by an extraordinary order under *Laud's* hand, none but his keepers were permitted to speak with him, and all his letters were intercepted, and he not allowed pen, ink and paper to write for necessaries, or to petition for relief. And in his petition to the house of commons, when released, he says 'he sent to the archbishop, to desire him to release or bail his servant, that he might attend him during his fores*; which out of his grace and charity he utterly refused, saying, He would proceed against him in the high commission, where he has ever since been vexed, and sent from prison to prison, only for refusing to accuse him the petitioner.' Nor was Dr. *Bastwick*, or Mr. *Burton* notwithstanding his indelible character, used after a more humane manner; both their wives being forbid to set their feet on the islands where they were prisoners.

Having mentioned Mr. *Prynn's* former sufferings, 'twill not be improper to let the reader

* *Rushw.* vol. 3. p. 300.

know, that this poor gentleman, only for writing against stage-plays* (tho' his book is in a manner transcribed out of the fathers, being full of quotations from them, and was licenced by archbishop *Abbot's* chaplain) was not only committed to the Tower, without bail or mainprize, for a whole year, and denied access to his council, or convenient time to examine witnesses; but also fined 5000*l.* expelled the university of *Oxford* and *Lincoln's-inn*, degraded, put from his profession of the law, set twice in the pillory, where he lost both his ears, and had his said licenced book burnt before his face by the hangman; and after all he was condemned to perpetual imprisonment.

Prynne's book against plays was the more provoking, because the court was extremely addicted to these ludicrous entertainments, and the queen so fond of them, that she did not scruple to act a part in her own royal person †: and therefore this treatise against stage-plays was suspected to be levelled at the practices of the court, and the example of the queen. And there being in the table of the book this reference, *Women actors, notorious whores*; this was construed by an innuendo to reflect on

* *Rusw.* vol. 2. p. 179, &c.

† *Hist. Engl.* vol. 3. p. 62.

the queen's sacred person. Bishop *Laud*, as he was the instrument and abettor of most other vile things, so he was of this prosecution; by shewing *Pryn's* book to the king, and pointing at the offensive part of it, and then by employing his chaplain Dr. *Heylin* (a fit business for such a worthy divine) to pick out all those passages to which he could give the severest turns; and lastly, by carrying those notes to the attorney-general for matter of information, and urging him earnestly to proceed against the author. 'This, the reverend dean of *Peterborough* says, 'was looked on by some serious men as giving countenance to the licentiousness and profaneness of the stage*:' But who could, whether serious or not serious, expect any other from an archbishop that appeared so zealous for profaning the Sabbath, and ruined a great many godly ministers and their families, because they would not read the proclamation for sports on the Lord's day?

But as *Laud* had no regard to conscience himself, so he took special care that others should have as little; witness the canons framed by him and his instruments for the clergy of *Scotland*, which obliged the whole clergy of that nation to swear to submit to, and pay all

* *Hist. of England*, by Dr. *Kennet*, vol. 3. p. 62.

obedience to what was enjoined by the liturgy, tho' they knew not what it contained, it not being ready till a year after or thereabouts †. This no doubt was politicly done by him, since he could not but see, that if he once made the whole body of that clergy blindly swear to they knew not what, they could with a very ill grace pretend conscience for refusing to comply with any of his impositions. And much of a piece with this was the obliging the *English* clergy to swear, as they were bound by the canons of 40, to a government of, &c. Now were there no &c. in the case, yet an oath that obliges men, especially those who are concerned in the legislature, not to endeavour to alter the government of the church; must be, to say no worse, a very rash oath, because it is designed to hinder men from doing their duty, if ever they come to think this government inconvenient or unlawful.

But to return, during *Prynne's* imprisonment, *Dr. Bastwick* was brought into the high-commission court, for a book entitled *Elenchus Papismi*, writ in answer to a book of one *Short* a profess'd papist; for which he was condemned to a fine of a thousand pounds, to be excommunicated, debarred his practice of physic,

† *Clarend. hist.* fol. book 2. p. 82.

his book to be burnt, and he to be imprisoned till he made a recantation*; or, in other words, disowned the king's prerogative, the defending of that being the great fault of his book.

And what made those gentlemen, *Prynne*, *Burton*, and *Bastwick* so very criminal, was their complaining of several innovations in the church (in defence of which, at their censure, *Laud* made a very large speech, which is printed in the history of his troubles) and for not allowing bishops to be *Jure Divina* †, and for maintaining that they incroached on the king's prerogative, particularly in keeping courts, and issuing out processses in their own names. For this they exhibit a cross bill against the bishops; upon which the archbishop demanded the opinion of the judges, whether they could not be punished as libellers, who all but one answered negatively, for that it was tendered in a legal way. Upon this the star-chamber prevailed on eleven of the twelve judges, who had declared for the legality of shipmony, to declare likewise for the legality of bishops issuing out processses, and keeping courts in their own names.

* *Whitlock's* Memoirs, p. 21, 22.

† *R. Shaw*. abridg. vol. 2. p. 275.

High-church have in particular great reason to thank God for the freedom men enjoy under the present administration; for had they lived in those days, and took the same liberty to rail at the bishops then as they do now, in representing them as enemies of their order, betrayers of the rights of the christian church, &c. they would have undergone as severe punishment as those three confessors, who bore all their sufferings, tho' they had no prospect of seeing an end of them, with incredible courage and resolution.

The next I shall mention is the reverend Mr. *Smart*, a prebendary of *Durham*, who was kept prisoner at *York* four months before any articles were exhibited against him, and five before a proctor was allowed him*: Thence he was removed to the high-commission at *Lambeth*, and after long trouble remanded to *York*, fined 500*l.* committed to prison, ordered to recant, and for refusing fined again, excommunicated, degraded, and deprived; his damage amounting in the whole to thousands of pounds: and yet all the crime this poor man was guilty of, was his presuming to preach against some innovations that

* *Fuller's Church History*, p. 173.

Dr. *Cosins*, a creature of *Laud's* had introduced into the church of *Durham*, where he had set up a marble altar, with all the appurtenances, namely, a cope with the Trinity, and God the Father in the figure of an old man; another with a crucifix, and the image of Christ with a red beard and blue cap: which was every whit as scandalous as *Laud's* causing the popish picture of the Trinity, where God the Father was drawn like a little old man, to be painted afresh at *Lambeth* * : or his speaking in favour of that painter, who to express God the Father, had painted on the glass divers little old men barefooted, and in long blue coats, because God is called in Scripture *the Ancient of Days*. But I refer the reader to *Rushworth* †, where he will see that the recorder of *Sarum* for pursuing an order of vestry for breaking down this most scandalous picture, deprived of his recordership, fined 500 *l.* and obliged to acknowledge his offence to the bishop of the diocese; tho' the church, in which this picture was, was a lay-fee, and exempt from all episcopal jurisdiction.

I shall now give some account of Dr. *Cosin's* innovations, which were so very scandalous,

* See *Laud's* def. in *Prynne*, p. 463.

† *Rushw.* abridg. vol. 2. p. 124.

that he was impeached in parliament for them, and the commons preferred twenty one articles against him *; some of which were, that he not only used many extraordinary bowings to the altar, but violently compelled others to do the same, and called some gentlewomen whores, jades and pagans, and tore their clothes for omitting it : That at the first *Candlemas* after his coming to that church, he caused three hundred wax-candles to be lighted in honour of our Lady, and placed sixty of them upon or about the altar (*Fuller* adds, that he forbade any psalms to be sung before or after sermon, but substituted in their place an anthem in praise of the three kings of *Colen*) That he framed a superstitious ceremony at lighting the tapers on the altar, in causing a company of boys to enter the church with burning torches, and to bow thrice towards the altar, and then to retreat with their face towards it : That he beat in the church, to the great disturbance of the congregation, the dean's man, for offering to put out, at his master's command, some of the many unnecessary lights he had set up in the church : That in a sermon he said, that our reformers, when they abolished the mass, took away all good order ; and instead of reformation, made a deformation : That he said, that

* *Rusbro.* abridg. vol. 3. p. 383.

the king had no more power over the church than the boy that rubbed his horse's heels; and not only called one of the canons rogue, rascal, &c but laid violent hands on him in his own house, for complaining of these words; and afterward he endeavoured by many unjust stratagems to have him turned out of his place. What happy days and glorious times were these, when high-church could ruin a man for but preaching against such innovations, for the sake of which Dr. *Cosins* was preferred to a good deanery by *Laud!* And what are we now to expect, if the *Laudean* faction rides triumphant!

Nay, high-church priests were then grown so insolent, that the reverend Mr. *Harrison* came to the common-pleas bar, all the courts then sitting, and cried aloud, *I accuse Mr. Justice Hutton of high treason**: and said that he made choice of this public way, because the other had as publicly delivered his opinion against shipmony. And being asked what point of high treason he accused him of; he answered, "That he denied the king's supremacy, in affirming the king had no lawful power to levy shipmony; contrary to the opinion of all the orthodox divines in the kingdom."

* *Ibid.* vol. 2. p. 474.

Indeed if the opinions of all the orthodox divines that preached up the lawfulness of the king's levying taxes without consent of parliament had been printed, it would have made as large a book as *the history of Passive Obedience*; where the opinions of as orthodox divines are mentioned, to prove that our all, our very lives depend on the will and pleasure of one who is intrusted with power by the legislature, for no other reason than the defence of our lives and liberties.

But to shew there was no character or post in church or state that could exempt one from being treated after the most barbarous manner, who would not come in to the arbitrary measures of those times, I shall instance in Dr. *Williams* bishop of *Lincoln*, who with so much honour supported the dignity of lord keeper under king *James*, and lost the seals with as great honour under king *Charles*, for having joined with other patriots in opposing the duke of *Buckingham* in parliament*: nay, he had not only the seals taken from him, but was not allowed to do his homage to the king with the rest of the spiritual lords at the coronation, and to execute his office as dean of *Westminster* in assisting at it; and after that

* Hist. of England, vol. 3. p. 14.

was denied a parliamentary summons: which tho' at last, upon a motion in parliament, it was obtained, yet he had a particular charge from the lord keeper not to appear in person, and it was with some difficulty that he got leave to make a proxy *. But what provoked the court most, was, that he had the honesty and courage, while the court-bishops and clergy were justifying the king's levying money without parliament, to declare against the loan (which obliged people to pay after the rate of four subsidies and three fifteenths) This occasioned an information of other matters to be preferred against him in the star-chamber, and other hardships to be put on him by the court. But that which effectually did his business was, that he acted like a christian and protestant, and a true promoter of the king's as well as the kingdom's real interest, in preventing the subjects from being ruined by the ecclesiastical courts for matters of opinion, and their affections alienated from the prince: and therefore he advised Dr. *Lamb* dean of the arches, Dr. *Sibthorp*, and some proctors, who were at dinner with him at *Bugden*, 'to take
' off their heavy hands from the puritans; in-
' forming them that his majesty intended here-

* Hist. of Engl. p. 28, 37.

‘ after to use them with more mildness, as a
 ‘ considerable party that had influence on the
 ‘ parliament, without whose assistance the king
 ‘ could not comfortably supply his necessities :
 ‘ adding, that the king had communicated to
 ‘ him, by his own mouth, his resolution of
 ‘ dealing more gently with men of that opi-
 ‘ nion*.’

Some years after this advice, an information was given in the star-chamber, by *Lamb* and *Sibthorp*, that the bishop did give great discouragement to their proceedings against the puritans, and that he asked *Lamb* whether the puritans did not pay loan-money † ; to which he answered, they did conform in that part, but that nevertheless they were puritans, not conformable to the church. To which the bishop replied, *If they pay their money so readily to the king, the puritans are the king's best subjects, and I am sure they will carry all at last.* But as to this information, either the matter was thought too frivolous, or even such a poor story wanted sufficient evidence to support it ; and therefore the attorney-general let fall this bill, and preferred another against the bishop for tam-

* *Fuller's Church History*, p. 155.

† *History of England*, vol. 3. p. 84.

pering with the king's witnesses in this very cause, which himself had dropt.

All the vilest methods were used to frighten the bishop's witnesses, and some of them not permitted, after a long and close imprisonment, to have their liberty, till they owned, under their hands, crimes both against themselves and the bishop*; which afterwards they denied on their oaths; while no exceptions were allowed against the king's witnesses, but their credit was to be esteemed sacred in all they avered or deposed for the king. But I refer the reader to *Hacket's* life of *Williams*, to see what villainous instruments, perjuries, subornations, expunging and rasing of records were made use of by his grand adversary *Laud* to ruin his benefactor, whose greatest crime was, that he had been so instrumental in preferring so vile and ungrateful a man.

Indeed the whole management did appear so very gross to the parliament, that they not only ordered all the records relating to that suit to be obliterated, but it did hasten, as the historian † observes, if not chiefly cause the suppression of the court of star-chamber. The judgment was suitable to all the rest of

* *Fuller*, p. 158.

† *Ibid.*

the proceedings; for the bishop was fined ten thousand pounds, *suspended a beneficio & officio*, and to be imprisoned during the king's pleasure. Besides this, he was condemned to pay to Sir *John Mounson* a thousand marks, for saying that the order, he and some other justices made against *Prigeon*, a witness of the bishop's, was a *pocket-order*, and made in an inn.

This *Prigeon* was accused, in order to invalidate his testimony, of having a bastard, which was banded at *Lincoln* assizes between him and another*; one sessions fathering it on him, the next clearing him from it, the third returning it upon him again; which order was again dissolved by the king's bench, and *Prigeon* cleared from the child. And because the bishop's servants concerned themselves in behalf of *Prigeon*, therefore their master was not only condemned, as above-mentioned, for tampering with witnesses, but three of them were likewise fined, and one in no less than a thousand marks: and *Laud* made a speech of almost an hour long in the star-chamber, to aggravate the crime, and yet at the same time pretended he had been five times on his knees to the king in the bishop's behalf.

* *Rushw.* abridg. vol. 2. p. 317, &c.

The bishop during his close imprisonment in the *Tower*, which was about four years, was examined upon a book of articles of 24 sheets, written on both sides, in order to deprive him of his bishoprick*. One article was, That all books licenced by his Grace's chaplains, as *Chune* and *Sala*, popish books, with *Manwaring's* sermons, are presumed by all true subjects to be orthodox, and agreeable to sound religion. This the bishop utterly denied, and wondered at their impudence to propound such an article to him.

Another article related to the licensing of books, which he said, "belonged only to bishops, and to all bishops alike, and not to their servants: however, his Grace had shuffled in his chaplains in the last printed star-chamber decree." But more frivolous were the ensuing articles:

That he had called a book intituled, *A Coal from the Altar*, a pamphlet.

That he said, that all flesh in *England* had corrupted their ways.

* *Fu'ller*, p. 157.

That he said scoffingly, he had heard of a mother-church, but not of a mother-chapel, meaning the king's, to which all churches in ceremony were to conform.

That he had wickedly jested on St. *Martin's* hood.

That he said, the people are not to be lashed by every man's whip.

That he said, citing a national council for it, that the people are God's and the king's, and not the priest's people.

That he does not allow priests to jeer, and make invectives against the people.

It shews what a temper his adversaries were of, when they thought these articles of such a criminal nature, as that a bishop might be deprived for them: and it likewise shows what a regard they had to the character of a bishop, when of five persons who were to sit judges of his doctrine, with a power to deprive him of his bishoprick, three of them were lay-doctors: And tho' the bishop objected against his lay-judges, yet this was over-ruled, and he as one of the king's subjects required to make his answer.

All that had been hitherto done against the bishop of *Lincoln* did not satisfy the malice of his enemies, but they caused him to be fined again five thousand pound to the king, and three thousand pound to archbishop *Laud*; because forsooth one *Osbaldiston*, a schoolmaster at *Westminster*, writ letters to him, wherein were these words: *The little vermin, the urchin, and hocus pocus, is this stormy Christmas at variance with the leviathan**. And the witnesses against the bishop were his two servants, who were before confined in the court of star-chamber for tampering with witnesses; whereof one was his secretary †, “ who the bishop
 “ said had a commission to open his letters in
 “ his absence; and if any such letters were
 “ found in his house, they were laid up and
 “ concealed by his secretary; and tho’ he had
 “ received such letters, no law directed the
 “ subject to bring to a justice of the peace
 “ enigmas or riddles, but plain, literal and
 “ grammatical libels against a known and
 “ clearly decyphered person: and that *Osbaldiston* denied that he designed archbishop
 “ *Laud* and the treasurer *Weston* by those
 “ words, but deposed on oath he meant other

* *Fuller's Church History*, p. 165.

† *Russw. abridg.* vol. 3, p. 12, &c.

“ persons, whom ’twas proved he used to call “ by those names.” But this did no more excuse the bishop than the schoolmaster, who was fined 5000 *l.* to the king, and to pay 5000 *l.* to the archbishop, deprived of all spiritual dignities and promotions, and his ears nailed to the pillory in the presence of his scholars. If men should be served so now for railing, not only in enigmas and riddles, but openly and plainly, at an archbishop, there would scarce be a high-church priest in the kingdom with any ears on.

But all this did not put an end to the bishop of *Lincoln’s* troubles *; for there was a new information of ten articles drawn up against him, tho’ for the main they were but the consequence and deductions of the supposed former fault, in tampering with witnesses, for which he had been so severely censured before. But the broils with *Scotland*, and other things intervening, put a stop to this prosecution; and not long after this *tamperer with witnesses* was made archbishop of *York*.

But the highest post in the church, the metropolitanical see of all *England*, in a reign supposed so tender of the rights of the clergy,

* *Fuller’s Church History*, p. 165.

could not secure the good and wise archbishop *Abbot* from being treated very inhumanly, only for refusing to license a sermon of *Dr. Sibthorp's*, which directly subverted the whole constitution, and destroyed all property, in maintaining that the king had a divine right to impose taxes without consent of parliament, and that the subject, on pain of damnation, was obliged to pay them; and this he termed apostolical obedience. Nothing could satisfy good king *Charles*, but that the archbishop must license this sermon; which when he refused to do, the king sent him menace on menace, in order to fright him to a compliance; and *Laud*, then bishop of *St. David's*, was ordered by the king to answer the reasons, which the archbishop, who was then sick at *Lambeth*, sent to the king to excuse himself for not licensing *Sibthorp's* sermon: and for this service he was made a privy councillor. But the king being sensible how little his champion was able to cope with the archbishop, would not suffer him to have a copy of *Laud's* answer, or even to read it himself; and when he found the archbishop was immovable, he not only forbid him meddling with the high commission, but banished and confined him to an old house of his near *Canterbury*. But seeing this disgrace and confinement did not break the

heart of the good old man, miserably afflicted with gout and stone, nor make him act against his conscience, there was a commission granted to *Laud* and some other bishops to try him for an irregularity, for which he had been acquitted seven years before by bishop *Andrews*, Sir *Edward Coke* and others *, whom king *James* had impowered to try him for this very thing. But 'tis not strange he should be now found guilty and suspended, when his judges were to be intrusted with his archiepiscopal power.

The good archbishop had the satisfaction to see these doctrines he refused to license disapproved by the king himself, in the proclamation he set forth for calling in *Manwaring's* sermons: But the world, which saw how soon after he had preferments heaped on him, could no more believe the king was in earnest, than *Manwaring* himself was when he made his recantation, especially when they saw this practised with relation to others, and that *Montague* †, soon after a proclamation to censure him for his book, had letters patents for a bishoprick.

* *Fuller's Church History.*

† *Hist. of England*, vol. 3. p. 52, 53.

Tho' these were the deep policies of the court at that time, yet the archbishop had the satisfaction to see the parliament very much in earnest in approving what he did, by censuring both *Sibthorp's* and *Manwaring's* sermons: And the articles on which the latter was impeached by the commons and condemned by the lords, were *,

1. That he laboured to infuse into the conscience of the king, that his power was not limited by law; which king *James* in his speech to the parliament called tyranny, yea tyranny accompanied with perjury.

2. That he endeavoured to persuade the consciences of the subjects, that they are bound to obey illegal commands; yea he damns them for not obeying them.

3. He robs the subjects of the propriety of their goods.

4. He endeavours to set a division between the head and members, and between the members themselves.

* *Hist. of Engl.* p. 51.

5. That like *Faux* and his followers he seeks to blow up parliaments and parliamentary powers.

Are not all the preachers of absolute power in the prince, and unlimited obedience in the subjects, guilty of these damnable crimes? What can more effectually blow up parliaments, and all parliamentary powers, than making the lives and fortunes of all the good people of *England* depend on the will and pleasure of a single person? Such a precarious tenure makes us all *Turkey* slaves, and not free-born *Englishmen*: and consequently the preaching up that doctrine is the greatest treason that can be against the constitution.

If the clergy themselves, even the greatest of them, bishops and archbishops, were so barbarously dealt with, that would not come in to the arbitrary measures of high church, we can't think the laity had better usage, and therefore I shall only give an instance or two of their treatment. *Lilbourn* and *Wharton* were put into the star-chamber court, for printing seditious books contrary to the decree of that court*: but refusing to take the oath

* *Rushw.* abridg. vol. 2. p. 345.

ex officio, and insisting that no man was obliged to accuse himself, and that imposing this oath was contrary to the rights of freeborn *Englishmen*, were for their refusal set in the pillory, and fined 500 *l.* each, and *Lilbourn* whipped from the Fleet to the pillory; where for the liberty of speech that he took, and for dispersing of some pamphlets said, tho' never proved, to be seditious, he was by order of the court of star-chamber gag'd during the residue of the time he was to stand in the pillory, and afterward ordered to be laid alone in the wards of the prison, where none but the meanest sort are put, with double irons on his hands and legs, and none permitted to resort to him, and all letters, writings and books brought to him to be seized and delivered to the court.

When his judges were impeached in parliament for this sentence, the cruelty of his being whipt from the *Fleet* to *Westminster*, where he had at least 1500 stripes, was much insisted on. 'Twas urged, ' That even in *France* the
 ' judges would allow no more than 13 blows
 ' to a priest, who had persuaded a poor maid
 ' that *St. Francis* had a mind such a night to
 ' lie with her, and so feigning of himself *St.*
 ' *Francis*, was taken in bed with her : and that
 ' for the pillory, it was not designed for
 ' gentlemen as *Mr. Lilbourn* was, but was first

‘invented for mountebanks and cheats, to ex-
 ‘alt them in the same kind as they had exalted
 ‘themselves upon benches and forms to abuse
 ‘the people.’ And whether this reason does
 not extend to mountebanks in divinity, when
 being exalted in their wooden boxes, they
 abuse the people with seditious discourses, I
 leave the reader to judge.

The next instance I shall produce, to shew
 that no station could exempt a man, in those
 blessed times, from being prosecuted contrary
 to all law and justice, shall be of Sir *John El-
 liot*, Mr. *Denzil Hollis*, and several other
 members of the house of commons, who were
 proceeded against in the star-chamber for li-
 berty of speech, so essential to all parliamentary
 debates: but after they had lain in prison about
 half a year, the process against them in that
 court was let fall, and they were prosecuted
 in the king’s bench, where the defendants put
 in a plea to the jurisdiction of the court*;
 which being over-ruled, judgment past against
 each of them on a *nihil dicit*; and Sir *John El-
 liot* was fined 2000*l.* *Hollis* 1000 marks, &c.
 and every one of them to be imprisoned during
 the king’s pleasure, and not to be delivered

* *History of England*, vol. 3. p. 49.

out of prison without giving security for their good behaviour, and owning their offence: which rather than do, like good patriots, they were content to suffer a long imprisonment (where several of them died) before they would betray the rights of parliament.

This liberty of speech was looked on as a greater crime in *Elliot* than others*, because he had before been enjoined silence in the house, by a command of the king, delivered him by the speaker; and had been before imprisoned for presuming to concern himself, tho' by order of the house, in the impeachment of the duke of *Buckingham* †, and for which he obtained a vote of the house that he had not exceeded his commission: and he was after that committed prisoner to the *Gatehouse* ‡, for not complying with the demand of the loan, and his petition for his discharge was rejected.

What provoked high-church chiefly against *Elliot*, was reflecting on that part of the king's declaration prefixed to the 31st article, where 'tis affirmed, *If there be any difference in opinion concerning the interpretation of the articles, the convocation has power to settle those disputes*.

* History of *England*, p. 45. † Ibid. p. 23, 24.

‡ Ibid. p. 37. || Ibid. p. 47, & 54.

This he said was giving them a power by which popery might be introduced: and the commons were so sensible of the fatal consequences that might attend religion if the convocation was trusted with such a power, that they entered a protestation against it.

Thus it was that all sorts of people were oppressed and ruined, without any more regard to their station or characters, than to law or justice; and the judges were so miserably overawed, that if a man did not stand right in the opinion of *Laud* and his minions, he was to expect no right in *Westminster-hall*: and it was rarely, very rarely, that they durst send any prohibitions to the ecclesiastical courts, how much soever they exceeded their bounds, even tho' the ecclesiastical high-commission court took to themselves a power of fining and imprisoning. And the court of common pleas sending a rule, in Sir *Giles Allington's* case, to the high commission, to shew cause why a prohibition should not be granted, was, says my author *, 'so bold a stroke in those days, 'when the clergy had got the whole power of 'the kingdom in their hands, that the king himself interposed, and by the lord keeper

* *Rubw.* abridg. vol. 2. p. 87.

reprimanded the judges; and *Laud*, then bishop of *London*, threatened to excommunicate them in his own diocese, and to declare it at *Paul's cross*, in case the archbishop of *Canterbury* did not do it in his province. Which so overawed the judges, that they left *Sir Giles* to the mercy of the high commission court, where eight bishops and four civilians fined him 12000*l.* to the king.

My lord *Clarendon* says*, 'It can't be denied, that by the great power of some bishops at court, the high commission court had much overflowed its banks, not only by meddling with things not within their cognizance, but extending their judgments in matters triable before them beyond that degree that was justifiable; and grew to have so great a contempt of the common law, and the professors of it, that prohibitions from the supreme courts of law, which have and must have the superintendency over all inferior courts, were not only neglected, but the judges reprehended for granting them, which without perjury they could not deny; and the lawyers discountenanced for moving them, which they were obliged in duty to do; so that thereby the clergy made almost the

* Vol. 1. p. 221, 222.

‘ whole profession, if not their enemies, yet
 ‘ very undevoted to them. Then it grew from
 ‘ an ecclesiastical court to a court of revenue,
 ‘ and imposed great fines; which course of
 ‘ fining was much more frequent, and the fines
 ‘ heavier after the king had granted all that
 ‘ revenue, whatsoever it should prove, to be
 ‘ employed for the reparation of *Paul’s* church.’

And in another place he says *, ‘ That the
 ‘ peevish spirits of some clergymen, had taken
 ‘ great pains to alienate the profession of the
 ‘ common law from them; and that others
 ‘ believed the straitning the profession of that
 ‘ law must necessarily enlarge the jurisdiction
 ‘ of the church. Hence, *says he*, arose their
 ‘ bold and unwarrantable opposing prohibi-
 ‘ tions, and other proceedings of law in behalf
 ‘ of the ecclesiastical courts.’ *And then adds,*
 ‘ I never yet spoke with one clergyman, who
 ‘ hath had the experience of both litigations,
 ‘ that hath not ingenuously confessed, he had
 ‘ rather, in respect of his trouble, charge, and
 ‘ satisfaction to his understanding, have three
 ‘ suits depending in *Westminster-hall*, than one
 ‘ in the arches, or any other ecclesiastical court.’

’Tis visible from this great man’s opinion, how natural a tendency the principles of high-church

* Vol. 1. B. 4. p. 241, 242.

have to lead the clergy into a contempt of the common law, and the professors of it; and in consequence to trample upon all the rights of the people, which are only secured by a just administration of that law.

Had not high church been continually preaching up, that kings are superior to all human laws, as having by divine right an absolute power over the properties of their subjects, I am verily persuaded king *Charles's* reign had not been stained with so many acts of oppression, which were more and greater than the people felt in any, I might almost venture to say in all the reigns since the conquest till that time. In one year the king demands 100000 *l* of the city of *London* by way of loan; and not only forces them to pay it, but to fit out twenty men of war at their own expence †. Besides other taxes imposed by his own authority, my lord *Clarendon* says *, ‘Supplemental acts of state were made to supply defect of laws; so tannage and poundage, and other duties upon merchandizes, were collected by order of the board, which had been positively refused to be settled by act of parliament, and now greater imposition laid

† *Rushw. Hist. Coll. abridg. vol. 1. p. 267, 268.*

* *Clarendon's Hist. B. 1. p. 54, 55.*

' on trade. Obsolete laws were revived and
 ' rigorously executed, *viz.* Forest laws and
 ' knighthood [which last obliged all persons
 that had for the three last three years 40 *l. per*
annum in their hands, or for their use, to re-
 ceive the order of knighthood] And he adds,
 ' That no less unjust projects of all kinds,
 ' many ridiculous, many scandalous, and all
 ' very grievous, were set on foot; and that
 ' the council-chamber and star-chamber held
 ' for honourable that which pleased; and for
 ' just that which profited; and, being the same
 ' persons in several rooms, grew both courts
 ' of law to determine right, and courts of
 ' revenue to bring money into the treasury:
 ' the council-table by proclamation enjoining
 ' to the people what was not enjoined by the
 ' law, and prohibiting what was not prohibit-
 ' ed; and the star chamber censuring the
 ' breach of those proclamations by very large
 ' fines and imprisonment †: And that there
 ' were very few persons of quality who had
 ' not suffered or been perplexed by the weight
 ' and fear of those judgments and censures;
 ' and that no man could hope to be longer
 ' free from the inquisition of that court, than
 ' he resolved to submit to extraordinary
 ' courses.'

† *Clarendon's Hist.* p. 223.

A tyranny made familiar by long use, is much easier to be borne than a new one : and therefore the *English*, the freest people in the world, must be in a terrible consternation and confusion, when they found themselves all of a sudden overwhelmed with a vast inundation of oppression of all kinds ; and that the law, instead of redressing these grievances, was perverted by mercenary judges, to entail slavery on themselves and their posterity : And that the parliament, which was their last refuge, when it met, which was very seldom, was constantly insulted, and the members upon its unseasonable dissolution were fined and imprisoned during the king's pleasure : And that martial law was practised in time of peace, and projects on foot for bringing in foreign force, and the church in a worse condition than the state, by the clergy's carrying their ecclesiastical tyranny higher than ever it was in these kingdoms in the times of popery (to which they were daily making advances) by these two courts of inquisition, the high-commission, and the star-chamber, which inflicted such terrible punishments, as that death itself, compared with them, ought to be esteemed a favour. And a man must be strangely in love with life, who would not prefer dying before the sufferings which high-church inflicted on the reverend

Dr. Oates, or even Mr. Johnson, tho' they escaped several of the cruelties that the star-chamber used to inflict on clergymen; such as nailing of ears to the pillory, cutting them off, flitting of noses, branding them in the face with hot irons. And I can't but think Mr. Turbin was very much in the right, who rather than endure the whippings, to which Jefferies, in the bloody assizes of the *West*, condemned him, upon no other pretence than not owning his right name, petitioned king James in the following manner: ' That he humbly conceives
' that the sentence past on him by Jefferies is
' worse than death, and therefore humbly
' prays your majesty will be mercifully pleased
' to grant him the favour of being hanged
' with those of his fellow-prisoners that are
' condemned to die; and till then your pe-
' titioner, &c.*.

But it not being the business of this paper to consider the cruelties of those reigns, where the king's bench supplied the want of the star-chamber, by imposing immoderate fines, and inflicting excessive corporal punishments; I shall resume the thread of my discourse, relating to the cruelties of the high commission and the star-chamber, where if there happened

* *Western Martyrology*, p. 226.

to be any difference as to the degree of punishment, the ecclesiasticks usually voted with those who were for the severest. Nay, I shall give an instance where *Laud* had not authority enough to get one man to join with him in the punishing of a man, and that was in the case of *Gillibrand* an almanack-maker, who was by his order put into the high-commission court, for leaving out of his calendar the names of the popish saints, and putting in those of the protestant martyrs *. And tho' at the hearing of the cause it appeared it was the same with *Fox's* authorised calendar, and that almanacks of that kind had been formerly printed; for which reason *Gillibrand* was acquitted by archbishop *Abbot*, and all the rest of the court; yet *Laud* would by no means consent, and cried, *The queen herself had complained to him of this almanack, which gave great offence to those of her religion, and therefore he hoped it should not pass unpunished in that court.* And when he saw he could not prevail, he told the almanack maker with a great deal of fury, *You have made a faction in this court, for which you ought to be punished;* and then threatened him with a second prosecution, which put the poor man into a fever, of which he died. This was more

* *Laud's trial by Prynne*, p. 183, 184, 503, 506.

scandalous than preferring Dr. *Pocklington*, who had so scandalously libelled the protestant martyrs; for which, as has been already observed, he was censured in parliament.

Laud, whether it was to promote his interest at court, or for any other motive, appeared so great a favourer of popery and popish books, that even while he was bishop of *London* he was petitioned against by the printers and booksellers, for restraining books written against popery; and they complained that divers of them were in the hands of pursivants for printing against popery; and that the books against it were not allowed by him or his chaplains, who had then the sole licensing of books*.

In a word, *Laud's* chief design was to advance the ecclesiastical power above the law of the land (one of the articles on which he was impeached) And therefore while he was aiming at a papal power himself, affecting to be called *His Holiness*, and *Most Holy Father*, and *Summus Pontifex* †, titles which custom has appropriated to the pope; and several as flattering titles, as *Archangelus*, & *ne quid nimis*

* *Rushw.* in fol. vol. 1. p. 655.

† *Heylin's Life of Laud*, p. 297.

Spiritu Sancto effusissime plenus †: 'tis no wonder he were no friend to the pope's supremacy or infallibility. But for the other popish doctrines which served to set up an *English* popery, we need go no farther than his life written by his own chaplain *Heylin*, to see how ready he was to favour all who promoted them, and how severely he treated all who opposed them; the books of the rankest papists being either licensed by his chaplains, or approved by himself; and not only new books against popery were hindered from being published, or called in, and passages against popery deleted in others (of which you have a large account in *Prynne's* history of his trial) but the best protestant ones, as were formerly licensed by authority, were not permitted to be reprinted: such as *Fox's Acts and Monuments* (of which every church is obliged to have one) *Dr. Willet*, and the famous bishop *Jewel's* works; nay even the *Practice of Piety*, which had been printed six and thirty times, could not now obtain a new licence. And had not his creature bishop *Wren*, the same design, when he put this into the articles of his visitation, *That the churchwardens in every parish of his diocese should inquire whether any persons presumed to talk of*

† History of his troubles, p. 284, 325.

religion at their tables, and in their families? Since such a gross ignorance as this must cause, would as much help to bring in popery, as the restraint of protestant books.

The best argument *Heylin* has to prove *Laud* was no papist, was his marrying the earl of *Devonshire* to my lord *Rich's* wife, while he was alive, and not divorced *a vinculo matrimonii* * ; which he says *may serve for a sufficient argument that he was no papist, nor cordially affected to that religion.* But whether he was so or no, I refer the reader to what this chaplain of his says concerning the project of the union with the papists ; which he does not deny his Grace was concerned in †.

But because he is magnified by high church for his great service to king and church, I shall shew from my lord *Clarendon*, that he was the chief cause of the ruin of both. For he owns, ‘ That when he was made archbishop ‘ (which was in 1633.) it was a time of great ‘ ease and tranquillity: The king had made ‘ himself superior to all those difficulties he ‘ had to contend with, and was now revered ‘ by all his neighbours; the general ‘ temper and humour of the kingdom little

* *Heylin's life of Laud*, p. 53. † *Ibid.* p. 238.

‘ inclined

' inclined to the papist, and less to the puritan
 ' —The church was not repined at, nor the least
 ' inclination shewn to alter the government or
 ' discipline thereof, or to change the doctrine ;
 ' nor was there at that time any considerable
 ' number of persons of any valuable condition
 ' throughout the kingdom who did wish
 ' either : and the cause of so prodigious a
 ' change in so few years after, was too visible
 ' from the effects ; the archbishop's heart was
 ' set upon the advancement of the church,
 ' &c †.' Then he goes on to declare what
 methods he took to bring about so prodigious
 a change, and says, ' He provoked men of all
 ' qualities and conditions, who agreed in no-
 ' thing else but their aversion to him *.' And
 how could it be otherwise, since he concerned
 himself in every thing ; and, as *Clarendon* ob-
 serves, ' never abated in any thing of his seve-
 ' rity and rigour towards men of all condi-
 ' tions, or in the sharpness of his language and
 ' expressions : which was so natural to him,
 ' that he could not debate any thing without
 ' some commotion, nor bear contradiction,
 ' even in the council, where all men are equal-
 ' ly free, with that patience and temper that
 ' was necessary, of which they who wished him

† *Clarendon's* Hist. vol. 1. p. 61, 71.

* *Ibid.* p. 79.

' not well took many advantages : particularly
 ' my lord *Cottington*, who knew too well how
 ' to lead him into a mistake, and then drive him
 ' into choler, and then expose him upon the
 ' matter and the manner, to the judgment of
 ' the company *. He entertained, says this
 ' noble lord, too much prejudice to some per-
 ' sons, as if they were enemies to the discipline
 ' of the church, because they concurred with
 ' *Calvin* in some doctrinal points (*as the body of*
 ' *the clergy then did*) when they abhorred his
 ' discipline, and revered the government of
 ' the church, and prayed for its peace with as
 ' much zeal and fervency as any in the king-
 ' dom ; as they made manifest in their lives,
 ' and in their sufferings with it and for it †.
 And another historian, who is not backward
 on all occasions to commend *Laud*, owns,
 ' That the proceedings in the spiritual courts,
 ' not only against open separatists and profess'd
 ' puritans, but even against many true mem-
 ' bers of the church, that did not come up to
 ' new measures ; were so strict and severe, that
 ' it gave occasion to strike at the jurisdiction of
 ' those courts ‡. And when so many of the
 true members of the church were used so
 severely, the dissenters could not expect better

* *Clarendon's Hist.* vol. 1. p. 77. † *Ibid.* p. 70.

‡ *Hist. of England*, vol. 3. p. 85.

treatment: who were not permitted to seek their repose abroad, nor suffered to enjoy any quiet at home; but were treated with the utmost rigour that malice armed with arbitrary power could contrive.

As no expressions could more fully shew the imperious insolent temper of this proud prelate, than not to be able to bear a jest from the king's fool, whose business it was to make jests on his master, as well as the rest of the court; and therefore *Laud* obtained an order from the council, the king being present, to get the fool's coat pulled over his ears, to be discharged the king's service, and to be banished the court (and 'tis well he escaped being fined in the star-chamber) for asking him upon the news of the disturbance in *Scotland* about the liturgy, *Whe'as the fewl now?* So nothing could shew more the weakness of his mind, than that dreams, as 'tis plain from his diary, were capable of making such an impression on him*.

Had not that house of commons which sat three years before his trial, plainly seen that nothing could prevent the utmost confusion, while *Laud* was at the head of affairs; they

* *Welwood's Memoirs*, p. 58.

would not the very first month of their sitting, when there was not the least misunderstanding between the king and them, have declared him *nemine contradicente* a traitor †.

And none who is the least acquainted with the history of those times, but must be convinced that if *Laud* had not prevailed on the king to impose on the *Scots*, by his own authority, canons and liturgies of his framing; the king would never, by reason of the circumstances of the times, have thought himself obliged to pass an act for the abolishing of episcopacy in *Scotland*: In which act 'tis declared, *That the government of the church by bishops was against the word of God, and the propagation of religion* *. Nor would he, in pursuance of that act, have given away the bishops lands to those who were the greatest enemies to episcopacy; nor in all likelihood, afterward have consented to, and signed a contract with the *Scots* ‡, in which he obliged himself to confirm by act of parliament in both kingdoms the solemn League and Covenant, and by act of parliament in *England* presbyterian government, the directory for worship, and assembly of divines at

† *Wellwood's* Memoirs, p. 58.

* *Clarendon*, v. 1. p. 244, 245.

‡ *Ibid.* vol. 3. p. 78, 79.

Westminster for three years: And that upon a consultation with the assembly of divines, to which twenty should be added by the king, with some from the church of *Scotland*, it should be determined by the king and parliament what form of church-government should be established after the expiration of those years. Which was in effect as compleat an establishment of presbytery as could be; because no legal establishment can be conceived in such absolute and unalterable terms, but must be subject to be changed after the same manner as this establishment was: to which no end could be put, but by the consent of every part of the legislature to an alteration. And yet the clergy have the assurance to maintain, that this gracious king died a martyr to episcopacy: though in truth he granted these terms to the *Scots*, to encourage them to invade *England*, and to create a new civil war, while he refused them to the *English*; when by concessions far less dishonourable than he granted to the *Scots*, he might have secured himself, and the peace of the kingdom.

I thought myself obliged to mention these few, among the many instances that might be produced of the insupportable insolence and cruelties of a prelate, who scarce appears to have one good quality to atone for all the ill ones he

was in so high a degree possessed of; who took all the methods imaginable to alienate the most unconquerable affections of the people from the king and church; and acted after such a manner, as if he despaired of bringing about his wicked designs, till he had put all things in confusion. This must appear evident to any one, who takes ~~men's~~ characters from their actions, and not from the panegyrics which flattering historians give of them. These things, I say, I thought myself bound to observe concerning him, not on his own account, since he has long ago suffered what he deserved; but for the sake of high church, who esteem him the very pattern in the mount, and condemn the best churchmen as *perfidious Grindals*, loading them with all manner of obloquy, that will not tread in his steps: which plainly shews what they would be at, if ever the nation be so infatuated as to trust them with power.

My lord *Clarendon*, in exposing the weakness of the *Scots*, says, * *The infectious breath of their senseless and wretched clergy corrupted and governed the people.* And will it not be as great a reflection on the *English*, to be corrupted by as senseless and wretched a clergy

* Vol. 3. p. 83.

as ever those of *Scot*'and can be supposed to be? Those I mean, who propose *Laud* and his party as the standard and model by which they would govern themselves; and would have all that won't come into their measures be treated as enemies to the church. For which reason, it will not be improper to repeat the character my lord *Falkland* gives of these standards and patterns of high-church; and I chuse him, because his zeal for the church is as well known as his ability to defend it; and because he died a martyr in fighting for the royal cause, when his post of secretary of state to *Charles I.* exempted him from any military engagement; and because my lord *Clarendon*, who spends above three pages in one place in his commendation, gives him the highest character that can be bestowed on a mortal: among other things he says, * 'He was so severe an adorer of truth, ' that he could as easily give himself leave to ' steal as to dissemble: that he was a person ' of such prodigious parts, learning and know- ' ledge, of that inimitable sweetness and de- ' light in conversation, and of so flowing and ' obliging humanity and goodness, and of ' that primitive simplicity and integrity of

* Vol. 1. p. 268.

‘ life, that if there were no other brand on
 ‘ that odious and accursed civil war than that
 ‘ single loss, it must be most infamous and
 ‘ execrable to all posterity*.’ And therefore
 what so impartial, so candid, and so able a
 judge says of things, which happened within
 his own knowledge, cannot fail of gaining
 credit even with the most prejudiced. *Vid.*
Rushw. fol. vol. 4. p. 184.

*The Lord Falkland’s speech concerning
 Episcopacy.*

‘ MR. SPEAKER,

‘ HE is a great stranger in *Israel* who knows
 ‘ not that this kingdom hath long la-
 ‘ boured under many and great oppressions,
 ‘ both in religion and liberty; and his ac-
 ‘ quaintance here is not great, or his inge-
 ‘ nuity less, who doth not both know and
 ‘ acknowledge that a great, if not a principal
 ‘ cause of both these have been some bishops
 ‘ and their adherents.

‘ Mr. *Speaker*, A little search will serve to
 ‘ find them to have been the destruction of
 ‘ unity, under pretence of uniformity; to

‘ have brought in superstition and scandal,
‘ under the titles of reverence and decency;
‘ to have defiled our church, by adorning
‘ our churches; to have slackened the strict-
‘ ness of that union which was formerly be-
‘ tween us and those of our religion beyond
‘ the sea; an action as unpolitic as ungodly.

‘ Mr. *Speaker*, We shall find them to have
‘ tithed mint and anise, and have left undone
‘ the weightier works of the law; to have
‘ been less eager upon those who damn our
‘ church, than upon those who, upon weak
‘ conscience, and perhaps as weak reasons
‘ (the dislike of some commanded garment,
‘ or some uncommanded posture) only ab-
‘ stained from it. Nay, it hath been more
‘ dangerous for men to go to some neighbour’s
‘ parish, when they had no sermon in their
‘ own, than to be obstinate and perpetual
‘ recusants; while masses have been said in
‘ security, a conventicle hath been a crime,
‘ and which is yet more, the conforming to
‘ ceremonies hath been more exacted than the
‘ conforming to christianity; and whilst men
‘ for scruples have been undone, for attempts
‘ upon sodomy they have only been ad-
‘ monished.

‘ We shall find them to have been like the
‘ hen in *Æsop*, which laying every day an egg
‘ upon

‘ upon such a proportion of barley, her in-
 ‘ strefs increasing her proportion in hope she
 ‘ would increase her eggs, she grew so fat upon
 ‘ that addition, that she never laid more: so
 ‘ though at first their preaching were the oc-
 ‘ casion of their preferment, they after made
 ‘ their preferment the occasion of their not
 ‘ preaching.

‘ We shall find them to have resembled
 ‘ another fable, the dog in the manger; to
 ‘ have neither preached themselves, nor em-
 ‘ ployed those that should, nor suffered those
 ‘ that would: to have brought in catechising,
 ‘ only to thrust out preaching, cried down
 ‘ lectures by the name of factions, either
 ‘ because their industry in that duty appeared
 ‘ a reproof to their neglect of it, or with in-
 ‘ tention to have brought in darkness, that
 ‘ they might the easier sow their tares, while
 ‘ it was night; and by that introduction of
 ‘ ignorance, introduce the better that religion
 ‘ which accounts it the mother of devotion.

‘ *Mr. Speaker,* In this they have abused his
 ‘ majesty, as well as his people: for when
 ‘ they had with great wisdom (since usually
 ‘ the children of darkness are wiser in their
 ‘ generation than the children of light) silenced
 ‘ on both parts those opinions which have
 ‘ often

• often tormented the church, and have, and
 • will always trouble the schools, they made
 • use of this declaration to tie up one side, and
 • let the other loose; whereas they ought either
 • in discretion to be equally restrained, or in
 • justice to have been equally tolerated. And
 • it is observable, that that party to which they
 • gave this licence, was that whose doctrine,
 • though they were not contrary to law, was
 • contrary to custom, and for a long while in
 • this kingdom was no oftener preached than
 • recanted.

• The truth is, Mr. *Speaker*, that as some
 • of our ministers in our state first took away our
 • money from us, and after endeavoured to
 • make our money not worth the taking, by
 • turning it into brass by a kind of antiphilo-
 • sopher's stone; so these men used us in the
 • point of preaching, first depressing it to
 • their power, and next labouring to make it
 • such, as the harm had not been much if it
 • had been depressed: the most frequent sub-
 • jects, even in the most sacred auditories,
 • being the *jus divinum* of bishops and tithes,
 • the sacredness of the clergy, the sacrilege of
 • impropriations, the demolishing of purita-
 • nism and propriety, the building of the
 • prerogative at *Paul's*, the introduction of

‘ such doctrines, as, admitting them true,
 ‘ the truth would not recompence the scan-
 ‘ dal; or of such that were so far false, that,
 ‘ as Sir *Thomas Moore* says of the casuists,
 ‘ their business was not to keep men from
 ‘ sinning, but to inform them, *Quam prope*
 ‘ *ad peccatum sine peccato liceat accedere*: so it
 ‘ seemed their work was to try how much of
 ‘ a papist might be brought in without po-
 ‘ pery, and to destroy as much as they could
 ‘ of the gospel, without bringing themselves
 ‘ into danger of being destroyed by the law.

‘ To go yet further, some of them have so
 ‘ industriously laboured to deduce themselves
 ‘ from *Rome*, that they have given great
 ‘ suspicion that in gratitude they desire to
 ‘ return thither, or at least to meet it half
 ‘ way. Some have evidently laboured to
 ‘ bring in an *English*, though not a *Roman*
 ‘ popery: I mean not only the outside and
 ‘ dress of it, but equally absolute, a blind
 ‘ dependance of the people upon the clergy,
 ‘ and of the clergy upon themselves; and
 ‘ have opposed the papacy beyond the sea,
 ‘ that they might settle one beyond the water.
 ‘ Nay, common fame is more than ordinarily
 ‘ false, if none of them have found a way
 ‘ to reconcile the opinions of *Rome* to the
 ‘ preferments

' preferments of *England*; and be so abso-
 ' lutely, directly and cordially papists, that
 ' it is all that fifteen hundred pounds a year
 ' can do to keep them from confessing it.

' Mr. *Speaker*, I come now to speak of our
 ' liberties; and considering the great interest
 ' these men have had in our common master,
 ' and how great a good to us they might have
 ' made that interest in him, if they would
 ' have used it to have informed him of our
 ' general sufferings; and considering how little
 ' of their freedom of speech at *Whit-hall* might
 ' have saved us a great deal of the use we
 ' have now of it in the parliament house,
 ' their not doing this alone were occasion
 ' enough for us to accuse them as the be-
 ' trayers, though not as the destroyers of
 ' our rights and liberties: though, I confess,
 ' if they had been only silent in this parti-
 ' cular, I had been silent too. But, alas,
 ' they whose ancestors in the darkest times
 ' excommunicated the breakers of *Magna*
 ' *Charta*, did now by themselves, and their
 ' adherents, both write, preach, plot, and
 ' act against it, by encouraging Dr. *Beal*, by
 ' preferring Dr. *Manwaring*, appearing for-
 ' ward for monopolies and ship-money; and
 ' if any were slow and backward to comply,
 ' blasting

' blasting both them and their preferment
 ' with the utmost expression of their hatred,
 ' the title of Puritans.

' *Mr. Speaker,* We shall find some of them
 ' to have laboured to exclude both all per-
 ' sons, and all causes of the clergy, from the
 ' ordinary jurisdiction of the temporal magi-
 ' strate, and by hindering prohibitions (first
 ' by apparent power against the judges, and
 ' after by secret agreements with them) to
 ' have taken away the only legal bound to
 ' their arbitrary power, and made as it were
 ' a conquest upon the common law of the
 ' land, which is our common inheritance;
 ' and after made use of that power to turn
 ' their brethren out of their freeholds, for
 ' not doing that which no law of man required
 ' them to do; and which (in their opinions)
 ' the law of God required them not to do.
 ' We shall find them in general to have en-
 ' couraged all the clergy to suits, and to have
 ' brought all suits to the council-table; that
 ' having all power in ecclesiastical matters,
 ' they laboured for equal power in temporal,
 ' and to dispose as well of every office, as
 ' every benefice: which lost the clergy much
 ' revenue, and much reverence, by encou-
 ' raging them indiscreetly to exact more of
 ' both than was due; so that indeed the gain
 ' of

‘ of their greatness extended but to a few of
 ‘ that order, though the envy extended upon
 ‘ all.

‘ We shall find them to have both kindled
 ‘ and blown the common fire of both nations,
 ‘ to have both sent and maintained that book,
 ‘ of which the author no doubt hath long
 ‘ since wished with *Nero, Utinam nescissem*
 ‘ *litteras!* and of which more than one king-
 ‘ dom hath cause to wish, that when he writ
 ‘ that, he had rather burned a library, tho’
 ‘ of the value of *Ptolomy’s*. We shall find
 ‘ them to have been the first and principal
 ‘ cause of the breach, I will not say of, but
 ‘ since the pacification at *Berwick*. We shall
 ‘ find them to have been the almost sole
 ‘ abettors of my lord *Strafford*, whilst he
 ‘ was practising upon another kingdom that
 ‘ manner of government which he intended to
 ‘ settle in this; where he committed so many,
 ‘ so mighty, and so manifest enormities and
 ‘ oppressions, as the like have not been com-
 ‘ mitted by any governor in any government,
 ‘ since *Verris* left *Sicily*: and after they had
 ‘ called him over from being deputy of *Ire-*
 ‘ *land*, to be in a manner deputy of *England*
 ‘ (all things here being governed by a *juntillo*,
 ‘ and that *juntillo* governed by him) to have
 ‘ assisted him in the giving of such counsels,

‘ and the pursuing of such courses, as it is a
 ‘ hard and measuring cast, whether they were
 ‘ more unwise, more unjust, or more unfor-
 ‘ tunate, and which had infallibly been our
 ‘ destruction, if by the grace of God, their
 ‘ share had not been as small in the sub-
 ‘ tilty of serpents, as in the innocency of
 ‘ doves.’

As every one that is conversant in story
 must allow this to be a favourable descrip-
 tion of the then high-church clergy; so he
 must own, that the high-church laity were
 then for the most part not only grossly ig-
 norant in religious matters, but withal very
 much addicted to drunkenness, and all manner
 of debauchery, and remarkable for their great
 contempt of all that’s sacred or serious, and
 abominably guilty of all manner of lewd
 buffoonery, and of swearing, profaning and
 blaspheming the holy name of God; and in
 a word, were a very fit people for such
 priests.

’Tis no wonder this description the above-
 mention’d lord gives of high-church in *Charles*
 the First’s reign, is so lively a picture of them
 at present, seeing they have ever since made
 it their business to copy after that original;

and

and therefore in the following reigns, when the court seemed to have no other aim but popery and slavery, they came plumb into all its measures, and went hand in hand with the court till an indulgence was allowed to the dissenters. And they have sufficiently shewn the world, that no government, tho' it parts with the *first-fruits* and *tenths*, or any other branch of its revenue to the church, is to expect them to be in its interest, if they are not allowed the power of persecuting protestant dissenters. Persecution with them, is like charity with true christians; without which, do what else you will for them, you are but as *sounding brass* and *tinkling cymbals*.

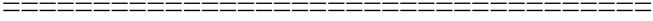
But tho' high church proposes the reign of *Charles I.* when *Laud* and his faction governed every thing, as a precedent for all future reigns, I suppose it is with this tacit exception to the treatment of clergymen of their side, if they chance to be tried for any misdemeanour; except we can suppose they are willing to have *Dr. Sacheverell's* ears cropt, his nose slit, his face stigmatized, to have an excessive fine put on him, and to be condemned to perpetual imprisonment, as clergymen and others then were, who were not guilty of the thousandth part of the crimes

crimes this reverend divine stands accused of. And so far I agree with them, that I would not have any of their proceedings, which at all times favoured of violence and injustice, proposed as a pattern in a reign so famous for its gentleness and moderation: nor would I have the whigs prevailed on by any practice of the tories, or by any thoughts of retaliation or provocation, or any pretence whatever, to exceed the due bounds of impartial justice; but only to take such care as may prevent both church and state from falling under such deplorable circumstances, as they were in when high-church rid triumphant.

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The Bank of Wisdom publish all works of human interest, we scorn no ideas of serious thought. Ideas and beliefs some may think “dangerous” and would want to hide, we seek to reproduce and distribute for the consideration and intellectual development of every human mind. When peace and understanding is established throughout the world it might be said that humanity has achieved an acceptable degree of civilization, but until that longed for time we must never cease to search for greater truth and a higher morality for humanity.

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Emmett F. Fields
Bank of Wisdom

Bank of wisdom
P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201
U.S.A.

A
DISCOURSE
ON
GOVERNMENT
AND
RELIGION,

Calculated for the MERIDIAN of the
THIRTIETH OF JANUARY.

By an INDEPENDENT.

*Ye know nothing at all, neither consider that it
is expedient for us, that one man should die
for the people, and that the whole nation
perish not.*

CAIAPHAS.

SALUS POPULI SUPREMA LEX ESTO.

The Author unknown.

T H E
P R E F A C E.

TH^{O'} this is the place of a preface, what I have to say, more than the contents that follow, being not the subject of the day in the title-page, but of the present times, I think it may not improperly be called, *a Postscript by way of Preface.*

There is now much talk about altering the *Common Prayer*; no one doubts of the need of doing it, but pur-blind bigots; but how to alter it to please every one, is an unfurmountable difficulty. I own I have read none of the arguments published on this subject: however I will give my opinion, that if it be at all altered, it ought to be in such a manner, as will best please *all conscientious and reasonable men*, and that in my judgment will be, not to alter the book, but the use of it; not to abolish a syllable or ceremony of it, but let it remain just as it is. Let every parish priest either use the whole, or leave out what part
he

he pleases, or let it all alone, not allowing him to introduce any *new* ceremonies, for that would be a leading towards popery; but leave out as many of the old ones as he thinks proper; that he who is to pray for others, may pray in what manner he judges best, either by that form, or by any other of his own composing, or by none. So the priest enjoying liberty of conscience himself, will feel the sweetness of it, and be willing that others should enjoy the same felicity. How can any one pray, or teach, according to the best of his judgment, in the sincerity of his conscience, that is denied the liberty of doing it? Upon the rock of private judgment and liberty of conscience, stands the reformation. That no ceremonies should be imposed on men in religious matters, nor doctrines, but such as agree with their reason and the Bible, is the foundation of protestancy; and if this was freely permitted, all bigotry in religion, which is the scandal of it, would be done away. Men will not then persecute one another in words, or deeds, about things indifferent, nor esteem them essentials. All good and wise men both clergy and laity will be pleased, and none displeas'd but superstitious, arbitrary and unreasonable tempers. And such good consequence is as much as can

can be expected or desired, when any alteration is made, on any account, in any time or place in the world. An unalterable conformity to any one system, is presumption to expect, and tyranny to impose, unless the men appointing it were infallible. But infallibility is God's peculiar property, according to protestant doctrine; and is doubtless an infallible truth: therefore to leave men free in religion, is true protestant practice. To give this liberty in public devotion, is to make but *one* alteration; but to alter the book, will be to make an alteration, which, however made, will want altering again and again without end. But by this method, all the people as well as all their guides will please themselves, for then if too many or too few, too much or too little ceremonies, be used at one church to please any person, those that dislike may go to another, where the worship is more agreeable to them. All the conformity that God requires, is to the dictates of a pure conscience; and all the religious conformity necessary for social life and happiness, is, *that supplications, prayers, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings, and all that are in authority; the manner how should be left to the discretion of him that does it, so that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all*

all godliness and honesty; and that men should be advised and counselled how to act as the reason and nature of their circumstances require, with all moral and commendable conduct.

A
DISCOURSE
ON
GOVERNMENT, &c.

AFTER a hundred years contention and animosity about the good or evil of *one* action, it is time that mens passions should subside, and that they growing calm and sedate, without enthusiasm and bigotry, should reflect and reason on the subject; and 'tis fit that those who have the favour of good sense should exercise it.—Those who are not able to form a rational judgment of things, are liable to every deception; they cannot possibly tell when they are deceived, and for want of judgment can never be convinced: therefore such must go their own way, till suffering opens their understandings; then they wish, too late, they had reflected in time. As when men feel the effects of slavery,

slavery, they wish for freedom, who never valued it, when they enjoyed it; nor endeavoured to preserve it, when they were in imminent danger of losing it. But were it not for the *careless* and the *coward*, mankind could never be enslaved.—As for my own part, I am determined to write for *liberty*, while I have liberty to write, seeing in these happy days of freedom, we now enjoy that natural and reasonable liberty, which is the natural and reasonable right of mankind, and reason therefore may speak without fear: but when *tyrants* reign, reason for liberty is suppressed, because it is feared.—I am of no levelling spirit: I think sovereigns are made to rule, and subjects to obey, the laws governing both; the laws I mean made by the governing powers, that are according to equity, and moral justice.—Such a government ought not to be abused, nor to suffer abuse from malecontents, that enjoy equal liberties with their fellow subjects; whose murmuring is only to make men despise the heavenly *manna* they at present relish, to bring them back to the antient slavery of *Egypt*, to lordly and priestly tyranny, which free-born souls abhor; or to the stinking *garlick* of popery, which is loathed by men of taste.—Some men are of such servile and stupid dispositions,

positions, that they think whatever is the will of the sovereign, is law. If he was God himself, a Being not capricious, but necessarily so perfect, that it is absolutely impossible for him to be the author of an *evil law*, it would be so, and right in being so. If his laws like God's were perfectly just, because his will is absolutely good, not because he is absolutely powerful; for power and goodness are distinct and different things; therefore the one may be where the other is not; and very seldom meet together in man. They can only be cemented by wisdom and justice. This cannot be where weak-headed men are possessed of power; for where ambitious and self-conceited men bear rule (which is the natural consequence of strong passions and weak intellects) the event naturally is, that destruction attends not only all those their arm of vengeance is capable of reaching; but also, that they over-reach themselves to their own fatal downfall and justly merited ruin.— If to enslave a nation is an *inglorious* and *dishonourable* thing to the doer; to redeem a nation from slavery is a *glorious* and an *honourable* action. If men have a natural right to the enjoyment of civil and religious liberties, they have a natural right to assert and maintain these liberties, and to defend them by
what

what means they can. When necessity calls for it, it is not any unnatural rebellion, but a natural and noble stand for liberty: but to rebel without this cause, *as has been lately done*, is to attempt the destruction of our most valuable liberties, and to set up tyranny and slavery in its room; which if attempted by a king, renders him the most detestable of all kings; and if by a people, proves them the most base and ungrateful of all people. A king is then a tyrant, when he will not be governed by the laws of the country he ought to be governed by: but as long as he governs himself by them, those laws are his protection. On the contrary, he that makes his arbitrary and despotic will, the law of the nation, is a tyrant; and as he does and would reign without the law of reason and justice, he is, or ought, in reason and justice to be outlawed. And every priest that preaches up the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance to such a prince, is a traitor to the liberties of the people. When the people's liberties are intended to be taken away, then, and only then, such doctrine is necessary to be preached to the stupid and unthinking herd; that while they are lulled asleep in spiritual stupefaction, their properties may be invaded without obstruction; and their natural rights stolen from them

them without impediment. The king and the priest, so joining to play their part, are like two robbers, that, at their attacking a man upon the highway, one of them throws dust in his eyes, while the other robs him of what he has. What's the reason that priests don't preach this high-flown doctrine now? It is, *first*, because the prince intends no invasion on the liberties of his subjects, and *secondly*, because they have got a king they can't make an ecclesiastical noodle of. When fools reign, they have always knaves at their elbow. When a king is desirous to enslave the people, there are always some *black* counsellors at hand, that seek their own advancement in the common ruin. If he take it into his head to side with the church and clergy in doing it, they will sanctify all his actions, assert his birthright from above, cast a ray of glory around him, and make him appear a saint, or one of the minor sons of God.

Notwithstanding the wicked, stupid, and damning doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance, men have a right to stand up in their own defence, when their lives and liberties are invaded; for *self-defence* is the greatest law in nature, it is interwoven in the constitution of every creature, and such unnatural doctrines cannot extirpate it.

Let not kings be deceived by false notions; when by wicked actions, they have lost the love of the people in general, they can have no safety from the people; but are in the case of poor debtors, that dare not trust themselves abroad for fear of a bailiff. But a few malecontents, and a faction against the court, will always be, *1st*. By some, because they are out of place. *2^{dly}*. By others, because they suffer themselves easily to be deceived, and are generally dissatisfied. And *3^{dly}*, Those that are jealous of their liberties will always fear the worst, and therefore grumble at whatever does not seem to them to have a favourable aspect, or appears to have an ill tendency; these I may call *court spies*; but it is a sign of liberty in the state, when the people are permitted to be watchful of it, and even allowed a jealous murmur or complaint.

The action of this day, being done contrary to the *interest*, and therefore contrary to the *dispositions* of the priests, it was policy in them to blacken it, and make it a sin, which now they have prayed above these hundred years to be forgiven. And if it is not forgiven by this time, they either pray to a strange God, or they are a strange sort of prayers, that work no manner of effect upon him:

him:—He either hears them not, or don't think them worthy his regard, and so they may pray on till doomsday.—When God, the king, and the people are to be mocked, there is no better way of doing it, than by practising it with the face of religion. The cavaliers pray for the forgiveness of a sin they never committed; and so they have mocked God, ever since they have begun to practise repentance on this score—Those that are most guilty of hypocrisy, cry out most against others for being hypocrites. What is it but hypocrisy, for men to pretend to repent of what no man in the age they live in is guilty of; or to attempt by sour penitence to atone for an action of the generation now dead, and which those that committed, were not conscious of its being a crime in the nature and reason of the thing?—But however it be, if they have committed a crying sin before God, and have not answered for it by this time before God, there is no truth in our religion—Why then should we, a degenerate race, condemn; and whining, pretend to repent of the action they did, and thought themselves right in doing? If we are to answer for it, where is the justice of God? If we believe we shall be answerable for their faults, where's the rationality of our belief? But I

expect to be told that the *Lord visits the iniquities of the fathers upon their children to the third and fourth generation*. What upon those children who had no hand in the action of their fathers, and who cannot be guilty of it! To assert this is as ridiculous, as impious. This is just as right, as it would be to lash a boy at school, that never played truant in his life, because his father or grandfather played the truant, and was not whipt for it. *Ezekiel* (chap. xviii.) tells us, that God said *then*, and I suppose he has not changed his mind since; *the soul that sinneth shall die, the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, &c.* This chapter is a good explanation of the threatening annexed to the second commandment.—The truth is, there are *families*, as well as *nations*, that tread in their predecessors steps, and the *son* goes on in the same wicked path the *father* did (as *James II.* followed *Charles I.*) till their iniquities are full; that is, till they can be borne with no longer; and then *justice* fully incensed, whets her vengeful sword, and cuts them off. Seldom does it happen, that tyrannical kings treading in the steps of their wicked ancestors, prosper to the *fourth* generation; but according as their iniquity is, as to time and measure, they are cut down in the *second* or *third* succession.

cession. So the sins of *James I* which his son *Charles* walked in, helped forward his fall.—It is the mercy of God to mankind, that tyranny and oppression shall naturally stir up the vengeance of an incensed people, *to bind the heathen kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron. Such honour have all his saints, praise ye the Lord, says the * psalmist.* This is an honour due to none but *saints*, that is, to a people worthy of redemption. And kings that persecute christians are heathens to them.

It is the duty of subjects to defend and obey a *good* prince, and oppose a *bad* one; for all opposition to evil is good. The people, that obey a wicked prince, will be wicked; for a tame submission to his vices, will corrupt their morals. And his *religious vices*, most of all; because they are not seen as vices, being gilded over with religion. By this means slavery and iniquity may be planted, and take deep root in a nation.

Right government is, when the governor and governed mutually agree, and are mutually benefited: when they harmonize, they make each other happy. The chief end of govern-

* Psalm cxlix. 8.

ment is the safety and tranquillity of the people, in which the prince finds his account: their duty is to serve and protect each other. —Subjects disobeying a lawful prince, are justly punished; and he is a lawful prince, whom the power and will of the people appoint, and who rules according to law. —He that redeems a people from slavery, or from those arbitrary measures that present them with an approaching prospect of it, has a right to rule over them; and as he is their *rightful*, so he is their *lawful prince* if he don't enslave them. —Kings are the servants of the public, and if they deserve well of the public, they ought to be well rewarded by the public. But servants that do not their duty, ought to be discarded their service. He that destroys the public peace, whose duty it is to preserve it, deserves public punishment, whatever his office or station be in the public service. As it is hard to punish governors, without injury to the governed, if they can get rid of them at any rate, they must be contented; for formal justice cannot be executed on those that are above the reach of justice. Justice cannot always be executed where it ought, but ought always where it can, without regard to persons. —He that reigns according to the laws of the country, is not to be esteemed a bad
bad

Bad prince; but if bad laws are complained of, and he can rectify them, but does not, he is not a good prince; for every one that is made sensible of his duty, ought to do it, if it be in his power. A prince may be so far misled, as to agree to the making laws that may be productive of grievances to a nation; because he may not apprehend they will turn out such; but when he finds they do, by the complaints of the people, if he don't endeavour to redress them, he is a bad governor.— Necessary taxes must be raised to support governments, and when it is done in a legal way, according to the laws of the country, and applied to the necessary emergencies of state, it is a proof of disaffection, in persons that can afford to pay their taxes, to grumble at paying them. And if people at this time pay more taxes than formerly, they are much more able to do it, because of the great increase of trade; though the poor have always enough to do to live, and live honestly; therefore those only that are able to pay taxes, should be taxed; for to demand of any man what is not in his power to do, cannot be the demands of that law which is *holy, just and good*.—But kings that impose taxes on their subjects without law, and take away their rights and properties because they have a

power to do it; and do it, because it is to their advantage, are but more powerful robbers. And those that distress and destroy their subjects, that they may the better subdue and enslave them, to enhance their own arbitrary power, are tyrants and wicked rulers. *As a roaring lion and a raging bear, so are these over the poor people.*—Is it not just to remove the causes of common calamity by the death of the principal person, which nothing but his death could remove, or the death of the people from their oppressions? Is it *better*, in such case, *that one man die, or the nation perish?*

The promoters and abettors of slavery endeavour to enforce and sanctify tyranny by one text of *St. Paul, Rom. xiii. 1, 2. Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation.*—These words have been made a shameful handle of by shameless priests, for shameful ends and purposes.—According to the seeming sense of these words, if by *higher powers*, be meant *persons in power*, every one that is invested with power, has his
power

power from God; and every soul must submit to it on the peril of damnation. As there is nothing of *hereditary right* in the text, it does not patronize the slavish principles of passive obedience and non-resistance to one family, or set of men, more than to another. But if every one in power must be passively obeyed, on the peril of damnation, a worse doctrine cannot be taught to enslave the world than this; and favours more of a revelation from the infernal tyrant, than the revelation of the *glorious liberty of the sons of God*. This then is the doctrine not of *Paul*, but of priests: 'tis not *gospel*, but *priestcraft*; for the devil then in power must not be resisted, but obeyed.—I apprehend this doctrine is against *levellers*; against those that would be subject to, or governed by no power; who are for no king in this world, but *king Jesus*; no governor to exercise the authority of rule over them: whereas God has ordained, that there shall be some men having higher power than the rest, to govern the rest; and he that resists this ordinance of God, and order of nature, is a rebel to God and man; and will meet with his justly-merited condemnation; for this is to overturn all order and government among men; without which, all manner of evil may be committed with impunity.—

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The apostle don't say, *all persons in power* are to be obeyed; but the *power*, that is, every order, and office, appointed by the public, for the public good. Every one in a superior office ought to be obeyed in such a manner as is necessary. 'Tis the office, the subjection is due to, for 'tis this that gives the power to the persons possessing it, whoever the person be, not for the sake of his person, but of his office and authority: so far as his office, place, authority, or power requires he should be obeyed, in such manner and degree he ought to be obeyed; and he that does so, submits himself to the *power* rather than to the *person*, or only to the person for the office, power, and authority sake; not because so it *must* be, but because so it *should* be, or it is right so to do; for governing powers are the ordinance of God.—But if he in office does not use the power *right* which he is possessed of, he has no right to possess it; he forfeits his right by the ill use he makes of it: obeying him in such case, is not obeying the ordinance of God, as his minister for good; 'tis obeying man rather than God; what *the man in office*, not what *the office of the man* requires. Thus we should distinguish between the person and the power.—Every man in life has a power given him to

some end, and if he uses his power to a different end than what he ought to do, he abuses it; and not using it right, it is right to take it from him.—If kings can do no wrong, it is because as soon as they do wrong, they cease of right to be kings. A good office must be executed by a good man. The man should be fitted for the office he is to execute, or he is disqualified for the office, and so cannot serve it; cannot be what he is appointed, because he is not qualified for it. So that a king ruling wickedly, is not a king; therefore the people that kill, or cast off such a man, don't kill, or cast off their king, only one that would have been their king if he had been properly qualified for that high office and sacred dignity; and one that has unkinged himself by discovering his inability to reign. He is not a husband, that takes no care of his wife and family, and she that is a whore, is not a wife.

It is cause of wonder, how it should ever come into the head of any man to imagine, he ought to be obeyed as a God. It is an evident sign of the devil in man, that sets himself up in the place of God. It is making an idol of a prince, to bring the judgments of God upon him. It is a doctrine that nothing

but a priest could invent, or one that intended to raise his king the *higher*, that he might fall the *lower*. A spiritual trap to catch an unwary prince in, to fetter him to his everlasting and irretrievable ruin.

If *Charles* had not been a great enthusiast, it could never have come into his head, that any king on earth could possibly be so much a favourite of God, as that he indulged him to do what he pleased, without being accountable as men ought to be that break the laws of society.—Are not kings men? and no body but priests, madmen, or fools ever supposed or said they were more than men; and if so, then they are under the same laws of God in this world that all mankind are. Their office and power indeed makes it reasonable, that if they reign well, they should be more valued and respected than other men; because they are the authors of more good and benefit to men; but if they reign ill, they are less valued than other men; because they are the cause of much more evil and injury to men than others are.—Or rather why should God *hate* kings more than other men, that he should indulge them in the practice of more wickedness than others, to enslave the world with impunity. The rod of correction is
used

used for the good of children, which a loving father will exercise when necessity calls for it, to reclaim them by reasonable punishment. To suffer a king to be a criminal without fear, is to debauch the office of a king, and debase royal dignity. To suppose God does it, is supposing partiality in God; thus to do, is to debase God, to exalt the king.

Men are made *kings* by the grace of God, —but not *tyrants*, because they have not the grace of God in them. And that *grace of God* which makes kings, comes by means of the *good-will of the people*. Those that hold their power by this right, as *the present royal family do*, have the best, the justest, and the most natural right in the world. Properly speaking, men are made kings by *the grace of the people*, and they behave as worthy of such office, by *the grace of God*. Let those that deny this, shew their commission to be from God, and not from the people; let them plainly prove it so, without the sophistry of priestcraft, that the world may believe it.

What king did ever come from heaven! that any of them should presume to claim a divine right to any kingdom on earth? Or what commission was ever given from *heaven*

to any man, to possess a kingdom on earth? The *divine right* of kings to rule over people, without, and against their consent, is a *profane jest*; though 'tis like many other things that are called divine, which of all things have the least relation to divinity. And yet nations have been so far deluded, and imposed on by their teachers, by the governors and guardians of their liberties, that they have suffered their natural rights, liberties and properties to be given away, by will, at the pleasure of a departing king, like a paternal estate. If a king has a right to dispose of the people at his death, without their consent; why not to sell the kingdom in his life-time without their consent, as a man to sell his estate? or to sell his subjects, as cattle are sold in the market? but if he cannot justly give away the kingdom at his death, nor sell it in his life-time, without consent of the people, then 'tis evident that the power of governing them lies in themselves, and no man has a right to a kingdom, as a man hath to an estate; but that, *the right and power of governing a nation, is in the power of the nation*, till tyranny and oppressions rob them of it, and render them for ever incapable of recovering their *native right*: then farewell all that is dear and valuable to a free people.—When a whole
nation

nation become the property of a king or priest, or of both united to make the chain that binds them the stronger, who dare say his soul or body is his own? And as kingly majesty, so the priesthood is constituted by the people. "Whoever is declared to be a priest by any society, is a priest to them; and ceases to be one, the moment they declare him none."—But all pretended right that is maintained by power, force and violence, is no longer right than the foundation can support it. He possesses my property, as a robber does that is stronger than I, and can hold it no longer than he holds his strength; for when I can, it is my right to dispossess him of his unjust gains.—He that would enslave a nation, is himself a slave to some other person, or to his passions, and to restless ambition. He has a *weak head*, and a *wicked heart*; and if superstition and bigotry may pass for religion, he may be a very religious man.

The *Scotch prince* assumed a tyrannical power over the constitution of this realm, and the consciences of men, throughout his whole reign. He endeavoured to encroach on the privileges of parliament, and to set himself *above the laws*. In these *principles and practices*, he was flattered and encouraged by his
sycophant

tycophant ministers, bishops and clergy. With these false notions of power, the son's heart was corrupted, his head was turned and overturned. Ambitious men told them, their persons and authority were *divine*, to exalt themselves thereby; they swallowed the *profane* bait, and were intoxicated with it; they reeled and staggered with licentious power like drunken men.

Whatever is *divine*, must be so in the *nature* of the thing; and if so, then such as are *by nature kings*, are kings by divine right: and such his successor seems to have been, who kept by his wisdom what he got by his valour. Nature herself could not forbear discovering her disorder, groaning for the nation, at the loss of so great a man.—But nature seemed never to design the man, whom this day has almost deified, a higher *step* than that of a *bishop*; nor his father, than that of a *school-master*. Both father and son mistook their abilities, in conceiving themselves kings by any *natural qualification* they had for that office, or by any thing like *divine right* inherent in their persons.—To carry on this juggle since their reigns, and to deceive the populace into the *divinity* of the *Stuart family*, their successors pretended to work miracles, in curing
diseases

diseases by a touch, and the bishops and clergy countenanced the fraud, and carried on the imposture. Some fools now have faith enough to believe (and when have not fools a foolish faith) that the seed of the *Stuarts* have this gift, and have been as far as *France* or *Rome* to partake of it. A sufficient demonstration of the *imposition* and *stupidity* of that party. But truth and righteousness are not supported by religious knavery.

Enthusiasm enraged is madness; if the persons seized with it are exasperated, they grow mad. The king was enthusiast enough to believe, that he of all the nation was the *sole favourite* of heaven. The people who had scrutinizing eyes, seeing nothing superlative in him, worthy the delight of heaven or of earth, began to conceive, that if he *by the grace of God*, was God's peculiar favourite, they had as much right and title to *that grace* as he. Thus the enthusiasm which the priests had kindled in the king, began to spread among the people; and the wild fire being caught out of the priests hands, it was no longer under their direction. Every one of the Lord's people was as good as a priest or a king. And how indeed could it be otherwise, unless the king and priest had by their better doctrine and conduct taught the people better?

And

And so all thought themselves to be *kings and priests to God, even the lamb*, even that lamb who is convertible into a *lion*. As the king himself, in *his* way, was baptised with the fire of this enthusiastic spirit, so from him the flame caught the people; his priests sowed the seeds of it in him, and he among all the people. It begun at court, and extended over all his dominions. Such as men sowed, they also reaped in full measure, making good the righteous sentence of scripture, which saith, *With whatsoever measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.*

I read that, ‘The bad policy of king *James* appeared in nothing more than his falling out with his parliaments. This was principally owing to his *extravagant notions of regal power, which he carried higher than most of his predecessors, and so far as was inconsistent with a limited monarchy, such as is the wise and happy constitution of England.* This brought many and great inconveniences upon him; and happy had it been, if his only surviving son and successor *Charles I.* had taken warning by the imprudent management of his father; for then he might have avoided the rock on which he unhappily split. But being brought up in the
‘same:

‘ same *high notions of prerogative*, he trod in
 ‘ the same steps, nay took *larger strides* towards
 ‘ *arbitrary power* than even his father had
 ‘ done. By this means, the people that sided
 ‘ with the party against the court, grew every
 ‘ day more formidable, mens passions on
 ‘ both sides were heated, mutual distrust and
 ‘ jealousy took place; and religion also mixing
 ‘ in the quarrel, the patrons of civil liberty
 ‘ made their advantage of it, till enthusiasm,
 ‘ which gathered strength from the *arbitrary*
 ‘ *proceedings of the court*, and the *severity of the*
 ‘ *hierarchy*, grew rampant in its turn, and
 ‘ overturned not only the *hierarchy* but the
 ‘ *monarchy* too.’ This is the sum of the ge-
 neral history of those times, of which particu-
 lar facts are but so many proofs.

These were the mismanagements of king
Charles, his exercising an unlawful power,
 that is, a power to raise taxes without consent
 of parliament; his insulting, provoking, and
 falling out with them, instead of a becoming
 endeavour to please them, as if *majesty* con-
 sisted in *haughtiness*—never convoking them
 but when compelled by want, and when his
 wants were satisfied, suddenly adjourning or
 dissolving them again in a short time after
 their meeting; and at those times seizing some
 of

of their members; calling men to account out of parliament for what was said in it, which ought to be *the sanctuary of freedom*; and trying all the illegal ways he could to supply his need without them. *Eleven years did tyrannical power reign uncontrouled by parliament.* The king's protecting and defending evil-ministers, that persuaded him into such measures, both abroad and at home, as were prejudicial to the nation.—His shewing favour to papists, and putting many of them into posts of power and authority, whom all protestants had reason to dread and abhor, remembering queen *Mary's burning reign.* Authorising archbishop *Laud's* tyranny, who fined men in his high-commission court at his pleasure, while the king's ministers, by his sole authority, did the same in the star-chamber.—His giving men reason to complain by hard and unjust usage, and denying them the liberty of complaint.—His raising an army against his *Scotch* subjects to force them to conformity and obedience to *Laud* and the liturgy. It was grievous to the king to redress the grievances of his subjects, which were often remonstrated, and perpetually augmented; and when he suffered them to be redressed, it seemed to be by constraint, and with a design to renew them.—The parliament's being never

never able to depend on his promises being fulfilled, if he had power to break them.— These things were the unhappy mismanagement of that king, which in the end brought on him the hatred of the people, and his own destruction. And as the king took extraordinary and unprecedented strides towards arbitrary power, the parliament were obliged to take extraordinary and unprecedented strides to prevent his engrossing it to the ruin of the people's properties and liberties. Though neither side were entirely innocent, or all their actions justifiable; and in such confusion of affairs, it is impossible they could be void of blame; yet 'tis enough if we see clearly which side was *most* in fault, and was the real occasion of all the faults of the other side.— It appears by the general conduct of *Charles's* reign, that he used his people not *as a nursing father does his children*, but as the Lord used his enemies, and made them such to himself, for *he ruled them as with a rod of iron, and broke them to pieces as a potter's vessel.* — The commons shewed their fidelity to the nation, in often entering into the consideration of the liberties and properties of the subject, and of the multitude of grievances complained of by the people, as it was their duty to do, who are chosen to be guardians of their liberties;

liberties; and not to be creatures of the court, or tools of dominion, to enrich themselves and beggar the nation, but defenders of the kingdom, to redress an injured people from court-oppressions. They had a right, as it was their business to hear and examine into *grievances*, and do their endeavour to redress them. To whom should the people seek redress in *such* cases, but to their representatives? and when sought for in a *legal* manner, it was *illegal* not to do them *justice*; for that is to crush them with *injustice*.—Such vile infringements of the laws were so often made, that the parliament then must have had no regard to themselves, nor their country, not to be incensed at it.—The severities of the church and state increased the enemies to both. I may here set the church before the state, because the state was ruled by it.—Many then forsook their native country, forced by the inclemency of government, for shelter among the savages of *America*, hoping to enjoy life more to their satisfaction abroad, in an unknown and foreign country, than what they could expect at home.

As *the duke of Buckingham* was the man to whom (at the beginning of *Charles's* reign) the people imputed the cause of all their grievances, one *lieutenant Felton* undertook, at the
 expence

expence of his life, to attempt the redemption of the nation, by stabbing the duke to the heart, so that he fell down dead; and happy had it been, if *Felton's* success had been equal to his good intention, and undaunted action. Happy had it been, if the king could have learned *care* and *conduct* from it, by endeavouring to ease and please the people; and not by an obstinate disregard, or invincible stupidity, opened the fountain of their blood, which inevitably drew after it the loss of his own.—Actions well designed, but without success, are often blamed when men see the event, but not before. Many things are known to be wrong when they take a wrong turn to our expectations and desires.—The putting *Charles I.* to death, was not esteemed a sin by the nation, till *Charles II.* came in: The nation did not repent of it, till then; and till then, God did not seem displeased with them for the action; and then the Lord was displeased, or the priests belied him, as they have often done. *Charles the martyr* gives us a sample of what many other martyrs have been, who died for their folly and obstinacy, not for their wisdom and goodness. The *mother* church has *many* such martyrs in her calends; and its excuseable for the *daughter* to have *one*.—The power that is of God is a good

a good governing power, or a power that governs us for our good: This excites a love to God, when he punishes us only for our reformation, not *visits the iniquities of the fathers on their innocent children*, for this prevents our loving him. The more dreadful we conceive him to be, the less love we have towards him.—A religious sense of deity must needs be, that God makes, or knows the difference we make between good and evil, and rewards or punishes according to the regard we have thereto. But, what is good and evil to man, is *really* and *necessarily* so to him, whether it be the same to God or no, and we must form our conduct by our sense and knowledge thereof in all things relating to ourselves and society, that is, we must judge, whether actions are fit or unfit, as they may be prejudicial or beneficial to ourselves or others, by the nature and necessity of their circumstances.—If we act for our own private good in opposition to that of the public, 'tis a vice; and so much the greater, as the actor is a more public person, or person entrusted with the good of the public. An action for the *public good*, is an *extensive virtue*; and the goodness is greater or less in degree, as it more or less redounds to the public interest or advantage. This is good and true policy, and better than any bad and false religion.

religion. And all religion is false and bad that has not this true policy in it. Seeing necessity requires, of two evils we should chuse the least; *private* good, when it comes in competition with the *public*, should be made to submit to it. If then taking away the life of *one man*, will redeem a *nation* from civil and intestine wars, he *knows nothing at all* who does not *consider*, that *it is good one man should die for the people, that the nation perish not.*

The king's endeavour to force episcopal government, with the discipline, ceremonies, and service of the church of *England*, on the *Scots* nation, set the *Scots* against him with no less zeal on their side, which produced the Solemn League and Covenant, to maintain their own mode of religion against all innovations. —Religion is a thing of that nature, that though by pretending it, nothing is more easy than to wheedle people out of their senses, as appears by the pageantry, trumpery, idols, and brea den god of *Rome*; or though people may be brought up in what is called religion, without any sense at all of right or wrong, but as they are taught, as persecuting and burning men for conscience and judgment-sake, evidently shew; yet neither can *religion*, or what bears that name, bring forth the

Fruit of good works, which is forcibly ushered in, and put on as a yoke with severity. Reason may sometimes prevail, but compulsion never, to make men abandon what they esteem sacred; for violence committed on the sacred veneration men have for what they esteem, and have been accustomed to esteem *religion*, stirs up their abhorrence to that violence, and turns their veneration to zeal, to enthusiasm, to frenzy; and then it is, men so irritated are fit to burn or be burnt. Whoever attempts to *fill God's house by compelling men to come in*, will find it the only way to *empty* it. This method, instead of driving any useful members in, will drive many out. He that endeavours to force men's consciences, in matters not injurious to the government, has no right notion either of government or of religion: for he that suppresses an honest conscience, suppresses religion. The conscience that would injure another, is an evil conscience; because it is an injurious one; therefore a *popish* conscience is such as deserves no toleration among protestants; because it suffers papists not to tolerate any other than their own. If it have toleration, therefore, among protestants, it is more than it deserves; and that toleration ought to be under proper restraints and limitations, to guard their own liberties
against

against its baneful influence. It is much more safe to tolerate Mahometanism, Judaism, or Paganism, than Popery.—A right conscience towards God, can never injure others for conscience-sake.—*Religion* is nothing else but believing in, and worshipping God, according to the dictates of conscience, and if it hurts nobody, nor has any tendency to it, it ought to be tolerated; for not to tolerate such faith and worship, is destructive of sincerity and truth. And kindling a persecution against it by unwarrantable opposition, kindles the flame of enthusiasm in the persecuted. He that erects a church on the ruins of humanity, and carries a spiritual conquest over slaughtered consciences, is ignorant of divine and human nature, knows nothing of religion, and is a rebel to the majesty of heaven, which he pretends to worship; but 'tis the majesty of the priest he really promotes and pays his adoration to.—Ceremonies are *insignificant* as well as *indifferent* things; but he makes them *essential* who raises contentions and bloodshed in defence of them. Such ceremonies and encroachments as are set up to pull down liberty, men may warrantably guard against and oppose.—Where liberty is rooted out, sincerity is rooted out; impartial justice and goodness in such a state finds no place.—If

God is a reasonable nature, form or no form equally pleases him, for *alike sincerity in all, must be alike acceptable from all*, by whatever mode, or in whatever manner the sincerity appears; as we are told, * *The Lord seeth not as man seeth, but the Lord regardeth the heart.* And again, † *The true worshippers worship the Father in spirit and in truth.* The best and only best things please the only best being.—Modes and externals please the men of mode and of superficial judgments.—Whatever way men use, which pleases themselves in serving God, cannot displease him; for the heart sanctifies the action, without which all is no more than mere fantastic fashion, empty ceremony, and foolish formality. God loves that men should please themselves in pleasing him, if he made us, as we are told, to give us pleasure and happiness, not to increase his own.—He who understands that *equal sincerity* in all religions is *equally acceptable* to God, will give liberty of conscience to all; but he that sees it not, is religiously blind, and piously stupid.—He that denies men liberty of conscience, makes some men hypocrites, and destroys those that cannot be so made. He destroys that sincerity among men which is the

* 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

† John iv. 23.

only pure religion all the world over. Liberty of conscience to every man to worship God, and endeavour to please him in the best manner that appears to him, is as much the divine right of every subject; as power is the divine right of the best and most rightful kings on earth.—What I call the worship of God, is, that action which concerns only God and the worshipper, and has no relation to *meum* and *tuum*. An action which hurts no man, and which benefits no man but the worshipper. And as God is *the God of the spirits of all flesh*, he must have an equal regard to the spiritual worship, which is sincerity in all.—If it was evident to all, what sort of worship God loves or hates more than another; there would be some reason to value one better or worse than another. But till that is done, or appears on good proof, all sides have equal pretensions in their own way.—The consideration of man's ignorance of God, is sufficient to humble the spiritual pride of the most conceited enthusiast; for though there is not any thing in the world is more talked of, than of God, there is not any thing in the world less known; and the greatest priests know as little of him as the meanest men. Therefore methinks they should not presume too much, seeing though they bear the name

of *divines*, they are but little acquainted with *divinity*; therefore gentleness and moderation become all parties.

The king went to *Scotland* with an army of 20,000 men, to reduce the *Scots* to the obedience of prelatie power and common prayer. So the king first raised arms against his subjects, and taught them to stand up in their own defence against a deluge of arbitrary power. True it is, that he did not use his army against the *Scots*, because the *English* were not fond of assisting such power, the king being advised not to venture a battle: but if he had not intended it, why all that parade of power, and running the nation to such an unnecessary expence, when he was always in want of money? This wound was skinned over between the king and the *Scots* by a sort of truce rather than peace.—The *Scots* obstinately determined not to submit to any alteration in their religion, and the king as obstinately to make them, urged on by archbishop *Laud*, who managed the king's conscience, as men manage beasts of burden. Such stupid animals are kings who are enslaved by priests.—The king resolving to reduce the *Scots* by force of arms to his will, a numerous army is raised, but wanting money there was

a necessity to call an *English* parliament, lest further impositions should further alienate the affections of the people. But the parliament when called had no desire to aggrieve the *Scots*; but to have their own grievances redressed. Brave men, that would not be biassed by court-threats nor flatteries! and though we pray for the pardon of their sins, it would become us more to mend our own. — This parliament not complying with the king's demands, nor he with theirs, it was dissolved in about three weeks, and as was usual with him, he sent some of the members to prison. — When power is in the hand of a foolish prince, his exercising it exposes his folly. His priest should have taught him *Solomon's* advice*, *Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry, for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.* — Now the king prepares against the *Scots*, and the *Scots* against the king, and in the end the *Scots* had the advantage. The king is now obliged to call an *English* parliament to settle the disturbed state of the nation. This was the last parliament, which met in *November* 1640. And as the nation had been always oppressed, without being able to obtain any redress, and all former parliaments had been bubbled; they first appointed a

* Eccles. vii. 9.

select committee to draw up a remonstrance of all the grievances of the nation, which were numerous, but not presented till a year after. The king well knowing what he had to expect, shewed great compliance in giving his assent to all their bills, being awed, 'tis likely, into a sort of tractableness, by an army of *Scots* being in the nation.—The parliament went a great way in redressing the nation's grievances, and punishing the authors of them, which rendered them popular. Earl *Strafford* was brought to the block. The *high commission-court* and *star-chamber* were abolished, and many great and good things were done at the beginning of this parliament.—But though the king suffered them to go on great lengths, in delivering the nation from great oppressions, they knew it was contrary to his natural disposition; for he hated to have his authority limited by parliament, and was desirous of nothing more than of reigning without them; therefore, though they had passed a bill for triennial parliaments, they could not depend upon the security of that law; for what security can law afford, from one that tramples upon law; therefore they procured the king's assent to their *establishment* during their own pleasure, and having so done, they carried their point in all things they undertook to transact.—And well know-

ing;

ing their power had been despised, and as it were, annulled for some time before, they looked with a jealous eye on all the actions of the king, and resolved, by way of self defence, to stand by and protect one another, and to prescribe due limits to that tyrannical power, which had enslaved the nation fifteen years before.—They knew that to make lions tame, is to fetter them, and that then, though they may seem tame, yet as soon as they slip their fetters, they appear to be lions still. Whether the king feared those he had before insulted and irritated; for tyrannical tempers under power, or in fear, are the most abject; or whether he was under some better sort of tuition, like *Nero* under *Seneca*, that he behaved in a tractable manner for a while; I shall not pretend to determine; but certain it was, they knew the man. Therefore they had a jealous eye on all his actions; and as they could never trust him with safety, when he went afterwards to *Scotland*, they had as much reason to fear, he would contrive to bring a *Scotch* army against them, as he had before raised an *English* army against the *Scots*, contrary to the will of the *English* parliament and people.—Men of sense and penetration have the gifts of discerning the spirits of other men, more than the imprudent and unwary

can discern their own; and time made it appear, their mistrust and jealousy was not ill-founded. The king, who was always as weak in his conduct, as he was tyrannical in temper, could no longer be restrained: the severity and folly of his disposition discovered itself, though at the most improper season: for as the proverb says, *Muffled cats are no good mousers*. It was now too late to begin again to attempt the shewing his great power when he had suffered his head to be shorn; and though *he awoke and said, I will go forth as at other times, and shew my great strength; he knew not that the Lord was departed from him,* and was now with the parliament; for the Lord is never on the side of *weakness and folly*. Undoubtedly this condescension in the king's delivering so much of his *regalia* to the parliament, was a proof of a weak judgment, if he was right in maintaining it at first so strenuously, that he always disobliged his parliaments, and would if he could have reigned without any; but if he was right in his complacency, because he saw his former error; why did he foolishly assume such authority again, in sending officers to the house of lords and commons, to seize some of their members, and to deliver articles of impeachment against them of high treason, and at the same time,

by

by his sole authority, to send persons to seal up their doors, trunks, and papers? And why did he come himself with an armed band the next day to demand their delivering up those members? Does this look like a thorough conviction of his error? or was it only the effect of *restraining grace*? Was not this like *the dog's returning to his vomit again*, and like *the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire*? Did it not evidently shew the nature of the man, that *the old man*, the old tyrannical nature was yet in him, and that he had *not put him off with his deeds*; that he had not put on *the new man in righteousness and sincerity*, but in profession and external appearance only? Did not those clear-sighted men the commons see through him? Was not their inward jealousy confirmed and increased by this outward proof of his *unconverted state*? Had not then the commons, the guardians of the people's liberties, reason to be on their guard against all his actions? Did not they well, in withstanding such tyrannical spirit, and in sending a serjeant at arms to break open the seals, and apprehend those that put them on? for if they had not made a stand against these arbitrary proceedings, all they had done before had been to no purpose. And did they not well, to make an order

forbidding the seizing any of their members without leave of the house, authorizing all members to stand upon their guard, and all constables and other officers to assist them? For had they not done this, they had established themselves as members of parliament in vain; nay, they had not established themselves at all; for if they had left it in the king's power to apprehend any of them at his pleasure, he might have gone on, and by such repeated acts, soon demolished the parliament. No doubt but if they could have trusted the king to the *laws*, and permitted their triennial act to take place when they were dissolved, they would not have continued themselves by a *new* act; which, though it was contrary to any *former*, was however *law*; because it was agreed to by the king, lords and commons; for such agreement makes law by the constitution of this realm; and extraordinary cases may require extraordinary acts to be made for to every new necessity a new law must be adapted, and proportioned to the exigency of the case. But if a king, or his ministers by his command, act contrary to law, it is unlawful, and they are culpable of the breach of the laws of the land.—Force must be opposed by force, and deceit may be subverted by deceit, when other methods fail,

or man has not an equal regard for self-defence. Where there is good ground for jealousy, men ought always to be upon their guard, and never part with their power, when they fear being attacked; and so much the more exert themselves, as the enemy is great in authority. Kings that use their power to prey on the people, *Solomon* compares to roaring lions and raging bears; and they are not more merciful when their indignation is stirred up, and revenge is in their reach.—He that takes away a people's liberties, has a design on their properties; and their lives are next at his mercy. Let kings alone to engross power, and the property of his subjects, and their liberties and lives will follow.—If *Charles* did not grasp at this, why did he pretend peace to his parliament, and prepare for war against them, by sending his queen to *Holland*, to buy up arms and ammunition, and putting the crown-jewels into her hands for that purpose—Arbitrary power is what no man breathing ought to be trusted with; therefore 'tis good policy, to overturn the bad machinations that any person makes use of to obtain it: for when it is obtained by any king, there remains no remedy to any people: seldom doth the death of the tyrant redeem them, if his heirs succeed, though a

sea of blood be spilt to recover their lost liberty.

After this fresh provocation given the parliament, the king, perceiving how unpopular he had rendered himself, sent two messages to them in a complying humour; telling them he would wave his proceedings against the six members, and be as careful of their privileges, as of his own life and crown: and offered a general pardon. But pardon could not be grateful, when himself was the aggressor.— Now either the parliament saw that this was *temporizing* and *flattery*, knowing his natural disposition, or it appeared to them, he was like those christians that are always *sinning and repenting*, whose repentance and reformation never last longer than the influence of the cause that occasioned it. Whether of these ways they judged, his word appeared to them not to be confided in; their jealousy was confirmed, the fire was rekindled, they judged their lives and liberties were in danger from his power, and therefore it was to be retrenched as much as possible. Things were now carried to that pitch, and mutual jealousies raised so high, that the people could neither trust the king, nor the king the people. Had they submitted to the king's authority, in all probability they would have been crushed.

And

And the king seemed resolved not to suffer a diminution of his *divine* power, as his courtiers and favourite priests persuaded him that he was a *divinity*; and weak heads exalted on an eminence, are always made giddy thereby. Ambitious spirits chuse rather to reign in hell, than serve in heaven.

The sudden starts of mischief and treachery in the king, were a good foundation of jealousy to the parliament and people. And when will not fire increase fire where there is fuel? It increased here to a flame, till the king was burnt in the fire which himself had kindled: for in him was fulfilled the threatening of the Lord by the prophet *Isaiab*, (l. 11.) *Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: that walk in the light of the fire and in the sparks ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow.* And so it came to pass with those that had kindled the fire on both sides; and if the Lord hath executed the fierceness of his wrath on them already, will he do it again on us? Doth he not know when to have done? that the nation yet fast and howl before the Lord, and rather pelt him with prayers, if I may so say, than pray with true piety; for as *Isaiab* saith, lvii. 4, *Behold ye fast*

fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness. Is this such a fast as I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?—They fast, pray, and preach in spite to their brethren; therefore he that sits in heaven laughs them to scorn, and has them in derision: therefore this their righteousness is as filthy rags, and they ought to pray God to forgive them the iniquity of their holy things. The wise God heareth not the prayers of fools; because they are foolish prayers.—Not, but I would have this droning day for ever kept, to shew the world the mockery of religion; how one party, pretending piety, calls on God to pardon that sin of theirs which they never committed; while the other party that did the action, and in like circumstances would do it again, think it was an action worthy of as much praise as stabbing Cæsar in the capitol. When those that did the action ruled, God was not mocked by a national repentance for it, and yet in all appearance, he is not in better friendship with us, than he was with them, notwithstanding all our prayers and penitence, which appear to be all in vain; since being yet continued, they have not yet answered their end, in making atonement and procuring pardon: and

no wonder, for God loves not fools, nor hypocrites; and therefore wisely rejects their foolish, or hypocritical humiliation. However, it is very fit and necessary this day should be for ever kept, to remind kings that if they are desirous of living the *life*, they may expect to die the *death* of that king which this day celebrates.

The flame which began in *England*, burnt to the utmost bounds of *Scotland*, and reached even to *Ireland*, where the *Irish*, to make use of the advantage, destroyed 40,000 protestants settled there, by innumerable acts of barbarity; which, if only done to free themselves from the *English* yoke, whether countenanced by the king or not. Certain it is, that he regarded not the life of his protestant subjects; but the only thing he regarded was, that he might have sole dominion over them; to this end, he called for his forces from *Ireland*, that he might employ them against his parliament in *England*; whereby it's plain, he judged that the settling his own authority on the destruction of the constitution, was more necessary, than revenging the blood of 40,000 protestants, or securing *Ireland* under the dominion of the crown of *England*; and therefore, he either knew, the *Irish* papists that

that committed those massacres, were his friends, and he could trust them to secure *Ireland* to his obedience; or he was willing to lose a kingdom, to have revenge of his protestant subjects. And he that thirsts for dominion by blood, or that endeavours to wade to it through a sea of blood, deserves a bloody reward.—In short, the consequence was, what is very natural, and in such case will always be, that both king, courtiers, and high-flying priests on one side, and the parliament and people on the other, secured what power each party could for themselves; for it was not safe for the parliament to trust their persons in the power of the king, nor did the king think it safe, to trust his power with their persons. And the steps that each party took, but enraged the other; which of necessity terminated in the utter ruin of one of them. And as in nature the same causes will always have the same effects; so the same circumstances would always produce the same event, was the affair acted in any age or country in the world.—It happened at the end of eight years intestine wars which followed, to terminate by the death of the king, and his death alone could put an end to the blood that was spilt on his account. And sure it was better that *one man should die for*
the

the preservation of the people, than the whole nation should perish.

If *Charles* received his royal power from God alone, it is more than any king in this world ever did.—But *Charles* mistook his kingdom, for *it was not of this world*; therefore he was removed out of it, to seek a better, for which he was doubtless better qualified; for I don't dispute the goodness of the *man*, but the goodness of the *king*; who seems to me to have been the reverse to what some have said of king *David*, that he was one of the *best of kings*, but one of the *worst men*. Whereas on the contrary, king *Charles* who 'tis said was one of the *best of men*, was one of the *worst kings* in the world, as archbishop *Laud* was a very famous churchman, but a very infamous christian. As for religion, 'tis certain *Charles* had enough in him to set up a bishop, and a greater stock of *that* fort than kings ought to have. Yet this unhappy prince deserves our pity, as well as the nation under his government; he being stupidly instructed by the pedant, his dogmatical father, in his younger years, was so fitted in maturer age to receive the malignant impressions of his spiritual *Laud* and court flatterers, who sowed those seeds in him, that growing up, brought ruin to the nation and
himself.

himself. And one would think, that *he being made perfect through sufferings*, and happy before his natural time, it does not require a hundred years penance of a whole nation, for sending the soul of so good a man, among the souls of the blessed: and that the exchanging a mortal inglorious crown, for a crown of immortality and glory, was such a sufficient and satisfactory advantage to him, that he and his friends have reason to thank God and the nation, for such happy translation. And had it been done sooner, it had saved the lives of thousands more than it did. Necessity makes things unlawful, to be lawful. That which justifies war, in the defence of the rights and liberties of the people, from tyranny from abroad, will justify whatever measures necessity obliges people to take, to defend their rights and liberties against tyrants at home. **But no man's liberty or property is now at all invaded, every man sits under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree; enjoys the fruits of his labour, and may worship God according to his conscience, if he has any good conscience at all; if his conscience don't mislead him to overturn the state, and the consciences of all those that are led by more reason and humanity than himself.**

In all probability, the presbyterians would not have attempted to overturn the episcopal church,

church, if that church, when governed by archbishop *Laud*, had not endeavoured to overturn them. It must be owned, the church was the aggressor, or his tyrannical behaviour over them in it, which had the favour and protection of sovereign power. As both king and pontiff confederated together, and encouraged each other, to humble and demolish the power and liberty of nonconformists, both civil and religious; what was more natural, than for them to stand up in their own defence, to grasp that power which was capable of defending them against both civil and religious tyranny: and when they had grasped it, to use it as a scourge on their adversaries, and pay them in their own coin by way of retaliation? Men may talk what they will, that religion being the subject of the quarrel, by the principles of that religion they ought not to have gone such lengths as they did; the laws of religion will always subside when they are against the laws of nature, as soon as nature has power to prevail; and they will find reasons to comprehend the laws of retaliation in their religion, which before appeared opposite to it. For though the doctrine of *loving our enemies* may be preached, and embraced in sentiments when men have no enemies, or may seem to be embraced and practised,

tised, when retaliation is out of their power; yet when the power is turned, the tables are turned; when wrath prompts opportunity to action, then you shall hear another sort of religious doctrine maintained by the ascendant party; then the *vengeance of the Lord of hosts* is to be executed to maintain his *honour*. Then you find it commanded, * *Reward her even as she has rewarded you; nay more, double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double, then torment and sorrow, plagues, death, famine and fire, follow to the conquered party. And this gives joy to the conquerors. Thus it ever was, and thus it will ever be; men's passions will direct men's conduct, as policy and power give liberty to their actions.—Tho' revenge is not always laudable, yet it is generally justifiable, because necessary to awe men in power, not to exercise their power tyrannically and wickedly. Retaliation of injuries, not exceeding measure for measure, is therefore just, needful, and proper to be executed, being that chiefly which awes the wicked, and keeps men within the bounds of duty or moral behaviour. If I allow that christians, as such, ought not to revenge in-*

* Rev. xviii. 6.

juries done them, yet it must be allowed too, that christians are men, no more divested of passions than others, and those passions have the same influence, on the same occasions, over christians as over other men; therefore they, in such cases, will act as other men, even as *heretics* and *infidels* do; for when was it known that ever they did otherwise? I don't think there is an *infidel*, *deist* or *athist* in the world would burn a man for his religion, but if they were burnt by people of any religion, as soon as they had it in their power, they would destroy the power of that religion; and reason just, and practice good. And these (if they feared not God) would be as obedient to a mild and merciful king that acted for his subjects good, as any subjects the king had; but if like *Satan* on *Job*, he put forth his hand to destroy their properties, and their liberties, and torment their flesh, they would be as fit to rebel, and as zealous in the cause as other men, that are prompted on to action by the fury or enthusiasm of religion. And all men, religious or not religious, will do the same when excited by *oppression*, which makes a wise man mad.

He that redeems men from tyrannic power, and brings liberty and peace to an enslaved nation, even tho' it is but already begun, and
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a certain prospect of it appears; he that from such a state, frees a kingdom by his virtue and valour, is *by nature a king, and born to reign*, therefore has in himself *divine right* from God, his actions are a sufficient proof of it; and that slavish religion which is a friend to arbitrary power in the prince and priest, in any nation, is inimical and injurious to the peace and happiness of mankind. And such religion should be kept in a state of subjection, whose leaders and abettors are promoters of slavery in civil and religious government. Both civil and religious tyrants are such fast friends to each other, that they cannot well be separated; they rise and fall together.

One may generally know the *goodness* of mens religion, by the spirit that maintains it; for the worst opinions are generally maintained with the worst spirit by those that embrace them. And it is no wonder, if stupid principles or frantic opinions, should have stupid or frantic effects in practice. *By their fruits ye shall know them.*—That religion which teaches men to damn and burn those that cannot embrace it, ought to be condemned by all men. Better would it be for mankind, than maintain such religion, to extirpate all religion out of the world. It is more to the honour

honour of God, to say he requires no worship of us, than such a worship as makes man inhuman, and the world miserable. What is it but religious madness to affirm, that all men will be damned who are not of this or that faith, or who do not conform to this or that church discipline, or sort of worship? For seeing these all damn one another, don't they all prove themselves to be mad? Needs there a greater proof, when neither party will be directed by cool reason, which alone can cure their madness? The furious and bigotted spirit is equally bad in all religions; it is the spirit of popery in them all, which nothing but time and reason can expel. — Anger and rage on one side, breeds anger and rage on the other, so does a persecuting spirit in a church, stir up the same spirit in that which is persecuted. These who are first in the quarrel, are the cause of the effect that follows. If the presbyterians persecuted the episcopal church, it was a sign of a bad spirit, but it was first stirred up by the episcopalians; they were first, and therefore greatest in fault; though nothing is more common than to lay the *whole blame* on the provoked, not on those that gave the provocation; and yet nothing is more wrong, for it is as natural for anger, indignation, and

resentment, to arise from oppression, abuse, and injury given, as for fire to kindle fire; and men must be devoid of passion to be otherwise, which is more than any men are. Therefore to the public peace-breakers all the consequences of the public disturbance are owing.

O! cry churchmen, the presbyterians are a pack of wicked rogues, they pulled down the church! Nay, say I, not so; for they possessed themselves of the churches, and so became churchmen. But the church folk pulled down the meeting-houses, in *my time*, and would have pulled down all in the nation, if they had not been stopped by force. Was not this religious high-church frenzy and fanaticism? though this very party called the other fanatics! so madmen know not their own madness, and think others mad: but the churchmen, to have been even with the nonconformists, instead of pulling down their meeting houses, should have gone and preached in them. The presbyterians indeed pulled down the common prayer, because God should not be on the side of the church; for if they did not pray, to be sure the Lord could not hear them, and they could not pray without book, at the same time the presbyterians themselves pray'd for dear life—and liberty to pray.

But

But suppose they did pull down the church, was not the church as bad which would have pulled down the presbyterians at the same time? They wanted not will, but power. I don't suppose any nonconformists would have had any intention or thought of robbing the church of her bishops and godly gear, if archbishop *Laud* had been a good man, and not, like a wolf in sheep's cloathing, have worried Christ's sheep in his spiritual courts. No doubt but the church might have *drowned* in peace, had she let her sister church *toned* in peace. But at the end, the fortune of war turned for the dissenting-party, and whatever party lose the day, they must be at the mercy of those that get it. Those that fall undermost must submit to them that get uppermost. What was the fate of the episcopalians and common-prayer mongers, would have been the fate of the presbyterians, had they lost the field. But they fought with the spirit, as well as prayed by the spirit; and it happened at that time *to help their infirmities*. Indeed, in my opinion, it is the fairest way of living to live and let live, not to have any business monopolized. Religion, like trade, ought to be free. It is best dealing at an open market; by that means we have a more reasonable choice, and at a more reasonable

rate. When you have only *Hobson's* choice, you must pay *Hobson's* price. Parsons, when they find people can by no means help themselves, but must deal with them alone, are as great extortioners as any pawnbrokers whatever. Why should not every man chuse for himself in spirituals, as well as in temporals, and buy those wares he likes best, or thinks he has most need of, seeing he must pay for them. Religion is a thing of choice, and he has no religion, that never chose any himself, for himself; but if he seems to have any, it is the religion of another he puts on, but not his own. It was the religion of the person that first chose it, but is not his that wears it, and that person might, perhaps, be his great grandfather's great grandmother; and it may have been, of a very different fashion from his, worn in the family till it becomes quite thread-bare. Many families have religion by *hereditary right*, and this they take to be *divine*, but if it was so, it would be by *election* and *grace*, both on the side of Christ and the christian. Let either of them chuse first, they must *both* chuse; or else neither does the professor chuse Christ, nor Christ the professor. Therefore, in the day of judgment, will not Christ say to such, *Depart from me, I know you not*; and the professor, if he speaks the truth,

truth, must answer, *Nor do I know you.* What will become of these in that day, the day must declare.—But should any be so honest (for in that day men may be allowed to speak the truth) as to say, the priests of his country would not let him chuse, for they would damn him if he did. And I suppose this will be the complaint of millions. Let the priests look to it. I think it is but just that they should be damn'd for 'em. If any had liberty to chuse for himself, but depended on the priest to chuse for him; how can he think it unjust, that the priest should be saved for him. But as priests in all such cases, chuse for others what is most consistent with their own interest, they are paid *here*, therefore it is unreasonable for them to expect to be paid again *hereafter*: therefore both these we may reckon the Lord's chaff, which he will winnow from him with the fan of his word.—And suppose one is called to the bar, who, upon being asked his religion, declares upon his conscience, that as he lived in such days of fury, wherein every religious party damned each other, for fear of being damned (by all the rest) he chose none; and not thinking it safe to depend on mercenary priests, thought it better to preserve an honest conscience, and to place his whole dependence on the *merits*

of the son, or the mercies of the father only. Will not the *son* or the *father* take pity of him, think you, and save him for his honesty and fidelity, if not for faith and formality-fake? God cannot condemn a just man, and be just himself. But he whose faith and worship makes him inhuman and injurious to men, mistakes the true God for *Moloch*, or *Mass*, and he that makes his *interest* the motive of his choice, instead of serving the God of heaven, he serves the god of this world, *worldly power*, and a *worldly disposition*. Men that will not do justice here, will surely there feel justice done them, for the devil is just in his own dominions; how else can he be the executioner of justice? and there must be justice in hell, if there is mercy in heaven.

Nothing I think shews more the government of a good God, or his regard of this world, than that great criminals armed with power receive condign punishment in it; for what they receive in another world, those in this, know nothing of: therefore God's conduct in *that world*, is no proof to us of his moral character in *this*. Certainly power and greatness cannot sanctify wickedness in high places. If it be criminal to condemn *great criminals*, justice is all a farce, and power is only right, whether it be executed rightly or
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no; and power is sacred in them that have it, howsoever it be profanely used, and impiously prostituted for the screening villainy, and the worst of all villainy that of *tyranny*. *Cæsar* was a *tyrant*, because he overturned the constitution of his country. *Charles* did not this, because he could not; but he endeavoured to reduce the state into an absolute monarchy. *Cæsar* knew how to procure to himself favourable opportunities, and make the best use of them. *Charles* knew neither. *Cæsar* warred with glory, but *Charles* was inglorious in all his wars, and never shewed more bravery than when it least became him, in the unnecessary war he raised against his own subjects. In one respect they may be compared together; ‘when we reflect upon the prodigious number of men, whose death, poverty, or slavery they occasioned, we can hardly forbear abhorring them. Their *falsehood* and *ambition* brought on a *civil war*. They used the arms of their country for the oppression of their country.’ The people indeed in *Rome* and *Britain* did not tamely submit: therefore they that made the noble stand for the liberty of free-born subjects in opposition to *tyranny*, are damned by their favourites and priests, who endeavoured to enslave mankind by their wicked counsels and doctrines, and lead weak

heads to their own undoing. Had it not been for their ambition to rule as they ought not, both might have *lived and died in peace*. He that makes a prince's head giddy with unlawful power, paves the way for his destruction.

We blame that age, but not our own. They put a bad king to death. We expelled another, not killed him; because his heels saved his head. But we do worse than they, when we blame our redeemer, the *ILLUSTRIOUS WILLIAM*, for the *action of redeeming us, and settling liberty on that glorious foundation on which it now stands*. We were again redeemed by the bravery and conduct of another *WILLIAM*, from slavery rolling on like a deluge, and him, and that very glory which freed the nation, we now depreciate. They cut off a *head* that was troublesome to the *body*; we have several times rebelled against our head, in which *the life, safe'y, and health of the body depends*, against those that have settled and secured those civil and religious liberties to us, which they prayed and fought for; and is desirable and acceptable to all wise and good men, in all nations and in all ages. O let this day be for ever kept, to perpetuate the infamy of his tyrannic reign, and the holiness and power of high-church, that it is capable of making one, who was so
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great a sinner in his life, so glorious a saint and martyr at his death; consecrating not only the man, but tyranny, oppression, and bigotry; and that generations yet unborn may know the hard and bloody struggle their ancestors had to preserve the liberty they have conveyed to them, and awake to the sense of its inestimable value. And whenever they are in like danger of losing it, let them cry unto the Lord, and say in the words of his prophet of old; * *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art not thou the same arm that hast wounded the proud, and hewn the dragon in pieces?*

It cannot be denied, that actions are known to be good or evil by the intentions and consequences. Now to judge by this maxim, the putting king *Charles* to death, being intended to put an end to civil wars, and the consequence was, that it did so, and prevented the death of many men, and valuable members of the commonwealth, every one of which could not be less useful to the public, than the king. For how could he be useful to the public, who destroyed the peace, pro-

* Isaiah li. 9. So the old translation renders the latter part of the verse.

perties, and lives of the public?—If he was a king appointed by God, he was such a king over this island, as the stork was, which devoured the frogs, whom *Jupiter* sent to rule over them.—To plead or pretend, that it is for men's *sins*, such kings are commissioned by heaven to rule over them, is an ignorant subterfuge; for do they make men *less sinful*, and not rather much *greater sinners* than they were before? unless *robbery* and *murder*, the necessary consequences of war, are no sins. Does God punish sin with sin? or does sin make an atonement for sin? if so, a less degree of sin displeases God, but a greater degree propitiates him. Or does God disapprove of some sort of sins, and approve of others? If he does, it may be hoped, that the sin of putting king *Charles* to death, might atone for the sins of the king, and of the nation committed on his account, as reasonably as the sin of putting *Christ* to death, atoned for the sins of men. Is heaven more pleased with earth when set in a tumult, or is there sometimes a disorder in the divine mind, and allayed by the disorder of mankind? This, as my reason informs me, is a false and stupid imagination. Does God regard men in such degree, as they are advanced to power and dignity by men? Is *his* judgment conducted

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by *ours* in the estimation of things? I am sure, if God exalts men in and over the state, according to the value he has for them, *our* judgments are not conducted by *his*.—Kings reign by divine right, when they reign as they ought; but to say they reign by divine right, when they trample upon right divine, upon law and justice, and reign as they ought not, is a sacrilegious doctrine, and profaning, if not blaspheming, divine nature. If the persons of kings are divine, and sacred in the sight of God, let them rule as they will, then power is divinity, and authority is sanctity; and lawless sway may be lawful government; then the office of a king is not an ordination for the public good, but the public were ordained for his good, and then to be sure, God makes the people for the sake of the king; and his life alone, is of more value than the lives of all the kingdom. If so, what the high priest spake, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, is not true, that *it is better one man die, than the nation perish*. If this was true when applied to Christ, one would think, as *Charles* was not, to be sure, so good a man, it was better, at least to the people of this land, for *their temporal state*, that their sovereign *Charles* should die to save the further effusion of the nation's blood,

and their liberty, than that the Lord *Christ* should die to save the temporal state of the *Jews*, which was all that *Caiaphas* meant, though the Holy Ghost might have a further meaning. If God only regards kings, and the good of the people are below his notice, as must be the case, if the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance be right; then are the people in evil case! in evil case no doubt! But this is contrary to what we are taught, that *God is no respecter of persons*, and if *a sparrow cannot fall to the ground* without his notice, and we are *better than they*, in his sight; if *he takes care of oxen only for our sakes*†, sure we ought to take care of being gored, for our own sakes, by any person armed with power, or claiming a power over us. 'Tis reasonable to think that those to whom God has a peculiar regard to, more than to other men, he has given them some *greater endowments* of body or mind, more than he has to other men; but if nothing of this appears in them, how does the proof of it appear? It seems also reasonable to believe, that God guards his peculiar favourites in a peculiar manner, and yet what king cares to trust himself to God's guard only, if he can

* 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10.

get other guard beside?—That this *divine right* should be *indefeasible* and *hereditary* too, is such a piece of *priestcraft* and *imposition* on the common understandings of men, that there is no man of any common understanding, but what must see the folly, absurdity, and villainy of it. Let them produce the original grant, warrant, commission, or indenture, written above, signed and sealed below, and the witnesses. 'Tis not fit we should take the priest's word, who asserts what he is ignorant of, or contrary to what he knows: He that does, will be priest-rid with a witness; it being an evident witness of priestly imposition. Or to prove that any *particular line* of princes are so eminently exalted above the rest of all mankind, to have their authority from God alone; sure they ought to be proved to be descendants from above, that the first of the race came down from heaven, or was begotten by some God originally, not an *imaginary* but a *real God*, not *Jove* or *Mars*, whose godships are now dead and buried; and that the breed has not degenerated down to manhood. Let the assertors of this doctrine also prove that the *Stuart* race are of this heaven-born blood; for I think they have never conferred that *honour* on any other family, nor preached the doctrine of *passive obedience* to any other

princes,

princes, an *honour* peculiarly great to *them* of all others; because *they* of all others deserved it so little! This is all they have to prove, and if they cannot prove this *one* thing, of *their indefeasible hereditary right*, who have asserted it with so much warmth, casting about *fire-brands, arrows, and death* to support and vindicate it, and therefore ought to have been very sure, they were very right in doing so: I say, if they cannot prove this, who can believe them in any other point, or, who ought to believe them without producing their authentic credentials?

He that suffers such doctrines to be preached to him, or of him, has a *mean head*, and a *monstrous heart*; for he must be a man of *mean judgment*, and a *monster* in the judgment of other men that have understanding.—If we go to scripture for our rule, God gave to *David* and to his descendants the kingdom of *Israel* by oath, and yet God chose rather, not to insist too strictly on the performance of his oath, than disoblige his people. Nay, God gave up *his own prerogative* rather than *their liberty*. He let them have a *king* to their mind, and let the king have a *God* to his mind. God himself did not force men to *worship* him contrary to their own inclinations. If therefore any officious set of men pretend

pretend to regard men's service of God, more than God regards mens service, it is for their own service they make those pretensions, and shew of zeal for God, in an ungodly manner. And why should any earthly king insist on his prerogative, more than the king of kings insists on his; seeing * *in time past be suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.* God surely knows better, what he has to do, and how to do his will, than man does. If man can serve God better than God can serve himself, God may be obliged to man for serving him; but if God cannot be obliged by man's service, man can only serve himself in serving God.—But what if God gave the kingdom of *Israel* to *David*, and his sons, by *divine hereditary right*, what's that to us? How came the transition from *Israel* to *England*, and from *David* to *Stuart*? Our constitution of government is as different from theirs, as that people, time, and place, are different from ours. They had *prophets* that knew the will of God, and received their revelation from him; but our *priests* know no more of the will and revelation of God, than we do; for they know no more of it than what they read, and we know as much, and understand it as

* Acts xiv. 16.

well. Besides, *the gospel gives no rule about national government*; therefore God leaves all christian nations to walk in their own ways, as he did the nations in time past. Therefore it is not the business of christian priests to direct christian governors; 'tis impertinent in them to prescribe or meddle in state-matters, unless their assistance or advice is called for, or commanded by the state. And as *Christ's kingdom was evidently not of this world*, what have they to do to interfere and concern themselves with worldly kingdoms and affairs. Christ came to set us free, and is it their business, who profess to be his servants to enslave us? It is both ridiculous and insolent, for the servant to pretend to have more authority than the master; *the servant is not greater than his Lord*. How then can those who call themselves Christ's ministers, pretend to worldly power and authority, when their master had none, *had not where to lay his head*. Were they to have no wages, but what their master Christ is to give them, there would be very few but what would quit his service; though those Christ sends, he will no doubt reward. They that pretend to have their mission from him, not from the state or the people, and therefore claim civil dominion, claim what their master never did, should have no re-
ward,

ward, but such as he thinks fit to give them, from whom they pretend to be sent: for this very good reason, because they assume a tyrannical authority over those on whom they are dependents for their livings, and who pay them their wages; especially when humility and obedience to lawful kings and magistrates is their lawful and just duty, that they may, by their example, teach men to lead *quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.* Their doctrine and behaviour ought to be such, as may bring *glory to God, peace on earth, and good-will to men.* This is *gospel*; and this is the business of the *ministers of the gospel.* They ought not to *lord it over God's heritage.* Their duty is not to rule, but to obey, not to use force and violence, but meekness and instruction; both in life and doctrine promoting righteousness.

Be it known to all kings and princes, that those who preach unlimited obedience to them, do it for some base end; but will practise it no more than those that maintain opposition in some cases to be lawful and just, for there is no such obedience in man's nature; they preach a doctrine unnatural which cannot be practised, and therefore will be no more regarded by them than by others: for such doctrines

doctrines of religion as are against nature, whatever gloss may be put upon them, cannot, and will not be obeyed; and are therefore arbitrary, tyrannical, and unjust. Religion should restrain and regulate mens passions, not presume to crucify or extirpate them; for that is a presumptuous aiming to make men other creatures than ever God designed them; therefore such aims are equally stupid and wicked. Should any king put forth his hand to oppress the clergy, as king *Charles* oppressed his subjects, and *Laud* the laity; the clergy will be as ready as any other men to blow *the trumpet of sedition, and the alarm of war*; nor will they be content with bare exercising their spiritual terrors in the next world, and sufferings in this. The *battle* will be the *Lord's* of whatever regiment in religion the clergy be; and I have always observed, that the most zealous assertors of passive obedience, have been men of the most resisting and turbulent tempers. That they love tyranny, is very apparent, because they always promote it; and always deify that king who deifies them; who gives his power and dominion to them; though by his actions he be apparently *the vilest of men*: which shews, in the most glaring light, their extreme partiality, being always ready to sanctify and applaud whatever

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men or measures contribute to their advantage, to heap on them wealth and dominion, though they are of the darkeſt hue that moral characters can repreſent.

God who for the good of man, ſpared not his own ſon, for the good of the kingdom, ſpared not the king; eſteeming it better that one man ſhould die for the people, than the nation periſh. Nor does it appear to me that the one was leſs neceſſary in the different nature and reaſon of thing than the other. For had the nation ſubmitted to the king's will, it had, in all peradventure, remained enſlaved at this day; for when his vengeance had been irritated by oppoſition, in all probability there would have been no end, till tyranny had eſtabliſhed its ſeat by blood, and popery by fire. But what if the church had not been ſubject to the pope at Rome, if it erected a pope at Canterbury, would that have mended the matter? What if it had not all the popiſh trumpery and ceremonies, if it had her tyranny and cruelty, how would the matter have been mended? His grace of Canterbury was graciously pleaſed to declare, that he hoped to ſee the time when never a Jack gentleman in England ſhould dare to ſtand with his hat on before the meaneſt prieſt. This was ſufficient to ſhew, that he drove at making every gentleman ſervile and ſubmiſſive to every mean ſpiri-

tual tyrant, and that he hoped to make all priests rampant in power.

Though I may have seemed to have treated the divine right of king *Charles* without divine homage or veneration, yet if we consider rightly of the matter, there was a sort of *Athanasian divinity*, something like *trinity in unity* in the family; for such as *Charles* was, such was the father *James*, and such was *James* the son, in majestic prerogative co-equal, in religion co-external. As was the tree, such was the fruit. And as we found the fruit naught, we contradict ourselves to mourn over the tree, as if it had been good, which there was judged to be a necessity to cut down. Our fathers began the struggle for liberty against an arbitrary family, and we finished it with glory. Can that which is glorious in us, be inglorious in them? They for the peace and security of the state, cut off the head of the father; we, for the same reason, cut off the tail of the son; though it had been better for us if we had cut off his head also. But this was the judgment of God executed upon *them*, that he might have mercy upon *us*; for his judgments are always mixt with mercy. Such judgments the Lord threatened to his *Israel* of old, * *The Lord will cut*

* *Isaiah ix. 14.*

off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush in one day.

If we may judge of men's dispositions by their actions, if the tree be known by its fruit, this prince was certainly weak in his judgment, obstinate, and vindictive in his temper, and very insincere as hypocrites are; and therefore no wonder if he affected to be thought religious, and so fond of ignorant devotion and religious ceremonies, that he became a slave to priests; and endeavoured, as tutored by them, to enslave the people. Though it must be confessed, the king had a conscience, and a very great one; for when he had to do with the consciences of others that were different from his, it swallowed them all up, as *Aaron's rod* swallowed up the rods of the *Egyptian Magi*. And 'tis well known, that the rod of the priest's power always endeavours to swallow up all other power, and often does so.—In *Charles's* younger years he was looked on by all that knew him to be of a very obstinate disposition, which his mother much lamented; and publicly confessed, that *she feared he would live to be the ruin of himself, and occasion the loss of the three kingdoms by his obstinacy*.—If any thing hindered him from being a papist, it was his love of *prerogative*; for notwithstanding the strictness of the laws against papists at the beginning of his reign,

reign, he granted them a general pardon and indulgence; and declared, *it was his will that all the laws against them should stand discharged.* Thus he early discovered himself a friend to popery and tyranny.—And as the king and priesthood grasped at absolute authority, and increased in the exercise of it over the people, so the dire effects of their tyranny and cruelty increased. Their new invented and erected high-commission courts and star-chamber were nearly related to popish inquisition, by which monstrous cruelties were committed, and prodigious fines imposed on great numbers of persons, some of whom were men of the best reputation, parts and learning, of which it may not be improper to give a sample, whereby to judge of others.

Mr. *Prynne*, for reflecting on the court and archbishop *Laud* in his writings, was prosecuted in the star-chamber, and sentenced to pay 5000*l.* to the king, to stand twice in the pillory, to have both his ears cut off, one at each time, to be afterwards imprisoned during pleasure without use of pen, ink or paper, and to be stigmatized on both cheeks with S. L. denoting a seditious libeller.

Two or three years after, the same *Prynne*, and *Bastwick*, and *Burton*, for writing some
reflec-

reflections on the hierarchy and government, were sentenced to pay 5000*l.* each to the king, to stand in the pillory, to have their ears cut off, and *Prynne* that part of his ears which were left.

Mr. *John Lilbourne* for writing in Mr. *Prynne's* vindication, was condemned by archbishop *Laud* in his star-chamber to be whipt with a treble knotted cord from the *Fleet* prison to *Westminster-hall*, and had 500 lashes. Afterwards in this deplorable and bloody condition he was obliged to stand in the pillory, and was there gagged for complaining of this cruel and barbarous usage.

Dr. *Leighton* for offending the hierarchy, was sentenced to pay 10,000*l.* to the king, and by two of *Laud's* officers was hurried into a most dismal cell in *Newgate*, there kept almost two days without food, and his effects seized, received when very ill thirty-six stripes with a treble cord, afterwards stood in the pillory all bloody as he was almost two hours in a time of frost and snow, had there one ear cut off, one nostril slit, and one of his cheeks branded with a red hot iron, then carried away to the *Fleet* prison again by water; and that day seven night the sores on his back, nose, and face not being cured, he was again whipt and pil-

lored in *Cheapside*, and there had the remainder of the sentence executed, by cutting off the other ear, *flitting* up the other nostril, and branding the other cheek.

Innumerable were the torments and troubles of the subjects, in the reign of this *pious king*. And wherever the clergy reign, or a bigotted prince, they damn the laity, that is, they make them damned *slaves* or *villains*: and if they drive them to heaven, it is through hell. None sacrifice to *mammon* more devoutly than they. When tyranny is intended to be established, it is the work of mercenary priests to begin the folly against common sense: the better to bubble, bully, and enslave the people, the terrors of damnation are of sacred use: by these they endeavour as much as in them lies, to annul all the laws that secure to the people their rights and properties. Laws cannot possibly be of any service, if they may not be defended, against a powerful robber and perverter of them. Or against a band of men combined to rob the nation of their properties and privileges, which are as much their right, as what the king holds by law is his, because both hold them by the same rightful power, the law of the nation; and therefore subjects have equal right to possess and defend, what the law

gives

gives them, as the sovereign has. NOTHING IS MORE SACRED THAN LAW; it is the power of wisdom and goodness, or both, united for a good end, and is called JUSTICE. *It is justice that is law.* Justice is the proper ruling power, not the power of the ruler; for power is given to a ruler, to a political head, for the sake of maintaining justice. To transgress the law, is a criminal thing; it is doing what is not just, and therefore renders the transgressor criminal, and an unjust person, whoever he be; for the law is like God, which is God's law, it is *no respecter of persons*; and the law of nature is the nature of that law. When the political head therefore is become unjust, it is unnatural to the body politic, and offends it; ought not then the gospel precept to be practised, which says, * *If thy right eye, right hand, (or principal member) offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members perish, rather than the whole body*; for desperate diseases must have desperate remedies; though it ought not to be in the power of pope, priest, enthusiast, or any private, particular person, to determine the public particular case; but it resides in the united power of the public body,

* Matthew vi. 29, 30;

from which the head received its power of being head, for the united good of the body, or the public. For this reason, they confer their power on one person, and vest their authority in him, not for his good in opposition to theirs, but for their own good in conjunction with his. Considering the end and intention of their action, it is a power *lent*, not given; it is their power who are *lenders*, and they are the body who have it in themselves by *natural* right, that is, and that only is *divine*; and he that receives it from them, has it by the same right; but has no right to possess or execute it longer than he rightfully uses it. He that has lost his conduct cannot be a conductor. Of him that perverts what is lent him, to his own use, in prejudice to the lender; certainly the lender has a right to demand the restoration of what he lent, and oblige him to it by force, and foul means, when fair means fail. No law can bind men down *for better for worse till death*, if they are aggrieved, and can find a remedy, no more in political, than in physical cases. No laws of God or nature oblige any person or people to remain miserable if they can be freed from misery, and make themselves happy. To expel or kill a governor, undoubtedly puts a nation into convulsions; but

when his *life* puts a nation into convulsions, then his expulsion or death is the only remedy. When a disease is bad, the cure is good. If the remedy is worse than the disease, we must seek another; but some cases admit of but one remedy, one method of cure, and in those cases that must be had, or none. Let the remedy be what it will, it is not the less good because it is public; nor is justice the less justice, because it is done in a justiciary way.—To extort money from a nation contrary to law, is a national plunder, and public rapine. And we all know what punishment the law pronounces on highway-robbers. Do they who rob a whole nation deserve less punishment than those who rob only single persons? or ought great criminals to escape with impunity, and little criminals only suffer. Or in desperate cases, *is it not expedient that one man die for the people, that the nation perish not?*

Mr. Gordon, that Herculean reasoner, in his discourses on *Tacitus**, says, ‘An absolute prince is of all others the most insecure, as he proceeds by no rule of law, he can have no rule of safety; he acts by violence, and violence is

* Vol. I. p. 106:

the only remedy against him. His acts of cruelty upon particulars, whether done for revenge or prevention, do but alarm other particulars to save themselves by destroying him.

† It is rare for a prince limited by laws, and content with his power, to reign in sorrow, or die tragically, as it is uncommon for those who have no bounds set them, or will suffer none, to escape a miserable reign and unbloody end.

* The people likewise expect complaisance from a prince, expect to have their sentiments and humours considered; while the prince probably thinks that they have no right to form any judgment of public matters, or to make any demands upon him, but on the contrary requires of them blind reverence and obedience to his authority; and acquiescence in his superior conduct and skill, that all his doings should pass for just; himself for a person altogether sacred and unaccountable; and his words for laws. If their behaviour towards him do not happen to square exactly with these his sovereign notions and high conceit of himself, he will be apt to think, or some officious flatterer will be ready to persuade him, 'his royal au-

† Vol. I. p. 111.

* p. 123.

thority is set at nought, the people are revolted; and what remains but they take arms.' To punish therefore their disobedience, he proceeds to violence, and exercises real severity for imaginary guilt. Mischiefs are prolific; and violence in him begets resentment in them: The people murmur and exclaim; the prince is thence provoked, and flies to vengeance; when one act of vengeance is resented and exposed, as it ever will be, more will follow: Thus things go on; affection is not only lost, but irrecoverable on either side, hatred is begun on both; and prince and people consider themselves no longer as magistrate and subject, but one another as enemies.

Mr. Gordon says thus, of this *royal martyr's* reign, in his *Independent Whig* * : 'Now, if we enquire into the first cause, from which all the rest naturally followed, we shall find that the violence of his reign caused his violent end. It is not to be denied nor disguised, that from the very beginning the court aimed at arbitrary power, openly pursued it, and for fifteen years together practised it, raising money without law, and against law; which was robbery

* Vol. III. p. 361.

in those who enforced the collection of it : imprisoning men, the best and greatest men, without law, and against law : which was lawless cruelty : seizing the lands and estates of others, without right, and against right ; which was flagrant oppression and violence : assuming and exercising a power to dispense with laws, that is, to make and annul laws, which was manifest usurpation : and, in short, establishing an arbitrary and *Turkish* authority over the persons, and rights, and fortunes of the people, which was apparent and undeniable *tyranny*.’

‘ Between law and violence, between right and tyranny, there is no medium, no more than between justice and oppression. If king *Charles* had no right to act thus, then his acting thus was *tyranny*. If he had a right, of what force are laws and oaths ; and where is our constitution, the boasted rights of *Englishmen* and our ancient *Magna Charta* ? Why was his son king *James* turned out ? why declared to have forfeited ? And I would ask the admirers and defenders of king *Charles* I. how they would have liked, how borne such violences, such lawless doings and misrule in king *William* ? how in the late reign ? how in this ? How

would they have relished the imprisonment of their persons, taxes laid on, and exacted without consent of parliament, arbitrary and excessive fines, their estates seized, their families impoverished or famishing? Doubtless no men would have been louder in the cry of tyranny; and very just and natural would have been such a cry. How do they reconcile such zeal and profession with an approbation of the reign of king *Charles I.* which was one continued series of oppressions, and abolished liberty and law, and established universal slavery?—

‘ Was it not crying guilt in the crown, to abandon its duty, to violate the coronation-oath, to tread upon law and justice, to persecute conscience, to rob and oppress the people, and from limited and lawful to become lawless and arbitrary? And is it not equally reasonable, equally becoming us *Englishmen*, and freemen, to commemorate and detest an administration so pernicious and devouring, measures so black and lawless? Is it not our duty to take warning by them, and whenever we are threatened with them, to guard against them, to watch every principle of slavery, and suppress it betimes; to rejoice that we live in hap-

pier times, live in a *free government*, and under *the free course of the laws*, to pray for the continuance of such an invaluable blessing, and be dutiful and assisting to that GOOD AND GREAT PRINCE who secures it to us, and claims nothing to himself, but what our parliaments and known laws give him.'—

Seeing we have *now the best of kings* to govern us, which is the greatest of all national blessings, let us not grieve that our fathers delivered themselves from *tyranny* by their struggles, and us from the pernicious consequences of it. Have we not more reason to rejoice, that the parliament's army had got the better of the king's, than if the king's army had got the better of the parliament's? for whereas we now lament *one day in the year*, should we not then have lamented *every day in the year*? We might have sought the freedom we now enjoy in *America*, we should not have found it in *Britain*. If we were not ungrateful to that God who redeemed us, he would give us *feasting for fasting*, and *the oil of gladness for the spirit of heaviness*, we should thank God for his mercies to us, instead of complaining and repining before him of his judgments to them, seeing

seeing in the midst of judgment to them be hath remembered mercy to us.

As the lesson for this day is the sufferings of our blessed Lord, and as *Charles's* devotees are fond of making an analogy between them, I shall grant there was some in their *deaths*, though there was none at all in their *lives*; for the one went about doing good with his power, and saving the lives of men; the other went about doing mischief with his army, and destroying men's lives, to defend his power, and maintain his prerogative. But both friends and enemies allow that *he died a good death*. It was a national good that *one man died for the people, and the nation perished not*. In such case therefore, it may be looked on as a kind of propitiatory sacrifice, and his death may be *imputed righteousness*, which brought temporal redemption to the nation, as the death of *Christ* brought spiritual redemption to the world. As he died a *good man*, we must allow his death was unfortunate and is cause of mourning; but as he died a *bad king* the death of such a one is fortunate, and matter of joy to any people. Thus justly stating both sides of the account, we may set equal reasons of joy against equal cause of sorrow,

fo

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to cancel each other, and make the balance even. And as our fathers have sent him to his heavenly father, and have followed him themselves, *Requiescant omnes in pace.* If God is reconciled with them, as we ought in charity to believe, there is a reconciliation between God and his people; therefore we ought to be reconciled with one another †.

† Notwithstanding some grammatical errors in this tract, there is such an honest simplicity of heart, such good meaning, and such worthy sentiments in the whole, that I thought it deserving of preservation. How much better reasoning is found here, than in many sermons preached by great and dignified men before *Lords and Commons?*

END of the THIRD VOLUME.

THE
P I L L A R S
O F
P R I E S T C R A F T
A N D
O R T H O D O X Y
S H A K E N.

They are always forward to complain of innovations, and of disturbing things that are settled. But who have made more innovations than churchmen? Who have more disturbed and changed religion and states, by their ambition, by their disputes, by their turbulent behaviour, and exorbitant claims? and who are so much given to change? What changes, what violent and lawless changes, were there not wrought by I. A. D. and his brethren in his time, and always attempted by those of his spirit ever since? The laity have been only on the defensive, warding off the attempts and monstrous demands of such of the clergy, and answering their wild writings. GORDON.

V O L. IV.

L O N D O N:

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C O N T E N T S.

I.

THE Difficulties and Discouragements which attend the Study of the Scriptures in the way of private Judgment. By Bishop Hare.

II.

A serious Inquiry into the Use and Importance of external Religion: by the most worthy, learned, and excellent Mr. Archdeacon Blackburne.

III.

The Complaint of the Children of Israel: by Mr. Arnall.

IV.

An Inquiry into the Behaviour of our great Churchmen since the Reformation.

V.

Machiavel's Vindication of himself and his Writings, against the Imputation of Impiety, Atheism, and other high Crimes.

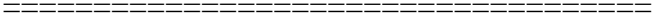
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Reasons against restraining the Press. The Author Dr. Tyndal.

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T H E

Difficulties and Discouragements

Which attend the

Study of the Scriptures

In the way of

Private Judgment ;

Represented in a Letter to a Young Clergyman.

In order to show,

That, since such a *Study of the Scriptures* is Mens
indispensible Duty, it concerns all Christian
Societies to remove (as much as possible) those
Discouragements.

By a Presbyter of the Church of England.

To which is annexed, The *CENSURE* of the
Lower House of Convocation upon this BOOK.
And a LETTER written by the Reverend
Mr. *John Hales* of *Eaton*, to Archbishop
LAUD, upon occasion of his

Tract concerning SCHISM.

From the SEVENTH EDITION.

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And no wisdom in superstition.**

The Difficulties and Discouragements
which attend the *Study of the Scriptures*
in the way of *Private Judgment* ; &c.

In a Letter to a Young Clergyman.

S I R,

I Do not wonder at the *surprize* with which you received, when we were last together, the *advice* I ventured to give you in relation to the *Study of the Scriptures*. For one who is a *clergyman* himself, to *seem* to dissuade *those of his own order*, from a study that has so many arguments to recommend it ; and which, in the opinion of *all good men*, ought to be their *chief business* ; has, I confess, the appearance of a strange *paradox*, and that of the *worst* sort. It looks like *popery* and *priest-craft* ; and therefore young and tender minds may easily be forgiven, if they startle at the first proposal of it ; those especially, who have a just sense of the *excellency* and *inspiration* of the *Scriptures*, and are eagerly bent on the pursuit of such truths, as more immediately tend to the advancement of *virtue and religion*. As you are of that number, and went into orders with no

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other view, but that you might the better study the *Scriptures* yourself, and advance the knowledge of them in the world; it was not to be expected you should presently come into other sentiments. Which I am so far from taking amiss, that I think it to your commendation, that neither the *affection* or *esteem* you so often express for an old friend could prevail with you to act a part that might have the appearance of levity in a matter of so much consequence. Nor is it less for your credit, that you can retain your opinion, without losing your temper, or shewing a backwardness to hear what is to be said against it. Most tempers run into extremes: They are either too volatile to be fixed; or else so fixed, that no force of argument can move them. But 'tis *your* happiness, that you can adhere without obstinacy, and change without levity, and therefore I shall think it no trouble to resume the subject, and lay before you in the best manner I can, the reasons that *seem* to make *against* the study of the *Scriptures* in the way of private judgement; which I hope will not upon cooler thoughts appear so strange to you. You will consider they come from one, who is not more a friend to *you*, than he is to the *church*. And, if examples be of any weight, I can assure you this side of the question is by no means destitute

tute of profelytes; and that when you come to know the world more, you will find this study *neglected* to a degree you little imagined. But 'tis *reasons*, not *examples*, will determine you. To come therefore to them; let me in the

I. *First* place, observe to you, that the *study of the Scriptures*, such a *thorough* study of them I mean, as you aim at, is extremely *difficult*, and not to be successfully pursued, without a very great and constant *application*, and a previous knowledge of many other parts of useful learning. The *New Testament* cannot be understood without the *Old*; the truths revealed in one, are grounded on the *prophecies* contained in the other; which makes the study of the *whole Scriptures* necessary to him, that would understand thoroughly a *part* of them. Nor can the *Apocryphal books*, how much soever they are generally slighted, be safely neglected; there being a great chasm of five hundred years between the end of the *Prophets*, and the beginning of the *Gospel*; which period is of the *greatest* use for the understanding of the New Testament, and yet is the *least* known. But now, if the *Old Testament* must be well studied, a good knowledge of the *Oriental tongues* is absolutely necessary. No man can be igno-

rant, who knows any thing of letters, that no versions of old books can be thoroughly depended on; the mistakes are so many, and sometimes of great moment; especially the versions of books writ in a language *little understood*, and many parts of it in a style extremely *figurative*, and those figures such as these parts of the world are almost wholly strangers to. But put the case *these difficulties* were less than they are, is it an easy matter to add to *Greek* and *Latin* the knowledge of so many *other languages*? Do not *they two* alone find work enough for most scholars? What *pains* then must a man take, if he will study so many *others* besides? And if the knowledge of the *Old Testament* could be dispensed with, give me leave to tell you that the language even of the *New testament* is not to be understood with so *little pains* as is commonly imagined. 'Tis learnt indeed in schools, and from hence thought to be the easiest Greek that can be read; but they who have read it in another manner than school-boys, know it to be quite otherwise. Not to mention the difficulties peculiar to *St. Paul*, whose epistles are a very great part of the New Testament; *Plato* and *Demosthenes* are in many respects not so hard, as even the *easier* books. The style indeed of the *historical* books, is plain and simple; but
for

for all that, even *these parts* have their difficulty. And the whole is writ in a language peculiar to the *Jews*: The idiom is *Hebrew* or *Syriac*, though the words be *Greek*; which makes some knowledge of *those* languages, still necessary.

Again, though it were not necessary to read the *Old Testament* in the *original*, yet the *Greek version* of it must be read, and that carefully; it being oftentimes the best, if not the only help, to explain the language of the *New*; besides that all citations in the *New*, are generally made from it. But now, how *laborious* a thing must it be, to study an *ill version* of a very hard book, which we cannot read in the *original*? I call it an *ill version*; for though it be indeed a very good one, considering the time it was writ in; yet as a version, it must be allowed by those who can judge of it, to be far from being exact or true. A man need only consult it on some hard places in the *Pentateuch*, as well as in the *Poetick* or *Prophetick* books, to be convinced of this. 'Twas certainly far from perfect *at first*; and is made much *worse* by the corruptions it has suffered in handing down to us: So that I may venture to affirm, that should any body now-a-days make a version so imperfect; instead of admiration

and esteem, his work would be much despised by most of our modern criticks.

I might to these add many *other difficulties* that attend a serious study of the *New Testament*. It requires a good knowledge of the *Jewish* state at the time of our Saviour's coming, a knowledge of their government, sanedrim, synagogues, customs, traditions, opinions, sects; the kinds of learning received among them; what they borrowed from the *Greeks*; when their mystical and allegorical manner of expounding the Scriptures began, and on what grounds; what their particular expectations were, in relation to the Messiah; and what they taught, and on what grounds, in relation to angels, dæmons, possessions, oracles, miracles, &c.

But 'tis in vain, you say, to tell you of *difficulties*: You are resolved not to be deterred. You have time before you, good eyes, a strong constitution, a mind prepared for fatigue, a reasonable degree of skill in the languages, and are furnished with a competent knowledge in all the parts of useful learning that are preparatory to this study; so that *difficulties* animate rather than dishearten you. And I am not unwilling so far to agree with you that were there no objection against this study, but the *difficulty*; this alone should not deter one who

is so well prepared for it. But if you are able to go through so *laborious* a study, I presume you are not fond of difficulties for difficulties sake. You cannot think it reasonable to take so much pains, unless it will turn to *some good account*. I shall therefore in the

II. *Second* place take leave to ask, *Cui bono?* What *good* can come of such pains? For it may seem, that a *free, serious, impartial and laborious* study of the *Scriptures*, will be of no great service; for the following reasons.

1st. Because 'tis plain the *orthodox faith* is not founded on a nice and critical knowledge of the *Scriptures*. Many of the antient christians, 'twill be allowed, were not great critics; but argued very much in a mystical way. *Origen* in particular, who was the greatest scholar Christianity had bred to that time, perpetually turns the letter of Scripture into allegory. From whence we may reasonably conclude, that the knowledge of the bare *literal* sense, was, in the judgment of many even in those times, thought to be of little use.

But 2^{dly}, 'Tis certain that the *original language* of the Old Testament was known to very few, for the first *six* centuries, in which those *general councils* were held, wherein all the articles

ticles of the *orthodox faith* were settled. They governed themselves and determined all their controverted points by the *Greek* version; and those who knew *Hebrew* best, whether they took to the mystical or literal way, had the misfortune to be *least orthodox*. So it was with *Origen*, who knew the Scriptures so well, that he had them all by heart. And *Eusebius* and others, who studied and understood the literal sense of the Scriptures *best* in the next ages, succeeded little better. So that this study seems to have been of little use, to the *establishment* of the *orthodox faith*. Now if an exact and critical knowledge of the *Scriptures*, was not necessary to the *settling* of the faith; it cannot be necessary to the *understanding* of it, or to the understanding *those who have writ best* in the explication and defence of it. On the contrary, such a knowledge tends to *lessen* our esteem for the *fathers* of the church, by discovering their mistakes; and may weaken our regard to the decisions of *councils* by exposing the *falseness* of the ground they seem to be built on. A man well skilled in the literal sense of the Scriptures, will often find in the *fathers and councils*, texts of Scripture urged very *insufficiently*; and great stress laid upon passages, which when critically explained, *prove nothing*,

or perhaps make *against* them. Which suggests to me a *third* reason, why it may seem that such a study can do no good. And that is,

3dly, Because the *orthodox faith* does not depend upon the *Scriptures* considered absolutely in *themselves*, but as explained by *Catholic tradition*. The faith was preserved in *creeds*, and handed down from one orthodox bishop to another, whose business it was to keep this sacred depositum pure and undefiled, and to deliver it to his successor entire as he received it. It was *by this tradition* the main articles of faith were preserved in the church; and not from any particular *study of the Scriptures*. The *ground* therefore of these articles must carefully be distinguished, from the *Scriptures* that have been brought in *proof* of them. These proofs may be weak and inconclusive; but the truth stands independent of them. 'Tis the faith they had *received*; and if at any time they argue *weakly* for it from the *Scriptures*, 'tis an argument indeed *against* their *learning*, but none *against* their *orthodoxy*.

This therefore may *seem* another good argument to prove, that an *exact and careful study of the Scriptures*, is not a *safe and profitable*

able

able study. 'Tis a much *safer*, as well as more *compendious* way to make a man *orthodox*, to study the *tradition of the church.*

But you will say, that to send you from *Scripture to tradition*, is to turn you out of paradise, the garden of God, into a vast confused bewildered wood; and that this is so far from mending the matter, that 'tis ten times *more laborious* than the study I would dissuade you from. And so, I confess it is; if all the ecclesiastical writers were to be carefully read, in order to know the *Catholic tradition*. But that is not my meaning. The *substance of Catholic tradition*, lies in much less compass. The *established church*, you will allow, is *orthodox* in all necessary points. If therefore you know the sense of the *established church*, you have in epitome the *church Catholic*; and therefore you need only study *her* opinions to make you *orthodox*. And this, the most illiterate man may find in the *liturgy and articles*. This, I trust you will allow, is as *short* a way, as could be wished, of knowing all that is necessary to be known. A very little time will serve a man to read, in his mother-tongue, things which all together will not fill a moderate volume; and he will be *orthodox* enough, and have a great deal of time to spare for other studies,

Studies, that will turn to *more account*. Besides that 'tis of great advantage to go in a way that is *safe* as well as *short*; and will lead you into the knowledge of all useful truths, without the hazard of falling into any dangerous opinion.

4thly, But if you will insist that 'tis *Scripture*, and not *tradition*, that the faith is founded on; there is one thing further I must put you in mind of, which may seem to prove, that a *profound and laborious study of the Scriptures* will not make you at all more *orthodox*. 'Tis a fundamental principle among protestants, that whatever is *necessary* to be believed, is *plainly and clearly* revealed in the Scriptures; and consequently what is *not plainly and clearly revealed* in them, cannot be *necessary*. Now if what is *plain and clear* in Scripture, is the only part that is *necessary* to be known; then a *laborious* search into the *obscurer* parts, may seem *unnecessary* to the obtaining a true orthodox faith. But you will say perhaps, that, notwithstanding this declaration of protestants, it may and has been urged against them by their adversaries, that they *do* believe and *maintain* as *necessary*, articles that *cannot be proved* by *plain and clear* passages of Scripture. This, I confess, has been urged, and may possibly be true of all parties of them, except the *established church*. But
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if it be, it proves only that they are not true to their principle; not that the principle is not in itself true and good. And he surely must be allowed to be the best protestant, who adheres best to the principle on which the reformation was founded.

5thly, Once more: Supposing the study of the Scriptures as necessary as you please; in the *last* place I say, and I am sure the world will say it with me, that they have been *sufficiently studied already*; and if any parts remain still obscure, *who* can hope to clear up passages that have puzzled so many great men? or will presume in disputable points to set up his *private judgment*, against them that were men of more learning, of abler parts, of greater application, and better acquainted with the *traditions of the church*, than any one will now be allowed to be? And (which is the best guide in knowledge of religion) they were moreover men of most exemplary piety, devotion, and humility; virtues, of which very little footsteps are to be found in the learned men of our times.

Must not now a man have a strong bent of mind indeed, who cannot by all these reasons be dissuaded from giving himself up to a *study*, that may by many be thought as *unprofitable* as
 'tis

'tis *laborious*? but will go on, in defiance of all that has been said to convince him that he wastes himself in vain, and that there will be *no fruits* of all his labour, but to know he knows *nothing*? I call that *nothing*, which will turn to *no account*.

But to shew you I am disposed to make all possible concessions, I will grant that even this objection might be got over, were this the worst of it: But I have one argument still in reserve, that I am persuaded will be decisive.
My

III. *Third* argument then is this; That a *painful, exact, impartial study of the Scriptures*, will by some be thought not only to do *no good*, but also a *great deal of hurt*, both to the *public* and to *yourself*.

1st, It will do hurt to the *public*. It will disturb the *peace of the church*, and that cannot but have a malignant influence on the state.

'Tis certain that *disputes* in the *church*, disturb the *peace* of it. And 'tis as certain these disputes have been generally raised by men pretending to a superiour knowledge of the Scriptures, and to discoveries that have escaped others. The *Scriptures* have always been made this use of by the *heretics* of old: And 'tis
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the character of the *great heretics* of this and the last age; who have set up for a *free and impartial search into the literal sense of the Scriptures*, above the rest of the christian world. But with what success? They have purchased their pretended knowledge of the Scriptures at the expence of their *reputation*, and their study has destroyed their *orthodoxy*. And were not their books and opinions carefully suppressed, and their persons rendered odious to the people; who knows what *disturbances* they might have created to the church? On the other hand, the *peace* the church has enjoyed for many years among its own members, seems to be owing to no one thing more, than to a general *neglect* of this study; and the dangers that at present threaten its tranquillity, come wholly from men, who have endeavoured to revive a study, that has so often proved pernicious to its peace.

Nor can it well be otherwise. For what security has a man that sets out in this way; that attempts to *study the Scriptures* in a free and impartial manner, laying aside all prepossessions and previous notions, resolving to see with his own eyes, and judge for himself, and to believe nothing that he is not upon his own search convinced is clearly contained in them; what security has such a man, that he shall not
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fall into some *opinions* that have been *already* condemned as erroneous and heretical, or which may interfere with those that are commonly received? Which, if they do not immediately strike at any fundamental point, yet will be *thought* to do so; and may have a tendency to put scruples into weak minds, and to disturb the *peace of the church*, by raising doubts about the meaning or truth of some articles, or by asserting that an explicit belief of them is not necessary? 'Tis so natural for curious and inquisitive minds to deviate from the common road, and the examples are so many, that 'tis odds but *you* do so too, unless you had more lead in your constitution, or a more resigned understanding, than any curious man ever had yet: Otherwise you cannot be sure, that you shall not study yourself into doubts at least, if not into opposite opinions concerning some *received* notions. You will doubt perhaps of the *authority* or *author* of some canonical book, and think perhaps that some passages are *interpolated*, or that some celebrated texts are *not genuine*, or should be *otherwise read*, or have not been *rightly understood*, or do not *prove the point they are commonly brought for*. You may fall into notions that will be thought tending to *Arianism* or the like. You may reject *arguments* brought from the *Old Testament*, to prove the

the *Trinity*; as trifling, and proving nothing but the ignorance of those that make use of them. You may think a *propheſie* has a *literal* meaning, where commonly the *mystical* is thought the only one. You may think that *many texts* in the *New Testament*, which are ſtrong againſt the *Socinians*, do not prove againſt the *Arian* notion. That the title of *ſon of God*, has not always one uniform meaning in the goſpel; and that that ſingle expreſſion of itſelf, is no proof of any thing in God analagous to *generation in men*. That the *identical conſubſtanti- lity* of the *ſon*, the *eternal proceſſion* of the *ſpirit*, and many other notions relating to the *trinity*, tho' they may be true in themſelves, are not ſo in virtue of the *texts* alledged for them. Theſe notions, *learned men* have fallen into; and from thence 'tis to be preſumed, *you* will not eaſily keep clear of them. I chuſe to inſtance chiefly in matters relating to the *Trinity*, becauſe 'tis the controverſie now on foot*: But the like may be ſaid on many *other* articles; in each of which the truth is but one, but the errors infinite: And there is hardly any notion with reſpect to any of them, which ſome learned man, by following his own *private judgment*, inſtead of taking the *doctrines of the church* for his guide, has not fallen into.

* See a late book, intituled, *The true doctrine of the New Testament concerning Jeſus Chriſt*:. printed 1767: wherein the *Trinity* is demolished for ever.

Now

Now if you should study yourself into any *new* opinions, or into *old* ones that have been condemned, what will you do? Will you keep them to yourself, or publish them? Or shall I rather say, 'tis no question? The authors of new notions are apt to be very fond of them; they think it barbarous and cruel, to stifle the infant in its birth. There is a secret pleasure in singularity. To differ from the vulgar, is in appearance to be *above* them; and to be *distinguished* from the herd, is too great a temptation to be easily resisted. But had you prudence enough to govern your *ambition*, *conscience* may come in here, and make you do what *ambition* could not. The truths you think you have discovered, either are, or will be thought by you of too much *importance* to the honour of God and the good of religion, to be concealed. You will look on them as the *blessings of God* on your studies; and think it a capital crime to extinguish the light, and suppress the knowledge he has imparted to you. In short, you will think yourself under the *highest obligation* not to dissemble in religious matters, and conceal from the church of God, opinions which you are convinced are not only true but of great service to it. Let me then conclude, that the novel or revived opinions
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which your *study* leads you into, will be published to the world. What now will be the consequence? Certain mischief, but no certain good at all. No good, I say; for possibly your notions may be wrong, or not of consequence; and, whether they are or not, the *presumption* against you will be so strong, that your notions will not be *received*, and perhaps not *examined*: They will be *condemned* as novel notions, or as exploded ones. And, whatever you advance, 'twill be thought a certain proof of its being of no consequence, that in so many ages it has never been *received*. There is no room therefore to expect, that what you advance, should be *received*, or do any *good*. But the *mischief* is sure and certain. It will raise *scruples* in weak and unstable minds, sap the foundations of the orthodox faith, and give a handle to sceptical men; who, because some things are called in doubt, (though incidental matters only and of little consequence) will think they have a right from thence to question every thing. Thus the church and *established faith* will suffer by the *scruples* put into its *friends*, and the *handle* given to its *enemies*. And when religious disputes are begun, *designing men* know how to intermix affairs of state with them; and then no body knows where they will end, or what mischiefs they may do.

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Whereas if you can be content to go on in the *beaten road*; if you will *implicitly* submit to the *received notions*; and humbly think the *judgment of the church*, where 'tis not the same, better than *your own*; you will be out of *harm's way*, and neither hurt the *church* nor *yourself*.

2. I add, *yourself*; as another motive, that ought to have great weight with you in this question. For you cannot disturb the *peace of the church*, without being greatly a sufferer *yourself*. If you really do not disturb its peace, 'tis all one, you will be *interpreted* to do it; and that will bring on you more evils, than I would wish to my greatest enemy. In a word, you will be thought a *heretic*; a term, which there is a strange *magic* in, though it has *no determinate meaning* in the mouth of the people, nor any *ill meaning* in itself. 'Tis supposed to include in it every thing that is bad; it makes every thing appear odious and deformed; it dissolves all friendships, extinguishes all former kind sentiments, however just and well deserved: And from the time a man is deemed a *heretic*, 'tis charity to act against all rules of charity; and the more they violate the laws of God in dealing with him, 'tis, in their opinion, doing God the greater service.

That you may not think this is said at random, purely to frighten you into a compliance with me; let me desire you to consider seriously the natural consequences of being under the imputation of *heresy*. And the first I would observe, is, that from the moment your people have this opinion of you, you are incapacitated from working much good upon them; and that, I'm sure, so good a man as you are, must think to be a great evil. While they think you *orthodox*, your virtuous and inoffensive behaviour, your strict sobriety and temperance, your affable and familiar manner of conversing with them, your generous and charitable regard to those who are sick or in distress; these good qualities, joined to your plain and easy, but affectionate and moving manner of instructing them, have a mighty influence, and you may lead them as you please: They admire and endeavour to imitate your good example: Your virtuous conduct is a constant, though tacit, reproof when they do amiss: The very sight of you, is a lecture of virtue to them; and the influence you have already had in the little time you have been among them, is too visible to be denied. But from the time you are called *heretic*, much of the good you could have done, is at an end. Those who before had a secret veneration of you, think it their duty to *defame* and *injure* you: your virtue, they call hypocrisy; your humility,

humility, spiritual pride. They look on you as an abandoned wretch ; that God has withdrawn his grace, and that the devil is at the bottom of all you have been doing : That nothing can better testify their *orthodoxy*, than to throw off all regard both to your doctrine and example ; and for fear they should seem to be infected with your errors, they will return to the vices you had persuaded them to leave ; and for the future, will take effectual care not to be the better for you.

No body can do much good, whom the people do not think a good man ; and that cannot be expected, when so much reproach and infamy will, right or wrong, be heaped on you, if you do not continue *orthodox*. And this you cannot doubt, if you will but reflect on what passes under your own eyes. And therefore 'tis in vain to fancy your *virtue* will protect you. No, the most *conspicuous virtue* will not be believed. If you are guilty of no open vices, secret ones will be imputed to you ; your enquiries will be called *vain, curious* and *forbidden studies*. Pride and ambition will be said to be the secret springs of them. A *search after truth*, will be called a *love of novelty*. The doubting of a single text, will be *scepticism* ; the denial of an argument, a *renouncing of the faith*. To say what the Scriptures have said, and in the very same words too,

if not explained in the common way, will be *blasphemy*; and the most sincere concern for the honour of almighty God, you cannot be sure will not be interpreted *down-right atheism*. Every thing you say or do, will have a wrong turn given it. A slip of memory, shall be made wilful prevarication; a mistake in a citation, shall be forgery and corruption; an error in an incidental point of learning, shall be a good proof, that you *know nothing*. Every unaccurate expression, shall be pressed into a crime; any little warmth of temper, shall be aggravated into pride and positiveness, into a contempt of authority, and ill manners. In short, all the indiscretions of a man's former life shall be ript up; and nothing forgiven, that can be remembered or strained to his disadvantage. And where is the man that can be fond of such usage? For my part, I am free to declare, I am afraid I should not have virtue or courage enough, to undergo such a fiery trial.

Now all this a man will draw upon himself, that brings himself under the imputation of *heresy*. Whereas the *orthodox* man lives quiet and at ease, unmolested and unenvied. His faults (and who has not some?) shall be extenuated or excused, if not quite buried in oblivion; his want of temper, shall be a commendable zeal; his indiscretion, good nature; his mistakes,

mistakes, shall be imputed to haste or inadvertency; and, when they cannot be defended, it will be argued in his favour, that the greatest men sometimes err, and the writers of the first rank are not always in the right; or perhaps a mistake shall turn to his advantage; it will be shown to be an error on the right side, and that a good cause drew him into it. His learning on the other hand shall be magnified beyond measure; every body will be full of his good qualities, and his virtues shall be set in the best light to show themselves and cover his faults. In a word, *orthodoxy* atones for all *vices*, and *heresy* extinguishes all *virtues*. That this is nothing but the bare truth, I appeal to what you every day hear and see yourself.

There are, you know, *two clergymen** of the town, who have studied themselves into *heresy*, or at least into a *suspicion* of it: Both of them, *men of fair unblemished characters*. One has all his life been cultivating piety and virtue and good learning. Rigidly constant *himself* in the public and private duties of religion; and always promoting in *others*, virtue and such learning as he thought would conduce most to the honour of God, by manifesting the greatness and wisdom of his works. He has given the world sufficient proofs that he has not mispent his time, by very useful works of *philosophy*

* Mr. Whiston and Dr. Clarke.

and *mathematicks*. He has applied *one* to the explication of the *other*, and endeavoured by *both* to display the glory of the Great Creator. And to his study of nature, he early joined the study of the *Scriptures*; and his attempts, whatever the success be, were at least well meant: and, considering the difficulty of the subjects he has engaged in, it must be allowed that in the main they are *well aimed*. And if he has not succeeded, no more have others who have meddled with the same subjects. Nor is he more to be blamed, than they. To be *blamed*, did I say? I should have said, not less to be *commended*. For sure 'tis a *commendable* design, to explain Scripture-difficulties, and to remove the objections of profane men, by shewing there is nothing in the sacred writings, but what is true and rational.

But what does a life thus spent avail? To what purpose so many watchful nights, and weary days? So much piety and devotion? So much mortification and self-denial? Such a zeal to do good, and to be useful to the world? So many noble specimens of a great genius, and of a fine imagination? 'Tis the poor man's misfortune (for *poor* he is, and like to be, not having the least preferment) to have a warm head, and to be very zealous in what he thinks the cause
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of God. He thinks prudence the worldly wisdom condemned by Christ and his apostles; and that 'tis gross prevarication and hypocrisy, to conceal the discoveries he conceives he has made. This heat of temper betrays him into some indiscreet expressions and hasty assertions. Designing to hurt no body, he fancies no body designs to hurt *him*; and is simple enough to expect the same favourable allowances will be made to *him*, that he sees made to those who write against him. As to his learning, 'tis his misfortune that he is not skilled enough in the learned languages, to be a great critick in them; and yet seems not to be sensible of his deficiency in this respect. And what advantage is taken of this, that he has not *less heat and more criticism!* His *learning* is treated in that manner, that you would think he did not know the first elements of *Greek*; though even in that, he is much superiour to most of those who make so free with him: And you every day hear his performances run down as whimsies and chimeras, by men who never *read* them, and, if they did, could not *understand* them. Nor does his *warmth of temper* come off better: 'tis all over *obstinacy, pride and heretical pravity*; a want of *modesty* and due *deference* to just authority. They that speak most favourably, look upon him as *craz'd*, and little better than a *madman*. This is the

poor man's character; and, *low* as he is, they cannot be content to leave him quiet in his poverty. Whereas, had he not been early possess'd with a passionate love for the *Scripture* and *philosophy*; had he not thought it his duty above all things to promote the *glory of God*, and been persuaded that could no way be so well done as by the study of his *word* and *works*; 'tis more than probable he had at this time been *orthodox*. And then, instead of his present treatment, his faults would have been overlooked; the learning he excels in, would have been extolled, and no defects would have been found in other parts of it. He would have been cried up as an ornament of the age, and no preferment would have been denied or envied him.

This you know to be the case with *one* of the *new heretics*. The *other* * is so prudent in his conduct, that he comes under but a *suspicion* of favouring the same notions. How now is he treated? *prudence* in him is as great a crime as the *want* of it in the *other*. The *imprudent* man is treated as a madman, and a rank *Arian*: The *prudent* one, is *less* a heretic, but *more dangerous*: *Sobrius accessit ad evertendam ecclesiam*; and therefore the greater alarm must be raised against him. And what has he done? Why, he has with a great deal of pains brought together in the best

* Dr. Samuel Clarke.

manner he could, all the passages in the New Testament relating to the doctrine of the *Trinity*. And so far, his work is what those who differ from him, *should* be pleased with; since he has brought the *materials* together, to enable men to form a right judgment of the question in dispute; and has put into their hands, if he be in the wrong, the best weapons against himself. But he has *interpreted some texts*, in a manner that is not liked: 'tis true, he has so; but not once, that I remember, has he given an interpretation that is purely *of his own head*. He brings *great vouchers*, and, if he errs, it is always in *good company*. This is his offence: He has maintained with many others, particularly with the late dean of St. Paul's, * in opposition to *Sabellianism*, that the *three persons in the Trinity* are *three real distinct Beings*: and the belief of three really distinct Beings *perfectly equal*, he maintains with Dr. South to be *Tritheism*: And, that there *must* therefore be a *subordination*. Now whether this notion be right, or not; if he cannot escape *ill treatment*, give me leave to say, that if your study should lead you into any opinions contrary to what is generally received, you can with no reason expect *better quarter*. He is a man who has *all the good qualities* that can meet together, to recommend him. He is possess of *all the parts of learning* that are valu-

* Dr. Sherlock.

able in a clergyman, in a degree that few possess any *single one*. He has joined to a good skill in the three learned languages, a great compass of the best *philosophy* and *mathematicks*; as appears by his *Latin* works: And his *English* ones are such a proof of his own *piety*, and of his *knowledge in divinity*, and have done so much *service to religion*, as would make any other man, that was not under the suspicion of *heresy*, secure of the friendship and esteem of all good churchmen, especially of the clergy. And to all the *piety* and *learning*, and the good use that has been made of it; is added a *temper* happy beyond expression: A sweet, easy, modest, inoffensive, obliging behaviour, adorn all his actions; and no passion, vanity, insolence, or ostentation, appear either in what he writes or says: And yet these faults are often incident to the best men, in the freedoms of conversation, and in writing against impertinent and unreasonable adversaries, especially such as strike at the foundation of virtue and religion. This is the *learning*, this the *temper* of the man, whose *study of the Scriptures* has betrayed him into a *suspicion* of some heretical opinions; and because it has, he must be *blackened* and *defamed*; he must be worried out of the great and clear reputation he is possessed of: and he that has so many shining qualities, must be insulted by every *worth-*

left wretch, as if he had as little learning and virtue as the lowest of those who are against him. What protection now can you promise yourself from your virtue, when a man of *such* a character cannot be safe in his good name? Whatever therefore you do, be *orthodox*: *Orthodoxy* will cover a *multitude of sins*, but a *cloud of virtues* cannot cover the want of the minutest particle of *orthodoxy*.

'Tis expected, no matter how unreasonably, that a man should always adhere to the party he has once taken. 'Tis the opinion of the world, that he is all his life bound by the subscriptions he made in his first years; as if a man were as wise at twenty-four, and knew as much of the Scripture and antiquity and could judge as well of them, as he can at fifty. And yet if a man will be studying these things, he cannot be sure he shall continue a year together in the same sentiments: And, if he should not, he must either stifle his persuasion, against the dictates of his conscience; or be exposed to the worst treatment, to be called a *renegado*, a *false brother*, a *heretic*, or any thing that *malice* can suggest.

But I have not yet done. This is not the worst of it. This perhaps you may pretend to despise, and not care what the world says of you, so long as your conscience cannot reproach you.

Well ; let then all concern for reputation go : Can you be proof against *one farther consequence* of lying under the imputation of *heresy* ? Can you bear to see yourself, your wife and children, ruined and undone ? This, I see, startles you. — But you ask ; *What danger can there be of that ?* An *Englishman*, you say, is out of the reach of *persecution* or an *inquisition* : That spirit, God be thanked, is banished the land ; and even *convict heretics* are protected from the *flames*. Very true ; the spirit of *persecution* is either gone, or is *disarmed* ; and that I look on as one of the invaluable blessings of the revolution : But can you be sure it will not return ? And suppose it will not ; are you therefore secure, that an imputation of *heresy* will not end in the ruin of yourself and family ? You and your children will not be *burnt* indeed ; but you may be as effectually ruined, as if you were. You may be *excommunicated* ; and in virtue of that be thrown into jail, to rot there, while your family are starving. And (which cannot be too well considered) when once you come into those circumstances, what is there can deliver you ? Your punishment will last and be the same, as long as you continue in the same mind. A rule of punishment, peculiar to the *ecclesiastick* state. In *civil* cases, the offender, if his crime be not capital, suffers a *temporary* punishment, proportioned

tioned to the fault he has committed ; and when he has undergone that, nothing further is required of him, except in some cases to find security for his good behaviour for the future. But in cases of *heresy*, there is no regard to the *degree* of the offence, in the punishment inflicted. Nor is there any *end* of it. 'Tis not enough to have suffered the *severest* punishment, though for the *smallest* offence ; 'tis not enough to give security of not offending for the future : The innocent offender must declare (what 'tis often times *impossible* he should declare) that he has changed *his* sentiments, and is become *orthodox* ; and this, though perhaps no methods of *conviction* have been used, except that of *punishment* be one. This is the miserable condition of a *convict heretic* : The punishment which fell on him for *expressing* thoughts *heretical*, he must *continue* to endure for *barely* thinking ; which is a thing not in his power, but depends on the *evidence* that appears to him : He must for ever (cruel justice !) for ever suffer for his *private* thoughts (though they go not beyond his own heart,) the punishment which some overt-act has once drawn upon him. To punish *toties quoties*, as often as those overt-acts are repeated, will not satisfy the *holy* office : Nor can a forbearance of such acts avail any thing, or a promise of silence for the future ; which yet is all that is in a man's power.

power. No; he must *recant*, whether he can or not; and generally 'tis required to be done in words drawn up for him. So that, if he do not see reason to change his opinion; and will not say he has changed, when he has not; he is in for life, and his punishment can only end with it.

Indeed, on every supposition, a man excommunicated for *heresy* has sad time of it. For if he *does* not recant, he is (as I have said) in prison for life, and his family must starve; and if he *does* recant, what does he get by it: his liberty indeed, but what else? Will people believe he is sincere? Will they not think his recantation loosely drawn in favour of him, to make it a recantation in *appearance* only? Or, if it be in the strongest words, will he not, if he submit to it, be suspected to *equivocate*? Will they not expect the *reasons* of his change; will they not ask, (if he says no more for the *orthodox* side than he has said before) why, if these reasons are convincing now, he did not think them so before? Will they not conclude, that to *him* they are inconclusive still; unless he can find better reasons than the best that had been before offered him? Which I take to be a contradiction. And will it not be argued from thence, that he is not changed? that 'tis the punish-

punishment only, and not his opinions, he would leave? So that if he *continues* in his opinions, he must lie under all the infamy and punishment of *heresy*; and if he does *not*, yet it will be supposed he does. He is punished for acting *according to his conscience*; and, if he would leave the *heresy* imputed to him, he will be said to act *against his conscience*; and perhaps be reputed a *worse* man than he was before. This in all events: once a *heretic*, and always miserable. The reputation (change, or not) is never to be retrieved; no preferment or employment to be *hoped for*. He will always be suspected of *heresy*, who is once guilty; and his wife and children must see him the perpetual subject of reproach and obloquy; and feel it too: Feel it in their character, feel it in their maintenance; as if the children of a *heretic* were a brood of monsters, nuisance to the common-wealth, and infected the very air they breathe in.

These misfortunes a man of the most *unblemished* life may draw upon himself and family, if he will be meddling with so *dangerous* a study, and cannot in *conscience* dissemble the result of it. Misfortunes, which the *vilest, lewdest, most immoral* wretch upon earth, is in no danger of. The greatest *immoralities*, nay, a long *course* of them, shall oftentimes escape unpunished; especially if a man be very *orthodox*: But if they do
not

not, the punishment extends only to the *person* of the offender. It derives no *infamy* on *himself* if he reforms, nor on his *children* if he do not. They are rather *pitied* for having such a father, and every body is willing to be kind to them. Who now, after this, can be so fond of a study, that may bring on him, let him be never so innocent, such a load of misery and infamy, a load without measure and without end? And if this will be the consequence of *excommunication*, tell me how much better 'tis than *persecution*.

But you will say, that 'tis possible a man's studies *may not* lead him into any *heretical* opinion; and if they should, yet 'tis not very easy to *convict* a *heretic*, or to say *what is heresy*. To the *first* I have already said enough: As to the *other*, I confess 'tis not very easy to *convict* a man of *heresy*. The law seems to be *deficient* in this point; but who knows how soon this defect may be supplied by a *new law*? And in the meantime, it may be *difficult* indeed to *convict* a man of *heresy*; but perhaps it may be found not to be *impossible*. And, if it should, 'tis but changing the word, and the offender may be come upon easily enough. If, through a defect in the laws, he cannot be convicted of *heresy*, he may however be convicted of writing or speaking *against* the established doctrine of the church;
and

and that will draw on him all the same consequences, that *heresy* would do. For *heresy* is the opposing the doctrine of the *Catholic* church; but the doctrine of the *established* church, will readily be *supposed* to be the doctrine of the *Catholic* church; and therefore to oppose the doctrine of one, is in effect to oppose both. So that a man shall be deemed a *heretic* to all intents and purposes, and sentenced to the same punishment; though in the sentence itself, for his comfort, the word *heresy* may be left out.

But you are willing to think the *temper* of the *English* clergy more moderate, and the generality of them averse to every thing that looks like the *spirit of popery*; as the ruining of a good man, merely for matters of opinion, must be allowed to do. I wish you may find it so, if ever there should be occasion. I confess there has appeared a *good spirit*, a very *humane* and *christian* temper in some late writings, where perhaps it was not much expected; but for all that, I must beg leave to differ from you. If indeed no one would *judge* in a cause he did not understand; if no one were allowed to understand a cause of *heresy*, but who was a good judge of the *sense of Scripture* and of *primitive antiquity*; if no one were esteemed to know Scripture and antiquity, but those who had *studied them well*, who had read them carefully with *their own eyes*, and did

did not take the sense of them *upon trust* from modern writers; if the *arguments* for his opinion were to be *examined*, before his opinion were condemned; if a man, before he gave his vote, were to lay his hand upon his heart, and declare himself thus qualified to judge; that he had considered the matter, and would speak nothing but what he thought; on these suppositions, I am apt to think, a number of judges would not very easily be found; and, when they were, it may reasonably be presumed that they would not be very forward to condemn. They would be sensible there was room for honest minds to be misled, from what they had read and observed themselves; they would know that there is more to be said on the other side, than the generality at all dream of; they would be careful how they discouraged learning, by discouraging the enquiries of learned men. They would be very unwilling a man should suffer by their sentence, whose life they are sure is innocent and virtuous, but whose opinions they cannot be so sure are false or dangerous. They know discouragements in learning and virtue to be of such ill consequence, that a man's opinions must be very bad indeed, to make it necessary to come to such extremities. But give me leave to say, you have no reason to expect such judges, or such a backwardness to judge. 'Tis always

supposed

supposed, that the doctrine of the church you are of, is right; that it is the doctrine of Scripture and antiquity. And this, every body thinks he understands. So that little learning or reading is necessary, to make any clergyman a judge over the learnedest man alive.

Another thing I take leave to tell you, is that most men think they can do *conscientiously*, whatever they can do *legally*. Men of *refined and exalted understandings*, who have a large compass of thought, and have lookt into the principles of things, know that *written laws* are but deductions of the *law of nature*, which is *prior* to all *human institutions*: That these sometimes deviate from that *unwritten law*; and, when they do, are of no real intrinsic authority. They know that a thing is not *just and reasonable* because it is *enacted*; but, in good governments, is *enacted*, because 'tis *just and reasonable*. They know that *laws* are sometimes obtained by surprize and corruption, by party-management, by craft or superstition. They know that penal laws in matters of religion, are seldom adviseable. They would not easily contribute to the making them; and, when they are made, would be glad to have them generally lie dormant. They know that no *authority of man* can alter the *nature of things*, or justify a *cruel or unjust* sentence

sentence in the sight of God. They are sure, that if to punish men for their opinions be not *very right*, there is no medium, it must be *very wrong*. 'Tis public robbery or murder to deprive a man of his life or goods for his religion; if it be not *just in itself* to do so, as well as *legal*.

Some perhaps may think in this manner; but these must be men of refin'd and exalted understandings; and therefore must be *very few*. The *generality* think they may do *justly*, whatever they can do *legally*. And it is, no doubt, for *them*, a good rule. They cannot judge of the nature of things for *themselves*; and therefore *the law* is the most proper guide and direction *they* can have. As long therefore as there are laws to punish the asserters of *heretical opinions*, or such as *oppose the established doctrines*; you may depend on it, they will not be suffered to lie dormant. There will never be wanting great numbers, who will call aloud to have them put in execution; and they will think their zeal in this matter, the *best* service they can do the church.

This is human *nature*: thus it has been in all times. And no experience of the mischief done to christianity by a forwardness to pronounce anathema's on those who differed from the *received*

ceived opinions, will make us wiser. It may, I doubt not, be *demonstrated* with the greatest evidence, that *all christian churches* have suffered more by their *zeal* for *orthodoxy*, and by the violent methods taken to promote it; than from the utmost efforts of their *greatest enemies*. But, for all that, the world will still think the same methods necessary. The same *zeal* will prompt to the same *persecutions* or *prosecutions*, (call them which you will) without considering that the *same means* must necessarily produce, at long-run, the *same fatal consequences*.

Let me therefore entreat you, not to fancy the world is altered in this point. Do not think your opinions *cannot* ruin you, because 'tis *not reasonable* they should. Do not flatter yourself, that *temper, prudence and moderation*, can in religious controversies get the better of *indiscreet zeal, bigotry and superstition*. In short; be not hasty in espousing of opinions, which can have no other effect, but to lay the *best men* at the mercy of the *worst*. Every *mean person*, who has nothing to recommend him but his *orthodoxy*, and owes that perhaps wholly to his *ignorance*; will think he has a right to trample on you with contempt; to asperse your character with virulent reflections; to run down your writings as mean and pitiful performances, and give *hard names* to opinions he *does not understand*; which
you

you must bear, without the least hopes of being heard a word in your defence.

Let me observe one thing more ; that 'tis the misfortune of a *clergyman*, that he is confined to *one profession*. Other men, if they cannot live in *one way*, are at liberty to try *another* : But a man who has once the *indelible* character, must live by the *one* profession he has made choice of. If therefore that livelihood be taken from him ; 'tis in vain he has *learning, parts, industry, and application*. He will not be allowed to take *any other course* to repair the loss he suffers by his opinions as a clergyman. His time, and fortunes, and studies, have been spent to make him useful in that *one profession* ; and, if he had abilities to maintain himself in *any other*, 'tis too late : He has made his choice, and must abide by it. This then is the unhappy dilemma a *reputed heretic* is reduced to ; he will neither be suffered to *keep* the profession, nor to *leave* it ; he shall neither live *in it*, nor *out of it*. So that, notwithstanding his *learning, parts, virtue, and industry* ; though he could make a good *lawyer, physician, merchant, or mechanic* ; if he be not *orthodox*, all possibilities of living comfortably, at least, and reputably, are taken from him. Go now, and think, if you can, that the advice I give you, is not the advice of a friend. 'Tis the advice of one who loves virtue and learning,
who

who is a friend to all good men, and is in particular greatly concerned for *your* success and advancement in the world. 'Tis advice seconded by the examples of the greatest men. For name me any one of the men most famed for learning in this or the last age, who have seriously turned themselves to the *Study of the Scriptures*. I might name to you the most eminent men down from *Scaliger* and *Casaubon* to the present time. *Capellus* indeed, and the excellent *Grotius*, are exceptions; but they met with such *usage*, that one has little encouragement from their examples. But not to go beyond our own country; who are the men that have excelled most (excepting always *Sir Isaac Newton*) in philosophy, astronomy and mathematicks? Have they not been *clergymen*? And was not their skill in these sciences, the effect of their great and constant application to them? Was not that time spent in *these studies*, that you think should have been applied to the *study of the Scriptures*? On the other hand, take out two or three from so great a body; and where is there a clergyman of a great genius, and that has made a chief figure in the learned world, that has writ upon the *Scriptures*? at least with any masterly skill in critick?

And *what* is it, that all this can be imputed to? Did these learned men decline this study, because

because they wanted the *abilities* proper for it? Surely that will not be said of men of their confessed learning. Or was there want of *inclination* and *good-will* to it? No, they were men of *virtue*, and *good protestants*, as well as scholars and men of letters. What then? Did they, who have taken so much pains upon *other* books, and with so much success, think *the Scriptures* the only ones that *needed not* their help? Neither can that be pretended. They saw the sacred books, through the *injury of time* and the *ignorance of scribes*, had suffered as well as others; and much more by *false and absurd interpretations*. To be plain: the *one thing* that turned them from so noble and necessary a study, was the *want of liberty*, which, in *this study only*, is denied men. They found it was *dangerous* to examine *impartially*, and speak *freely*; that they must write *without liberty*, or with *no safety*; that it would be expected of them, to strain all their wit and learning to *patronize* and *palliate* gross errors, instead of *exposing* or *mending* of them; and to support the *received interpretations*, however absurd, instead of such as *reason* and *learning* convinced them were the *only true ones*. But this was a task, which men of *ingenuous minds*, whose *integrity and love of truth* was equal to their penetration and great abilities, could not submit to. For men to have eyes and understandings

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it will put you into a way of making a decent provision for your family, and give a good education to those two fine children God has blessed you with, and you may have many more. The *other* will itself fatigue you with many difficulties, and expose you to the most fatal consequences: It will draw on you an insupportable load of infamy, as a disturber of the *church*, and an enemy to the *orthodox faith*; and in all probability end in the extreme poverty and ruin of yourself and family. Which God forbid should ever be the case of one who has no other views but to dedicate his life to God's service. I am,

S I R,

Your faithful humble servant.

The CONCLUSION.

AFTER all that has been said in this long letter, I am persuaded that many readers will still think what is here advanced, a strange paradox; or perhaps be scandalized at it as a very wicked one; and will on no terms allow, that clergymen should lay aside what *ought* to be their *chief study*. And, ~~to be ingenuous~~, I will confess I am *entirely of the same mind*. I am as unwilling, as *they* can be, to admit the conclusion, that the *study of the Scriptures* should be *deserted*; and yet cannot deny, but, humanely speaking, this must be the consequence from these premises. If therefore we will not allow the *conclusion*, we must show the *premises* to be untrue, and that this study will *not* be attended with *so much danger*. But this we in vain attempt, if we do not *our* parts at least, that these may *not* be the consequences. For as long as they are, the *study of the Scriptures* will *certainly* continue to be *neglected*, as it now is; and all men who *contribute* to these consequences in any degree, do so far *discourage* the *study of the Scriptures*, whatever they pretend.

In truth, there is nothing more absurd, than to say the glorious things we do daily of the
 Scriptures;

Scriptures; and, at the same time, make the study of them, to men of sincere and honest minds, so extremely *hazardous* and *inconvenient*. If then we would not be guilty of *discouraging* a study, which we acknowledge to be the *great duty* of the clergy, as we are *christians*; if we would be true to the *fundamental principles* of the *reformation*, as *protestants*, that the *Scriptures are the only rule of faith*; let us use our best endeavours to *remove* the *great obstacles* that lie against the study of them; let us do what we can, that learned men may have *full liberty* to study the *Scriptures freely and impartially*; good *encouragement* given them to go through the *labour and difficulties* of such a study, not slightly and superficially, but with application and diligence as the nature of the thing requires; and have *leave* to speak their sense with all manner of *safety*: That their *opinions* may be *examined fairly* and with *temper*: That their *names* be not unjustly loaded with *calumny and slander*; that their words and actions may be interpreted with the same *candour*, as is shown to those that differ from them: That, if what they advance be *right*, it may be *received*; if *wrong*, their errors may be *refuted*, as the *mistakes of learned men on other subjects*; if *doubtful*, and the *Scriptures* say so little, or speak so obscurely, that nothing can certainly be decided either way; that then no-

body may be *obliged* to take *either side as necessary*: That, whether their *notions* be right or wrong, their *persons* may in all events be safe, and their maintenance not affected by it: That as long as they *live virtuously*, and *write* with all due *modesty* and *good manners*, and advance nothing that breaks in upon *morality and government*, they may be treated in all respects as those are or ought to be, who employ themselves in any other part of useful learning.

I must add, let them be never so much in the *wrong*, I can apprehend no *danger* from it to the *church*; or that the errors of a few men, can have any considerable influence in opposition to a great body of a vigilant and learned clergy, who will be always able and ready to *defend* the *received notions*, if they *can be* defended; and if they *cannot*, it must be allowed they *ought not*. But if *some inconveniencies* would arise from the liberty I contend for, they are *nothing in comparison* of those that must follow from the want of it.

Till there is such a liberty allowed to clergymen; till there is such a security for their reputations, fortunes, and persons; I fear I must add, till so difficult a study meets with proportionable *encouragement*; 'tis impossible a *sincere, impartial* and *laborious application* to it, should
generally

generally prevail: And till it does, it is as impossible the *Scriptures* should be *well understood*: And till they are, they are a rule of faith *in name* only. For 'tis not the *words* of Scripture, but the *sense*, which is the *rule*; and so far as *that* is not *understood*, so far the *Scriptures* are *not our rule*, whatever we pretend; but the *sense that men have put on them*; men *fallible* as ourselves, and who were by no means so well *furnished*, as the learned at present are, with the proper helps to find out the true meaning of *Scripture*. And while we take the sense of the *Scriptures* in this manner *upon content*, and see not with our own eyes; we insensibly relapse into the *principles of popery*, and give up the *only ground* on which we can justify our separation from the church of *Rome*. 'Twas a *right to study and judge of the Scriptures for themselves*, that our *first reformers* asserted with so good effect; and their *successors* can defend their adherence to them, on *no other principle*.

If then we are *concerned* for the study of the *Scriptures*, further than *in words*; if we in earnest *think* them the *only rule of faith*; let us *act* as if we thought so: Let us heartily encourage a *free and impartial study* of them; let us lay aside that *malignant, arbitrary, persecuting, popish* spirit; let us put no fetters on mens *understandings*, nor any other bounds to their

enquiries, but what *God and truth* have set. Let us, if we would not give up the *protestant principle*, that *the Scriptures are plain and clear in the necessary articles*; declare *nothing* to be *necessary*, but what is *clearly revealed* in them.

Then may we hope to see the study of these divine books so happily cultivated by the united labours of the learned, when under no discouragements; that all may in the main agree in the true meaning of them. Places that *can be understood*, they will agree in understanding alike; such at least as are of *consequence* to the faith. And for such as are *too obscure to be cleared up with any certainty*, those likewise they will agree about, and unanimously confess they are such, as *no article of faith can be grounded upon, or proved from*. Next to the understanding a text of Scripture, is to know it can't be certainly understood. When the clear and dark places of Scripture are thus distinguished, an *unity* may then reasonably be hoped for among *protestants* in *necessary points*; and a *difference of opinion* in such as are *not necessary*, can have *no manner of ill consequence*, nor any way disturb the peace of the church; since there will then be nothing left in its doctrines, to *inflame mens passions*, or *feed their corrupt interests*, when we are all agreed about what is *essential* to religion; and what is

not essential, is looked on as indifferent, so that a man may take *one* side, or the *other*, or *neither*, or may *change*, as he sees reason, without offence.

Upon the whole, a *free and impartial study of the Scriptures*, either *ought* to be encouraged, or it *ought not*. There is *no medium*; and therefore those who are *against one side*, which ever it be, are necessarily *espousers of the other*. Those who think it *ought not* to be encouraged, will, I hope, think it no injury to be thought to defend their opinion upon *such reasons* as have here been brought for it, till they give *better*. On the other hand, those who think these reasons inconclusive, and can't find better; will find themselves obliged to confess, that such a study *ought* to be encouraged; and consequently must take care how they are accessory to such practices, as in their natural consequence can't but tend to its discouragement; lest they come into the condemnation of those *who love darkness rather than light*, and, for their punishment, be finally adjudged to it. There is in this case no other medium between *encouraging* and *discouraging*, but what there is between *light* and *darkness*. Every degree of darkness, is a want of so much light; and all want of light, is a certain degree of darkness. To refuse then a greater degree of light, where it can be had; is

in truth to prefer darkness: Which, in my humble opinion, can never be reasonable or excusable. Those who are of another mind, plainly *distrust themselves or their cause*. Which if it can *bear the light*, why should it not be shown in it? But if it cannot, 'tis not the cause of God, or of *the Son of God*; for *God is light; and in him is no darkness*; and *the Son of God is the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*.

T H E
C E N S U R E*

Of the *Lower House of Convocation* upon
this Book.

1. **I**T treats of things sacred, in a ludicrous and prophane manner.

2. It casts injurious reflections on the fathers and councils of the antient church.

3. It insinuates that the doctrines and articles of the established church, are not grounded on Scripture, but are rather inconsistent therewith.

4. It represents the body of the clergy as neglecting, and the governors of the church as discouraging the study of the Scriptures.

5. It exposes the discipline of the church under the notion of *persecution*, and invidiously reflects on the laws provided for its security.

[The *particular* passages upon which these observations are founded, are *not referred* to.]

* Note, this censure of the Convocation upon this excellent tract, was basely omitted in many succeeding editions, but is here restored to shew the true Spirit of that body of men.

A

L E T T E R

Written by the Reverend Mr. John Hales-
of Eaton, to Archbishop LAUD, up-
on Occasion of his Tract concerning
SCHISM.

May it please your Grace,

WHEREAS of late an abortive dis-
course, indited by me for the use of
a private friend, hath, without law-
ful pass, wandred abroad; and mistaking its
way, is arrived at *your Grace's* hands; I have
taken the boldness to present myself before you,
in behalf of it, with this either *apology* or *excuse*
indifferently, being resolved *in utramvis aleam*,
to beg either your *approbation* or your *pardon*.
For myself, I have marvelled, whence a scrib-
bled paper, dropt from so worthless and incon-
siderable a hand as mine, should recover so
much strength, as to be able to give *offence*.
But I confess it to be most true, that *Bellum in-*
choant inertes, fortis finiunt; and a weak hand
often kindles that fire, which the concourse of
the whole vicinity cannot quench. If therefore

any fire can arise out of so poor a spark, (which I can hardly conceive) I am myself here at hand to pour on water, to prevent a farther mischief.

Whatsoever there is in that schedule, which may seem apt to give *offence*; consists either in *phrase* and *manner of expression*; or in the *concepts*, and *things themselves*, there pressed and insisted upon. For the *first*: Whosoever hath the misfortune to read it, shall find in it, for stile, some things *over-familiar* and *sub-rustick*; some things more *pleasant* than needed; some things more *sour* and *satirical*. For these, my apology is but this, that *your Grace* would be pleased to take in consideration, *first*, what the *liberty of a letter* might entice me to. *Secondly*, I am, by genius, *open* and *uncautelous*; and therefore some pardon might be afforded to harmless *freedom*, and *gayety of spirit*, utterly devoid of all distemper and *malignity*. *Thirdly*, some part of the *theme* I was to touch upon, was (or at least seemed to me) of so *small* and *inconsiderable* a moment; and yet hath raised that noise and tumult in the church, that I confess it drew from me that *indignation* which is there expressed. When *Augustus* the emperor was asked, what was become of his *Ajax*; (for he made a *tragedy* upon the life and fortunes of that man;) he answered, *incubuit in spongiam*.

For all these things which I have above touched upon, my answer is, *incumbant in spongiam*. And I could heartily wish, (for, in the case I am, I have nothing but *good wishes* to help me) that they into whose hands that paper has unluckily fallen, would favour me so much as to *sponge* them out.

Now concerning the *things* discussed in the pamphlet, I humbly beg leave, before I come to particulars, to speak for myself thus much in general. If they be *errors* which I have here vented, (as *perchance* they are;) yet my *will* hath no part in them, and they are but the issues of unfortunate *inquiry*. Galen, that great physician, speaks thus of himself, 'Εγὼ δ' οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως ἐυθύς, &c. I know not how (says that worthy person) even from my youth up, in a wonderful manner, whether by divine inspiration, or by fury and possession, or however you may please to stile it, I have much contemned the opinion of the *MANY*; but *TRUTH* and *KNOWLEDGE*, I have above measure affected; verily persuading myself, that a fairer, more divine fortune, could never befall a man. Some title, some claim I may justly lay to the words of this excellent person: For the pursuit of *TRUTH* hath been my only care, ever since I first understood the meaning of the word. For *this*, I have forsaken all hopes, all friends, all desires, which might

bias.

bias me, and hinder me from driving right at what I aimed. For *this*, I have spent my monies, my means, my youth, my age, and all I have; that I might remove from myself that censure of *Tertullian*,—*Suo vitio quis quid ignorat*. If with all this cost and pains, my purchase is *but error*; I may safely say, *to err* hath cost *me* more, than it has *many* to find the *truth*: And *truth itself* shall give me this testimony at last, that if I have missed of her, it is not my *fault*, but my *misfortune*.

Having begged *your Grace's* pardon for this *περιαιτωλογια*, (peradventure unseasonable;) I will take liberty to consider of the *things themselves* discussed in the pamphlet. And *first*, howsoever I have miscast some *parcels* of my account, yet I am most certain that the *total sum* is right; for it amounts to no more than that precept of the apostle—*As far as it is possible, have peace with all men*. For this purpose, having summoned up fundry occasions of *SCHISM*, and valuing them with the best judgment I could; I still ended with advice to *all possible accommodation* and communion, *one only excepted*. Now certainly there could be no great harm in the *premisses*, where the *conclusion* was nothing else but *peace*.

One of the ancient grammarians, delivering the laws of a *comedy* somewhat scrupulously, thought *Non posse Ferrum nominare in Comediâ, ne transeat in Tragædiam*; that to name a *sword* in a *comedy*, was enough to fright it into a *tragedy*. The very *theme* I handled, caused me to fall on words of *dissention* and *noise* and *tumult*, and *stirr*: Yet I hope it is but an unnecessary fear, that the last scene being *peace*, the discourse will prove any other than *comical*.

To touch upon every *jaring string* in it, were too much to abuse *your Grace's* patience, of which once already you have been so extraordinary liberal unto me. All that may seem to lie open to *exception*, I will comprize under *two heads*; within compass of which, all other petty and inferior matters will easily fall. The *first*, concerns my carriage towards *antiquity*; the *second*, towards *authority*: Against *both* which, I may be supposed to trespass. For the *first*, I am thought to have been too *sharp* in censuring antiquity, beyond that *good respect* which is due unto it. In this point, my error, if any be, sprang from this; that taking *actions* to be the *fruit* by which men are to be judged, I judged of the *persons* by their *actions*, and not of *actions* by the *persons* from whom they proceeded. For, to judge of *actions*, by *persons* and

times,

times, I have always taken it to be most *unnatural*. Hence it is, that having no good conceit (for I will speak the truth) of *our rule by which we celebrate the feast of Easter*; (*First*, because 'tis borrowed of *Moses*, without any warrant for ought I know: *Secondly*, because it is of *no use*; for, which way is the service of God or man any jot more advanced by making that feast wander betwixt day and day, than by fixing it on one known day? *Thirdly*, because it is *obscure and intricate*, few scholars acquainting themselves therewith, and there being nothing more ridiculous than *Difficilis Nugæ*, useless intricacies and obscurities :) I could not with patience speak *gently* of those, who used so small and contemptible an occasion, to the great disturbance and rending of the churches; and, in maintenance of a *toy and simple ceremony* which it is no way beneficial to preserve, to fall into *that error*, than which themselves every where tell us there can scarcely any be more dangerous.

Whereas in one point, speaking of church-authority, I bluntly added, [*which is none* ;) I must acknowledge it was *uncautiously* spoken; and, being taken in a *generality*, is false; tho' as it refers to the *occasion* which there I fall upon, 'tis (as I think I may safely say) *most true*.

66 *The Pillars of* PRIESTCRAFT

For *church-authority*, that is, authority residing in ecclesiastical persons, is either of *jurisdiction* in *church causes*, and *matter of fact*; or of *decision* in point of *church questions*, and *disputable opinion*. As for the *first*; in *church-causes* or *matter of fact*, ecclesiastical persons in cases of their cognizance have the *same authority* as any others have, to whom power of jurisdiction is committed. Their *consistories*, their *courts*, their *determinations*, stand upon as warrantable evidence, as the decisions of *other benches and courts* do. I count in point of *decision of church-questions*, if I say of the *authority of the church*, that it was *none*; I know *no adversary* that I have, the *church of Rome* only excepted. For this *cannot be true*, except we make the church *judge of controversies*; the *contrary* to which, we generally *maintain* against that church. Now it plainly appears, that upon this occasion I spake it: For, beginning to speak of *schism* arising by reason of ambiguous opinion, I brought in nakedly those words which gave occasion of *offence*; which if I had spoken with due qualification, I had not erred at all. Again, whereas I did too *plainly* deliver myself *De Origine Domini*, and denied it to be founded either in *nature* or in *religion*, I am very well content to put off the decision of this point till *Elias* comes. In the mean time, whether it be true or false,

let it pass for my mistake; for 'tis but a point of mere speculation, which we fall upon when we study *Aristotle's politicks*; and in common life and use, hath no place at all. For *authority* is not wont to *dispute*; and it goes but lazily on, when it must defend itself by *argument* in the schools. Whether dominion in *Civilibus*, or in *Sacris* be *κτίσις* &c. or comes in by *divine right*, it concerns *them* to look to, who have dominion committed to them. To *others*, whose duty it is to obey, (and to *myself* above all, who am best contented to live and die a poor and private man,) it is a speculation merely useless. Our Saviour questions not *Herod's* or *Augustus's* title; and confessed that *Pilate* had his power *from above*; which yet we know came but by *delegation* from *Tiberius Cæsar*. Let titles of honour and dominion, go as the providence of God will have; yet quiet and peaceable men will not fail of their obedience. No more will I, of ought: so be that *God* and *good conscience* command not the contrary. A higher degree of duty, I do not see how any man can demand at my hands. For whereas the exception of *good conscience*, sounds not well with many men; because oftentimes under that form, *pertinacy* and *wilfulness* is suspected to couch itself: In this case, it concerns every man sincerely to know the truth of his own heart, and so accordingly

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to determine of his own way, *whatsoever* the judgment of his *superiors* be, or *whatsoever* event befall him. For since in case of conscience, many times there is a necessity to fall, either into the *hands of men*, or into the *hands of God*; of these two, whether is the best, I leave every particular man to judge. Only I will add thus much: It is a *fearful thing* to trifle with *conscience*: For most assuredly, according unto *it* a man shall stand or fall at the last.

One *thorn* more there is, which I would, if I might, pull out of the foot of him, who shall tread upon that paper. For, by reason of a *passage* there, wherein I sharply tasked *episcopal ambition*, I have been suspected by some, into whose hands that schedule fell before ever it came to *your Grace's* view, that in my heart I did secretly lodge a *malignity* against the *episcopal order*, and that, under pretence of taxing the *antients*, I secretly lashed at the *present times*. What obedience I owe unto *episcopal jurisdiction*, I have already plainly and sincerely opened unto *your Grace*; and my trust is, you do believe me: So that in that regard, I intend to say no more; and the very consideration of the *things themselves* which there I speak of, frees me from all suspicion of secret gliding at the *present*. For I spake of *schisms* arising either out of *plurality* of
bishops

bishops in one diocess, or *superiority* of bishops in sundry diocesses: *Both these* are strangers to *ours*, and proper to the *antient* times; the *first* arising from the unruliness of the people, in whose hands in those times the nomination of bishops was; the *other*, from somewhat (whether good or bad I know not) in the princes then living, who left the bishops to themselves, (among whom *some* there were no better than other men,) and took no keep of the antient canons of the church, by which the limits, orders, and preeminences of all diocesses and provinces were set. But *our* times have seen a prosperous change: For the nomination of bishops (which was sometimes in the *people*) is now most happily devolved into the *prince's* hand, together with the care of the preservation of the bounds of bishops sees, and antient titles of precedency. So that now, since that happy change, for well near *one hundred* years, we have had no experience of any such misorders; neither are we likely *hereafter* to fear any, so long as so *good*, so *moderate*, so *gracious* a royal hand shall hold the stern; which God grant may be either in him, or his, till times be no more.

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A
SERIOUS ENQUIRY
INTO THE
USE and IMPORTANCE
OF
External Religion.

OCCASIONED BY

Some Passages in the Right Reverend the
Lord BISHOP of DURHAM's
Charge to the Clergy of that Diocese,
At his Lordship's Primary Visitation in the
Year MDCCLI.

Humbly addressed to his Lordship..

I cannot but hold truth more ancient than error;
every thing to be firmest upon it's own bottom; and
all novelties in the church to be best confuted by
shewing how far they cause it to deviate from the
first original. TWYSDEN's *Hist. Vindication of the*
Church of ENGLAND.

First printed in the Year 1752.

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apostle's words) there may then be left some room for human injunctions of the ritual kind, limited by *the use of edifying*: But then we must take the *bodily exercise* here mentioned in a larger sense, and not understand it of the *Jewish* ordinances exclusive of others; and whether that will suit the interpretation Mr. *W.* gives of the latter part of the verse, I am not quite satisfied.

I expect you will say that Mr. *W.* by ritual observances in the Christian church, must be understood of such as are appointed in the *gospel*; the divine wisdom being the best judge of what is either necessary or expedient for the church in *any* period; and, I suppose, when we meet, you will ask me for some account of this *general expedience* I talk of.—For Mr. *W.* I pretend not to answer; and for myself shall only offer, that possibly there may be *some* instrumentality in human rites towards edification, and that such instrumentality may be verified by their effects and operations upon particular persons, though you and I may have no experience of the like.

However, I own, my notions of this *expedience* are but very obscure and confused; nor am I much enlightened by the episcopal

charge you mentioned to me some time ago, and which was put into my hands this morning, with a very high character, by my neighbour Mr. * * * *. Perhaps his lordship's doctrine might have the *less* weight with *me*, for having *so much* in the adversaries scale. . . .

February 7th, 1752.

A Serious Inquiry, &c.

MY LORD*,

WHEN I first perused your lordship's charge, I could not but think some passages in it, particularly in the 13th and the three following pages, liable to many just objections.

My conjecture was, that the papists, ever watchful to countenance their superstition, by pointing out the remnants of it yet unpurged out of our church, and to make their advantage of the concessions of some of our unwary divines, would certainly lay their finger upon what your lordship has advanced concerning the importance of *external religion*.

Still this was but my conjecture, which alone would never have afforded me sufficient reasons for troubling your lordship or the public on any occasion: But having now the misfortune to find them verified by a strenuous recommendation of this very charge from a zealous and bigotted papist to a worthy protestant gentleman (both in my own neighbourhood) your lordship and the

* The lord bishop of *Durham*, to whom this letter was addressed, was Dr. *Joseph Butler*.

reasonable part of the public will, I trust, excuse me for dropping all other respects but what are due to my religion and allegiance, till I have freely declared my sentiments of the dangerous tendency of your lordship's doctrine contained in the passages above referred to.

Your lordship, having told your clergy, *p.* 13. "That their chief business is to endeavour to beget a practical sense of religion upon the hearts of the people, as what they acknowledge their belief of, and profess they ought to conform themselves to," proceeds to say, "and this is to be done by keeping up, as we are able, the *form* and *face* of religion with decency and reverence, and *in such a degree* as to bring the thoughts of religion *often* to their minds; and then endeavouring to make this form *more and more* subservient to promote the reality and power of it."

Tho' your lordship's expression in this passage is not very clear, yet the subsequent parts of the discourse lead us to understand your lordship here of the clergy's *endeavours* in their public ministrations: and thereupon to remark, that the clergy of the church of *England* have no way of keeping up the *form* and *face* of religion any *oftner*, or in any *other degree*, than is directed by the prescribed order of the church; nor can they,

I apprehend, contrive to make *this form more or less* subservient to promote the *reality and power of religion*, beyond the common operation of the form itself: and what that may be we shall have occasion to consider by and by.

There are indeed some methods of keeping up the *form and face* of religion *in use* with some clergymen of our church (tho', I think, but few) which are not prescribed in our established ritual; such as, bowing to the *East*, turning the face to that quarter in repeating the creeds, dipping the finger in water, and therewith crossing the child's forehead in baptism; and some others of the like sort: But, that your lordship means to encourage any thing of this kind by the *degree*, in which you would have this *form and face* of religion made *more and more subservient*, &c. I cannot be persuaded.

A late eminent and pious prelate, well skilled in the ritual of the church of *England*, hath told us that " altho' our church claims a power (in
" common with other national churches) to or-
" dain, change, and abolish ceremonies or rites, or-
" dained only by man's authority, so that all things
" be done to edifying [art. 34.] yet of this edi-
" fying she does not allow or make any bishop,
" parson, or curate to be the judge, but has tied
" them down to certain rules—the rubrics of

“ the common-prayer, which are also now con-
 “ firmed by the laws of the land — Whosoever
 “ does *less* [than is prescribed in these *rubrics*]
 “ is an *offender* ; whoever does *more*, is an *inno-*
 “ *vater*, and does it without authority, and is
 “ fitter to be *punished* than *followed* *,” &c.

But, as I have little inclination, and less au-
 thority, to put a construction upon your lord-
 ship's words inconsistent with so plain a state of
 the case, for no better reason than because I
 cannot understand them myself in any other, I
 am obliged to leave them under their present
 ambiguity, and pass on to something more in-
 telligible.

“ The form of religion,” continues your
 lordship, “ may indeed be where there is little
 “ of the thing itself ; but the thing itself can-
 “ not be preserved amongst mankind without
 “ the form.”

Which may be very true if your lordship
 means the *Pagan*, the *Mahometan*, the *Roman*
Catholick thing called religion : Take away the
form from the religion of any of these, and you
 effectually destroy the *thing* itself : But, surely,
 your lordship, on second thoughts, will not ex-
 tend this maxim to the Christian religion.

* Bp. *Fleetwood's* works, fol. 1737. p. 722.

The Christian religion was revealed and dispensed, as we are taught, to make mankind happy both here and hereafter; we are farther taught that the circumstances of this religion, without the spirit or power of it, will have no efficacy to procure this happiness: Now one or more particular christians may be so situated that they *cannot* have the *benefit* of the *form* [the *public form*, of which your lordship is now speaking.] Apply your lordship's premisses to the case of such people, and the consequence will be, that they can have *no religion* amongst them.

How different are the sentiments of the great and good archbishop *Tillotson*. His opinion was, that a man may be a very religious and good christian, "who *quietly*, and without any *noise* and *bustle* minds the *substantial* parts of religion, and is truly devoted towards GOD, just and peaceable, and charitable towards men; meek and humble and patient, kind and friendly even to those that differ from him." — Yet such a one, he tells us, "shall hardly escape being censur'd for a lukewarm, *formal*, moral man destitute of the grace of GOD and of the power of godliness*:" — But *why censured?* why

* Sermons, 8vo. edit. 1713. pag. 4645, vol. X. I set down this just as I find it printed, but cannot imagine how the word [*formal*] got into the sentence. I dare say the archbishop did not put it there, as *formality*

why for no reason imaginable unless it is—“be-
 “ cause the *power* of godliness cannot be prefer-
 “ ved amongst mankind without the *forms* and
 “ circumstances of it.”

But, I am afraid your lordship will have a greater authority still to encounter, even our blessed Saviour himself, between whom and a certain woman of *Samaria* there was once some discourse concerning this very point, *viz.* The respective value of the *form* and *power* of religion: Our Lord's words are remarkable. *JESUS saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what [i. e. according to your own inventions], we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father [not at Jerusalem, or in this or that mountain, but] in SPIRIT and in TRUTH; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. GOD is a SPIRIT, and they that worship HIM, must worship in SPIRIT and in TRUTH. John iv. 21, &c.*

Can your lordship pick your proposition, *viz.*
 “ That the *thing* itself [RELIGION] cannot be
made it belongs to the character opposite to that he is here describing; and indeed is itself opposite to the other terms of reproach there mentioned.

“ preserved

“ preserved among mankind without the *form*,” out of these words, or out of any other words in the new testament? Do they not rather most evidently and expressly declare that *true religion* shall be preserved, and *true worshipers* sought and accepted by GOD without any regard to forms at all?

Your lordship probably may suggest (what has often been said and repeated upon occasion of handling this subject) that “ it is the utmost extravagance and enthusiasm to suppose that our Saviour intended to exclude *all forms* from religion, seeing that he himself instituted *two forms* at least.” — To which I answer :

1. That the forms instituted by our Saviour, are *one* thing, and the *face* and *form* of religion, spoken of by your lordship, quite *another*; if it is not so, your lordship should have told us. If your lordship only means, “ that the *evangelical* thing called religion, cannot be preserved amongst mankind without the *evangelical forms*,” surely it was very needless to refer to the *Heathens*, the *Turks*, and the *Papists* in this behalf. I answer :

2. I receive and comply with the forms instituted by *Christ*, with the utmost reverence; and for the rest, I am of opinion with the excellent

prelate already cited, *viz.* "We must not be
 " *rude*, nor do any thing that is naturally inde-
 " cent in the worship of GOD; this *authority*
 " should *restrain*; but *farther than this*, I doubt
 " not but the *gospel* hath left us *free* *." But
 what is it to be *left free* in this respect, but just
 to pay less or more regard to human forms, as
 we are inclined, without laying any stress upon
 them, or giving them any *importance*, in the af-
 fair of religion? But to answer more punctu-
 ally:

I very much question whether your lord-
 ship's position will be found true, even tho' the
 forms instituted by our Lord himself should be
 taken into the account. We have among us, as
 your lordship knows, a sect of *nominal* christians
 called *Quakers*, who make use of neither of the
 two forms above mentioned. Will your lord-
 ship say that these men "have no religion pre-
 " served amongst them?" It is more than I dare
 affirm, because they tell me very seriously that
 "they have a *spiritual* baptism, and a *spiritual*
 " communion, by which they are firmly persuad-
 " ed they fulfil the command of Christ as effec-
 " tually as we do, who practise the *formal* rites
 " according to the verbal institution." In which,
 tho' I think they are mistaken, and that I could

* *ibid.* vol. VIII. pag. 371⁸

disprove them; yet I dare not condemn them, as I certainly should do by saying that they have no religion preserved amongst them. To their own master they must stand or fall for *me*. In the mean time I observe among the members of this society much seriousness of deportment, benevolence of heart, and a sobriety and circumspection in their manners and conversation, not only extremely edifying in itself, but extremely full of tacit reproach to certain christians with *more* religious forms. All this they ascribe to the influence and operation of the good spirit of God, agreeably to the Scripture-accounts: And if among this people (who have too their religious worship in public assemblies) there is *no religion preserved*, we must, I verily think, abide no longer by the gospel-rule, but judge both men and things hereafter not by their *fruits*, but by their *forms*.

Your lordship, having stated this necessary and essential connexion between the *form* of religion and the thing itself, goes on to say: "And this
 " form *frequently* occurring, in *some* instance or
 " other of it, will be a *frequent* admonition to bad
 " men to repent; and to good men to grow bet-
 " ter; and also be a means of their doing so."

pag. 14.

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Hardly, my lord, if the good archbishop understood the case, who says the gospel left us free [as above] “to the end that the *less* we are tied “to *external observances*, the *more intent* we should “be upon the *spiritual* and *substantial* parts of “religion, the conforming ourselves to the “mind and will of GOD, endeavouring to be like “unto GOD, and to have our *souls* and *spirits* “engaged in those duties we perform to him :”* Which certainly was no good policy in the gospel, if the *form* and *face* of religion has a tendency to beget a *practical sense* of it upon mens hearts : and a greater tendency in proportion to the *frequent* occurrence of this *face* or *form* in *some* instance or other in it ; i. e. if in every such occurrence it is an *admonition* to *bad* men to repent, &c. Bad men are so greatly indisposed to put themselves in the way of such *admonitions*, or to apply them, whenever or however they occur, that it seems quite necessary they should be *tied* to them, whenever their operations are so promising.

And therefore, if, as archbishop *Tillotson* hath stated the case, men are *left free* as to the *face* and *form* of religion, the presumption seems to be, that the *face* and *form* of religion is either wholly void of, or at least much less connected with the *spirit* and *power* of it, than your lordship’s doctrine would make it.

*. Ibid.

Nor indeed will it be found, upon examination, that the archbishop hath at all misrepresented the gospel in this matter.

From our Lord we learn how apt the *religious forms, doctrines, and traditions*, of men are to make the *commandments of GOD* of no effect. *Matth. xv. 1—21. Mark vii. 1, &c.* From *St. Paul*, that observances of this kind had, instead of *forwarding*, greatly *obstructed* his ministry among the *Galatians*, chap. iv. 9, 10, 11. and in his epistle to the *Colossians*, chap. ii. 20, 21, 22. The same apostle speaks of *ordinances after the commandments and doctrines of men*, as means and expedients of men living in the world: that is, living a mere carnal and secular life.*

* I am not forgetful that our divines, in their controversy with the dissenters about ceremonies, have alledged; that the forms and ceremonies abolished or condemned by *Christ and his apostles*, were either, 1. Such as were *rudimental or elementary*, and peculiar to the *Mosaic system*: or 2. Such as were in themselves idolatrous or at least superstitious: But if it is considered what a variety of forms are specified in the several passages commonly referred to; as *vain repetitions, long prayers, long garments, washing of cups, consecrated gifts, observation of days, abstinence from meats, &c.* it may not perhaps be so easy to avail ourselves of this distinction as is commonly imagined: For my own part, I have always considered the reproof in the gospel as extending to mere human doctrines and commandments respecting religion in general: if I am wrong (which is very possible) I will be thankful to him who will set me right.

To this agrees the experience of *reasonable men* in all ages and countries, both before and since the promulgation of Christianity, who have observed that the *number, variety, and frequent occurrence* of forms in religion have been considered by *the generality* as *commutations or compositions* for their vices and iniquities; as something *substituted* in lieu of repentance, and dispensing, from time to time, with the *thing itself*: And accordingly, ever since the gospel hath confirmed this observation by its superior evidence, wise, and good, and reasonable men have complained of the *number and frequency* of forms in religion, as loads and incumbrances upon true Christian edification; and not seldom intimated that they were too often snares and traps to the secular and secure sinner, as well as sometimes to better men; teaching them to depend upon a virtue, and expect an influence from *forms*, which (as they have it not) they cannot impart. How things may be *altered* so, as to make this a *seasonable* doctrine only at *certain times*, as your lordship hath thought fit to suggest, *pag. 16.* we shall have occasion to consider when that passage comes to be examined in its course.

Your lordship's next observation is, that
 "That, which men have accounted religion in
 "the several countries in the world, generally

“ speaking, has had a *great and conspicuous* part
 “ in all *public appearances*, and the *face* of it been
 “ kept up with great reverence throughout all
 “ ranks from the highest to the lowest ; not only
 “ upon occasional solemnities, but also in the
 “ daily course of behaviour.”

In giving instances of this, it is remarkable that your lordship has only mentioned the *ancient Pagan*, the *Mahometan*, and the *Roman-catholick* religions, wholly omitting the *Jewish*, which undoubtedly had as *great and as conspicuous* a part, as well in all *public appearances* as in all ordinary transactions, as any of them. Now, had your lordship specified, or in the gentlest terms referred, to the *great and conspicuous* parts of the *Mosaic* institute, it must have immediately occurred to the hearer or the reader, that *these* great and conspicuous parts were actually and expressly abolished by *Christ*, and his disciples enjoined from thenceforward to lay the great stress of religion upon worshipping GOD in *spirit* and in *truth*.

It is true, your lordship, at a convenient distance, has made mention of the *Jews*, but in what manner, and with what propriety, shall be considered by and by.

In the mean time, my lord, permit me to ask, what fellowship hath Christ with *Belial*, the
Turk,

Turk, or the *Pope*? Hardly so much as he had with *Moses*. What help then can your lordship's argument receive from these instances, unless your lordship could prove that the forms in these three systems had and have a greater tendency to beget practical religion in the hearts, or were more effectual admonitions to bad men to repent, or to good men to grow better, than the forms in other rituals? How the case stands in that respect, let us now inquire.

“ In the heathen world their superstition was
 “ the chief subject of statuary, sculpture, paint-
 “ ing and poetry. It mix'd itself with business,
 “ civil forms, domestic entertainments, and
 “ every part of common life.”

Good my lord, what is all this to us Christians? Will any man say to us, Go ye and do likewise? Should a *masquerade* in the *Hay-market* be advertised in honour of the *nativity*, or a ball at *Ranelagh* to commemorate the *ascension*, what would be thought of your lordship's bench if they did not to a man remonstrate loudly against it? A traveller would hardly now a days be deemed void of superstition, even by the moderate papists, who should pack up among his necessaries a *crucifix* or a *madona* of exquisite sculpture, with a design to pay his devotions to
 it.

it on such solemnities as might fall out during his journey * ?

All, therefore, that, I conceive, your lordship can build upon this fact, is, that “ though the
“ rites themselves were superstitious, yet might
“ they still have a good effect in bringing the
“ thoughts of religion to mens minds, and in
“ being subservient to promote the *reality* and
“ *power* of it.” To which I would humbly answer :

1. That the *reality* and *power* of heathenism was little worth promoting by *any* means : and what the philosophy of those times and countries contributed towards the bettering of the human heart, was founded upon principles (as I doubt not but your lordship very well knows) which

* *Morem mihi habeo, quoquo eam, simulacrum aliquis Dei inter libellos condicum gestare; eique diebus Festis Thure & Mero & aliquando Victimis supplicare;* says *Apuleius*, [Apolog. pag. 296. Lugd. Bat. 1623] at a time when paganism had received its finishing touches from the refining Platonists. The learned Mr. *Warburton* has suggested, on very competent evidence, that *Apuleius's* adversary was a Christian; this evidence is founded on the remarkable contrast between the two men in point of reverence for religious forms; the use and value of which a whole college of *Jesuits* could not set forth with more elegance, pertinance, or colour of reason, than is done in this apology.

derive little honour to the popular religion and forms of worship.

2. That I am very credibly informed by the testimony of *St. Paul* and *St. Peter*, that the heathen superstition had no such good effect. The former of these apostles, writing to the *Ephesians*, says that *the unconverted Gentiles walked in the vanity of their minds, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the LIFE OF GOD, through the ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their heart: and that being past feeling, they gave themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.* Chap. iv. 17, 18, 19.

And lest it should be thought that *these Gentiles* might be no regular observers of forms, the same apostle speaking of *other Gentiles* who were carried away unto dumb idols, even as they were led (that is to say, who were under all the influence of idolatry, and consequently parties in all the forms and superstitions of it) says of them, that they were *fornicators, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners.* 1 Cor. xii. 2. and chap. vi. 9, 10, 11.

The time past of our life, says *St. Peter*, may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles,
when

when * we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable IDOLATRIES: Wherein they think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot. 1 Pet. Chap. iv. 3, 4.

This testimony of the apostle *Peter* is the more considerable, as it proves that these Gentiles were not only under no restraints in these criminal excesses from the forms of their own religion, but even wondered there should be any other religion, which prohibited the same sort of licentiousness: and this was indeed a reflection that would naturally occur to those, who laid so much stress on the form and face of what they accounted religion, as to mix it with business, civil forms, diversions, &c. So much of the face and form could have no other effect but to extinguish the spirit and power of religion, even where the principles of it were much better.

* There is no reason for translating this passage by, *we walked*; the participle *πεπορευμενος* no more agrees with *ημιν* than with *ιθωω*: and *Peter* himself never thus walked: and tho' the apostle might condescend to rank himself with those who had in some degree wrought the will of the Gentiles heretofore, yet would he hardly charge himself with these specific crimes. It would therefore, perhaps, be better to render it indefinitely, *who have walked*: in the *Basil* edition of the Greek Testament, 1543, instead of *πεπορευμενος*, it is *πορευομενος*; and *Curcellæus* (perhaps on better authority) hath put this among his various readings. If this latter is the true reading, the walking is limited to the Gentiles only.

Let us now see whether what the *Mahometans* account religion does any more for them. "They," your lordship observes, "are obliged to short devotions five times between morning and evening."

To this observation I will take the liberty to subjoin a larger portrait of this people and their religion, drawn by the hand of a most elegant, candid and sensible writer, and a clergyman of the church of *England*.

"Their [the *Mahometan*] religion is framed to keep up great outward gravity and solemnity, without begetting the least tincture of wisdom or virtue in the mind. You shall have them at their hours of prayer (which are *four* a day always) addressing themselves to their devotions with the most solemn and critical washings, always in the most public places, where most people are passing; with most lowly and most regular prostrations, and a hollow tone; which are amongst them the great excellencies of prayer. I have seen them, in an affected charity, give money to bird-catchers (who make a trade of it) to restore the poor captives to their natural liberty; and at the same time hold their own slaves in the heaviest bondage. And at other times they will buy flesh to relieve indigent dogs and
" cats :

“ cats: and yet curse you with famine and pestilence, and all the most hideous execrations, in which way these eastern nations have certainly the most exquisite rhetoric of any people upon earth. They know hardly any pleasure but that of the sixth sense. And yet with all this, they are incredibly conceited of their own religion, and contemptuous of that of others: which I take to be the great artifice of the devil to keep them his own. They are a perfect visible comment upon our blessed Lord’s description of the *Jewish* pharisees. In a word, lust, arrogance, covetousness, and the most exquisite hypocrisy complete their character. The only thing that ever I could observe to commend in them, is the outward decency of their carriage, the profound respect they pay to religion and to every thing relating to it, and their great temperance and frugality *.” For which two *moral virtues* the historian may perhaps be thought to have sufficiently accounted without having recourse to the influence of their religious *forms*.

Here, my lord, we seem to have every thing requisite to the *efficacy* of *forms*; here is great gravity and solemnity of appearance, constancy

* Mr. *Maundrel’s* first letter to Mr. *Osborn* of *Exeter* College, at the end of his Journey from *Aleppo* to *Jerusalem*.

and regularity of performance, frequency of occurrence, with a mixture of religion in *most*, if not *all* parts of common life ; and what is the consequence ? Not the least tincture of wisdom or virtue begot in the mind ; an affected charity, indeed, for birds and beasts, but the extremest cruelty to the human kind ; a decent respect for their own religion, but a petulant contempt for *every* religion *but* their own ; and horrid execrations denounced upon those who profess any other. The hearts of these men, so lowly, so solemn, so punctual and so critical in their devotions, are still the receptacles of lust, arrogance, avarice, and the most exquisite hypocrisy.

From the *Turks* then your lordship's argument can receive no aid ; perhaps we may succeed better among the *Roman Catholicks*.—" In
 " Roman Catholick countries, people cannot pass
 " a day without having RELIGION recalled to
 " their thoughts by some or other memorial of
 " it ; by some ceremony or public RELIGIOUS
 " FORM occurring in their way : besides their
 " frequent holidays, the short prayers they are
 " daily called to, and the occasional devotions
 " enjoined by confessors."

This, my lord, is the passage, which (taken along with your lordship's positions above laid down)

down) may well give occasion of triumph to the papists, and of grief and resentment to all good christians and true protestants: For if true religion cannot be preserved among men without forms; and if the frequent occurrence of forms in some instance or other, afford so many admonitions to bad men to repent, and to good men to grow better, the consequence must be, that the Romish religion, having more of these instances and more frequent occurrences of forms, is better than other religions, which have fewer of these instances and occurrences.

Nor is any thing saved by the intervention of the *Pagans* and *Turks*, as if your lordship intended we should make no other use of the *Roman Catholics* than of the other two; what your lordship had called *superstition* in the former, becomes in this period, RELIGION, and RELIGIOUS FORMS, which the papists pretending, in their system, to connect with Christianity, and your lordship giving no hint that this is no more than a pretence, a plain reader must needs take this as spoken by your lordship of the *means* and *memorials* of TRUE RELIGION, and will accordingly consider these as recommended to his practice and imitation.

Here it is likely your lordship may remonstrate, and say, that you have expressly distinguished

guished the *superstition* of the *Roman Catholics* from their *religion* in the very next words. The words are these. "BY THESE MEANS" [i. e., by these memorials, ceremonies, public religious forms, frequent holidays, short prayers and devotions enjoined by confessors] "their superstition sinks deep into the minds of the people, and [by these means] their religion also into the minds of such among them as are serious and well disposed."

But if your lordship holds with the church of *England*, (as I must needs believe you do) that the *memorials, ceremonies, &c.* of popery are *superstitious* and *fond* things, the *means* and the *superstition*, in that case, are one and the same thing, and to be considered in this sentence no otherwise than as a common and convenient *vehicle* of religion, necessary to *sink it deep into the minds of the serious and well-disposed.*

And does your lordship think, if *superstition* be once allowed to do this good service for true religion, that it would not quickly lose that invidious name, and be called (as indeed it would well deserve) by the more respectable appellation of *necessary and important externals*? And then who would not lament the fate and the folly of unhappy *England* for throwing so many of these valuable *memorials* to the *wales* and to the *brats*?

Who

Who would not deplore her blindness in being guided by a rule of faith and edification which gives her authority to treat *these* memorials, and every thing like unto them, in the very manner she has done?

I am not, my lord, of the number of those who deny to any people their just commendations in the regular practice and reverend profession of their religion, because it differs from *mine*. But, to speak my heart's thoughts, I cannot afford to bestow any more or any other praise on the *papists*, than just what the ingenious Mr. *Maundrell* above-cited hath given to the *Turks*, viz. That, generally speaking, a profound respect is paid by them to their own sort of religion, and to every thing relating to it. But if there is any tincture of true wisdom, virtue, or piety in the individuals of that communion (as I trust there may be a great deal) I will be free to say, they derive it not either from the *genius*, or the *modes* of *POPERY*, which I hold with the great and good archbishop *Tillotson* to be, “ in “ the *whole complex* of it, a corruption of the “ whole design of Christianity *.” Whoever among them acts according to the gospel of Christ, deserts, in that instance at least, the genuine principles of the church of *Rome*, which,

* Bishop *Burnet*'s sermon at his funeral, p. 9.

being adhered to and followed as far as she would carry her votaries, will leave no man one moral or christian principle to act upon; all faith and duty, as is most notorious, being resolved, in that church, under the pretence of infallibility, into an implicit belief of, and blind obedience to the *doctrines and commandments of men.*

As to particular papists, whatever their private sentiments or personal dispositions may be, it is well known, they must no longer continue to conduct themselves by *these*, than holy church forbears to call them to her service on some particular emergency; when that happens, all private obligations of justice and mercy, must at once evaporate. Of this that unhappy prince *James II.* has been given as an example by more than one of our historians. And if to this there is one exception in the whole range of popery, if there is a man, who, at the hazard of the censures of his church, will venture to do justice or shew mercy to a protestant, upon the true Christian principle of disinterested charity, I will open my arms to embrace him as a brother, and require no other proof that he is no more a papist than the musti of *Aleppo.*

It would be well indeed for *Popery* if it could stand a fair trial with *Mahometism.* The mussul-
man

man is as clear of idolatry in his worship, and is so far honest in his religious malice, as he has the precept and example of his prophet for propagating his religion by fire and sword, and for treating all those with execration who do not conform to it; but what name is bad enough for those who would fix these infamous characters and principles on the meek and benevolent *Jesus*, the gracious Saviour of the world, who came into it to seek and to save that which was lost, and not to destroy men's lives, but to preserve them, whether they would receive him or not?

The excellent prelate so often quoted, and who had studied popery to the very entrails, was so far from your lordship's opinion *that its external forms sunk religion deep in mens minds*, that "he thought (as his right reverend eulogist
 " has informed us) the idolatry and superstition
 " of the church of *Rome* did enervate true piety
 " and morality; and that their cruelty was such
 " a contradiction to the meekness of *Christ*, and
 " to that love and charity which he made the
 " character and distinction of his disciples and
 " followers, that he resolved to sacrifice every
 " thing, but a good conscience, in a cause for
 " which he was resolved, if it should come to
 " extremities, to be a sacrifice himself."

But perhaps these opinions were only *fashions* of the times, seasonable enough for the days of those zealous prelates; possibly *we* may know better, and have some reason to believe that popery is become a *tame* and *peaceable* *, as well as an *edifying* superstition. Believe it who will for me, I shall still continue to make it a petition in my daily prayers, that neither *we* nor our posterity may have occasion to try.

Here it may be said that the *edification* is not placed to the account of *superstition*, by your lordship, but simply to the *number* and *frequency*

* So Mr. *Worthington*, *Essay on the scheme and conduct, &c. of man's redemption*, p. 156. To the fact a satisfactory answer has been given, in a small piece intitled, "The true Spirit of Popery displayed," printed 1746; and another more at length, in a pamphlet printed in the same year, *viz.* "Popery always the same."—But here it may be proper to rectify a small mistake in the first page of the former of these pieces. The excellent author of the *Considerations on the state of the world, &c.* there cited, has indeed expressed his hopes, that the cruel spirit both of *Popery* and *Mahometism* may be abated; and for the ground of those hopes with respect to the *Papists* he cites Mr. *Worthington*, as above, and, with respect to the *Mahometans*, *Sale's* notes on the *Koran*; and consequently is no farther answerable for the facts than these authorities will support them. For the rest, this honest and worthy writer, not attending to Dr. *Law's* context and reference, has put Mr. *Worthington's* words into the mouth of Mr. *Sale*, who is only an evidence for the *Mahometans*, and a better, I doubt, than the *papists* have to produce.

of these *memorials*. If this is your lordship's meaning, I humbly apprehend it should have been differently expressed; and some instance given of a religious system with an equal number and variety of rites which are void of superstition; but such an instance, I believe, would be hard to find; and after all I am afraid that when we want to illustrate any thing of this kind, we must still bring our examples from Roman-catholick countries*.

And therefore, to do as much justice to this plea as may be, let us ask, how comes it that these memorials are so *numerous* and *frequent* in Roman-catholick countries? The plain reason of which appears to be the *frequent* and *numerous* swarms of ecclesiasticks in these countries, who would have nothing to do if they were not thus employed, and (what would be worse to them than that) who would have no pretence to amass and appropriate to themselves those sumptuous palaces and large possessions they enjoy,

* One instance of this we have indeed in our own country exhibited in *Deacon's* catechisms; but this performance having in it "rather *more* foppery and "superstition, than is to be found in the *popish* ritual," will not help in the present exigency. They who desire to see an abridgement of this work, may find a very useful one in Dr. *Middleton's* preface to his *Remarks on two Pamphlets, &c.*

if they could not persuade the people that their function was necessary to keep up the *sense* of religion in their minds by this variety in the *form* and *face* of it.

I lay no stress here, my lord, upon the superstitious nature of the rites which these men perform. Some of *their* usages may be as innocent and as edifying as some of *ours*; and whether they are or no, they have that reputation, and must have it among those who would edify by them.

What I insist upon is, that these *memorials* could not be so *frequently occurring in some instance or other*, without a suitable number of men who have nothing else to do but to ply the people with them; and who are accordingly set free for this purpose not only from family-cares, but from all public charges besides.

Now the account we have of these men, even from serious, well disposed and sensible persons in these very countries, is, that a large majority of them are idle and useless drones, and too often worse; that they are many of them intolerable incumbrances on the liberty and industry of much better men than themselves; that they occasion great inconveniencies and disorders in private families, even by the influence of these *memorials*;

memorials; and that, upon the whole, the edification of their ministry is in no reasonable proportion to the scandal of their lives.

Perhaps, my lord, it might be possible to devise a ritual as full of *memorials* and circumstantials as the *Roman*, and which might have nothing of what your lordship may call superstition in it: But if still we must have a proportionable number of men to discharge the offices prescribed in it, how shall we avoid these grievances, occasioned, as it should seem, by a multitude of such men? The ecclesiasticks of the popish church are certainly bound to good behaviour by as strict and solemn oaths, professions, subscriptions, vows, and rules of their several orders, as it is possible to lay upon human agents. And yet, all it seems, without the desired effect.

Upon the whole, my lord, the more I consider these instances, the less am I able to conceive for what purpose your lordship referred to them, or what practical use (consistent with our christian profession) we can make of them.

The externals of paganism have no better name given them in the New Testament than *abominable idolatries*; and from these what your lordship calls the *memorials* of popery, have, the

very most of them, been derived by very competent judges, and in a very legitimate pedigree. These then are equally useless to us: Were they ever so full of edification, the very cast and temper of christianity prohibits the adoption of them; they *are the traditions and commandments of men*; and what can we contrive that will be equivalent to them in *number and frequency*, which will not be liable to the same objection?

The *Turkish* washings and other circumstantials partake more of the *Jewish* formality: But this, your lordship knows, is gone, never to be recalled by *christians*. Their prayers in public places, and where most people are passing, have a censure from our blessed Lord, which will for ever discredit the like practice among *his* disciples.

If your lordship only meant in general to suggest that our religion should have a *great and conspicuous* part as well as theirs, we must call for your lordship's authority, for this, not from the third or fourth centuries, but from the Scriptures. If this was required of christians, it is strange that our Lord should promise his especial presence where only TWO or THREE were gathered together in his name. If this was to be ordered by councils, fathers, and

and bishops in ages posterior to the apostles, why should our Lord lay all the stress on worshipping God in *spirit* and in *truth*, i. e. according to the *word of God*? John xvii. 17. Or why should he direct his hearers to go and learn the meaning of those words of God in the prophet, I will have mercy and not sacrifice? *Mat. ix. 13.*

Again, if a *great* and *conspicuous* part in religion was necessary, why did not the apostles take the appointment of it upon themselves, or rather why did they say so many things to discourage such appointment? To what purpose was Stephen's observation that the *most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands* *? why should St. Paul add to this observation, that *God is not worshipped or ministered to with mens hands, as though he needed any thing* †? Why should he observe that *the kingdom of God is not meat and drink* ‡, i. e. is of a different nature from that kingdom which *stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings and CARNAL ORDINANCES IMPOSED until the time of REFORMATION* §? Why should these men say all this, if *after* this time of reformation, *other* magnificent temples, *other* conspicuous ordinances, *other*

* Acts vii. 48. † Chap. xvii. 25. ‡ Rom. xiv. 17. § Heb. ix. 10.

sumptuous ministrations and services of mens hands were to be *imposed* as necessary to preserve religion among mankind ?

The spirit and tenor of what Christ and his apostles taught in this matter, is not only so uniform and consistent throughout with the rest of the christian dispensation, but is so fully justified in point of wisdom by the product of a contrary spirit in the christian church, as for ever to discredit the idle pretence, that the simplicity of the christian worship, enjoined and implied in the gospel, was only accommodated to the beginnings of it ; to the times of poverty and distress. Was it not as easy for the apostles to have provided for *better* times, if *other* provisions were necessary for *other* times ? Did they not foresee what the exigencies of future times would be ? Have not the apostles said every thing that may point out the *spirit*, the *ordinances*, the *corruptions*, the *cruelty* of the church of *Rome*, and even the very *impostor* at the head of it ? And can any one doubt but they would have precluded all this, and regulated the plan of the christian church by a precise and authentic ritual, if *more* of this kind had been either necessary or expedient than what they have left behind them in their epistles ?

Alas, my lord, they found by too sorrowful experience the sad effects of the pride and hypocrisy in which an attachment to and reverence for *conspicuous* externals ended; they had sufficient warning from their heavenly master, and were not without a measure of sagacity themselves to discover, that the like causes would always have the like effects; and were not likely to set religion once more upon a bottom which had so miserably failed. It is too evident, I doubt, for the justification of these latter ages, that they never thought of this *great* and *conspicuous* superstructure, as in the least expedient for, or even void of mischief to the christian church; and if their successors had contented themselves to have enjoyed and left it in its original simplicity, there would, I am persuaded, by this time have been both more christians in the world, and better sorts of them, than our later *ecclesiastical polities* have produced.

And now, my lord, after so much suggested by your lordship in favour of the *Roman Catholic* religion, it was natural to expect your lordship, in speaking of our reformation, should throw the balance pretty strongly in favour of *that*, by a full and concise representation of the errors and corruptions which gave occasion to it:

What

What your lordship has thought fit to say on that head is, that “our reformers considering
 “ that some of these observances were in them-
 “ selves *wrong* and *superstitious*, and others of
 “ them *made subservient* to the purposes of su-
 “ perstition, abolished them.”

Why truly, my lord, *this is no good report that we hear of these things*, but neither is it a very bad one. There may be some room to doubt, whether it be quite bad enough to bear our reformers out in this *abolition*, especially of those things which only *might be made subservient* to the purposes of superstition; for these very observances themselves being in their turn *subservient* to the *purposes* of true religion, it might be asked, who made our reformers judges in so critical a case? If the observances of popery were really *means of sinking religion deep in the minds of serious and well-disposed persons*, was it a sufficient cause to separate a whole nation from the church in possession, that some of these observances were *esteemed* by our reformers to be superstitious? Is the church of *England* herself contented with this measure from the dissenters, who have over and over objected to some of *our* observances in words full as strong as these of your lordship? And how have they been answered? Why, we say, that admit this to be the case, *viz.* “ that some of our cere-
 “ monies

“ monies or observances are wrong and super-
 “ stitious ;” yet is not this a sufficient cause of
 separation ; such a cause as will acquit them of
 the guilt of schism, unless they can also prove
 these observances to be *sinful* ; which, I trow, it
 will be hard to prove of any thing which is a
 means of promoting true religion.

An ingenious gentleman, and one, who, if I
 mistake not, has full as much respect for *external*
forms as they deserve, seems to me to have put
 this affair upon a very different footing, in some
considerations of a later date than your lordship’s
 charge.

“ Indeed,” says he, “ if idolatry was to be
 “ now rooted out as it was in the reign of *Ed-*
 “ *ward VI.* and an innumerable multitude of
 “ other corruptions, and those of the most hei-
 “ nous nature, to be removed, or reformed, the
 “ secular powers, in case the clergy could not
 “ be persuaded to examine their own state,
 “ would be excusable, and something more than
 “ excusable, in doing it for them, and in rescu-
 “ ing religion from such abominations, even in
 “ opposition, not only to the majority, but to
 “ the whole body of the clergy *.”

* Free and impartial Considerations on the free and
 candid Disquisitions, pag. 4.

This is honourable to, and a full justification of our reformers. Instead of some *wrong* and *superstitious* observances, and others *subservient to the purposes* of superstition, there were, it seems, *idolatry* and *an innumerable multitude* of other *corruptions* and *abominations* of the *most heinous nature* to be rooted out; which, surely, was enough in all conscience to justify a reformation by the interposition of *any* class of men.

But now, my lord, on the supposition that your lordship has told us the *whole* truth, how will this gentleman come at his conclusion? If the observances of popery were barely *wrong*, *superstitious*, or *tending that way*, I greatly suspect this *considerer* would have thought the *secular* powers a little *premature* in their interposition, since he seems to be pretty clear that our *secular* reformers are only to be justified on the supposition that things were in the disorder he hath represented.

On the other hand, my lord, this gentleman's premisses will equally distress your lordship in their turn; for if the memorials and observances of popery are no better than *idolatry*, *corruptions*, and *abominations* of the *most heinous nature*, by what kind of operation will they become the *means* of making religion, as

distinguished from superstition, sink deep into the minds of the serious and well-disposed? Your lordship goes on :

“ Our reformers (having abolished the observances before mentioned) reduced the form of religion to great simplicity, and enjoined no more particular rules, nor left any thing more of what was external in religion, than was, *in a manner*, necessary to preserve a sense of religion itself upon the minds of the people.”

Not quite *so many* rules or externals, I should think, if what goes before and what follows be true : But to let that pass as none of my business ; your lordship by this account of our *rules* and *externals* seems to bear extremely hard on great numbers of serious and, to all appearance, well-disposed persons.

Your lordship has been reminded above of a people, professing christianity, called quakers* :

Besides

* It is so far out of all *orthodox* rule to allow the *quakers* to be christians, that I am right glad, on this occasion, to borrow a little authority from a late sensible writer, whose judgment no man will call in question who has any tenderness for his own. The writer, I mean, is the reverend Mr. Adams, the author of a late essay in answer to Mr. Hume's essay on Miracles. This Mr. Hume, it seems, lays claim

Besides these, are many thousands of protestant dissenters in this kingdom: There is too the body of the *Scottish* nation, and great numbers in protestant countries and communions abroad, among whom the form of religion is reduced to much *greater* simplicity, who have not *so many* particular rules, and have *much less* of what is external in religion, than what was left us by our reformers, nor have they any thing equivalent to many of our rules and externals.

Shall we say of these that they have not a sense of religion itself preserved upon their minds? How is this to be proved? and who among us will undertake it? That is to say, who will undertake to shew in *what manner* our rules and externals are *necessary to preserve a sense of religion upon the human mind*, which, I suppose, in respect of impressions from external religion,

to the *quakers* as fellow-professors with him in the mystery of *Deism*. To which Mr. *Adams* answers, "It is certain that the *quakers* profess the belief of christianity as universally as any sect whatever. And what right has the author [Mr. *Hume*] to charge a whole body of men with such flagrant "insincerity." *Essay*, pag. 130. In return for this little aid, and to make some amends for mentioning his name in a pamphlet whose subject is not of the *respectable* sort, I do hereby give that gentleman, my poor, but most hearty and sincere thanks for this and every other passage in his accurate and unanswerable *essay*.

is, in most of the common people of all denominations, framed and capacitated pretty much alike?

I will not be positive what some of our high churchmen may have asserted and maintain'd in this matter of *rules* and *externals*, because I have not all the books of our very warm apologists at hand: And I know too that some of the warmest of them have been disclaimed and given up by others who are warm enough themselves*. Of our *externals* these defenders have said, that they are *innocent*, *significant*, and *expedient*; *conducive*, and (perhaps some of them may have added) *necessary* to the *bene esse* of the visible church: But to make them *in any manner necessary* to preserve a sense of religion upon the minds of the people, is a strain of merit, which, I fancy, very few of our highest churchmen have ventured to ascribe to them.

It should seem, however, that our earlier reformers themselves had no such notion of this *use* and *virtue* of our forms and externals: The remaining histories of those times afford us sufficient proofs that some of the best and wisest of them would not, if they could have help'd it, have left us *so much*. And even such of them

* So *Montague*, *Heylin*, *Thorndike* and *Parker* are given up by *Dr. Nichol.* Defence, pag. 168, 169.

as laboured the other way, have left reasons of a very different sort from this suggested by your lordship.

In the convocation of 1562, it was debated, as we are told by bishop *Burnet*, whether the greatest part of our festivals, the cross in baptism, kneeling at the communion, the surplice and organs, were to be retained or dropt. And the question, it seems, was carried *for* these externals but by one vote of a proxy, whose principal, it is probable, knew little of the debate; and of those who were *present* the majority were *against* the rites †.

We likewise learn from the same right reverend historian, that the single reason for retaining these forms, entered in the record of these proceedings, is, that “the laying them aside, would be contrary to the *authorized* book of *Common-prayer*.” Whence it appears that even they who opposed the abrogation of these things, did not so immediately think of their necessity to *preserve a sense of religion upon the minds of the people*, as of the danger of a *præmunire*, of which this convocation stood in great awe, as appears by the postscript subjoined to their subscription of the XXXIX. articles*.

† Hist. Reformat. vol. III. pag. 302, 303.

* *Bennet's* essay, pag. 198.

Concerning one of these *forms* there is a remarkable passage in one of bishop Taylor's books, which may help us to conceive the value put upon things of this sort by the church of *England* herself. "There is reason to celebrate and honour," says he, "the wisdom and prudence of the church of *England*, which hath in all her offices retained but one ritual, or ceremony, that is not of *divine* ordinance, or *apostolical* practice, and that is the *cross* in baptism *."

Now the *sign of the cross*, simply and of itself, that is to say, without some explanation, can, I should think, convey or preserve no sense of *any thing* upon the mind; and accordingly the church informs us that this *sign of the cross* is made "in token that the person baptized shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ *crucified*," &c. and indeed it must be owned, that if it is an effectual token of this, the sense of religion to be preserved by it is very *important*.

And yet, strange to hear, the church herself declares that "without doubt a child baptized *without it* is lawfully and sufficiently baptized." So that there is no *necessity*, we see, for *this form* to preserve the sense of any thing.

* *Ductor Dubitantium*, pag. 668.

I do not pretend to understand bishop *Taylor's* suggestion that *all the rest* of our rituals or ceremonies are either of *divine ordinance* or *apostolical practice*: But however that may be, there is *one even of these*, that, it should seem, the church has *less* value for still, or lays, at least, less stress upon it.

For tho' the surplice is often mentioned in our ritual, on some occasion or other, yet are we on none of these occasions told of what the surplice is *typical* or *significative*; and Dr. *Nichols* is extremely angry with the puritans for pretending that this garment is used by the church in token of *purity of life*, "because, says he, it "is a thing which she *never once mentions* *;" and so leaves the people to gather any or no sense of religion from this form, as they think fit.

But is then the sense of religion preserved upon the minds of the people by these rules and externals? Nothing like it. "A great part of "this is *neglected* by the generality among us: "For instance, the service of the church not "only upon *common* days, but also upon *Saints* "days; and several other things might be "mentioned." pag. 15.

* Defence, pag. 29;.

Was I not in the right, my lord, to conjecture that our reformers might leave us *not so many* rules or externals as are *necessary*? How should our people have fallen into this deplorable neglect, if these *means, memorials* or *admonitions* had been sufficiently *frequent*?

Permit me however to observe that your lordship and the ingenious author of the *Considerations* above-cited, are not at all better agreed about *this* fact, than the other concerning the popish errors discarded by our reformers.

This gentleman having noted that a party in the nation [meaning *the dissenters*] have all along had some exceptions to our public service; goes on to say, “ But then there is *another party* [the “ members of the church] far more consider-
“ able than *they*, who, in general; are not only
“ satisfied with, but even FOND OF our present
“ liturgy and constitution*.” How is this to be reconciled? can it be said that our people *in general* are *fond of* what the *generality* of them neglect.

Here again too, my lord, your lordship and this gentleman, by adopting each other's premisses, must lose your several conclusions: Your

* Free and impartial Considerations, pag. 6.

lordship thinks it “highly seasonable to instruct the people in the importance of *external religion*.”

More seasonable! *how*, upon account of this neglect? But why so, if this gentleman’s later intelligence be true, *viz.* that the people are really *fond* of our *externals* already?

On the other hand, if the service of the church is neglected by the generality among us, it certainly cannot be so very *dangerous* to make alterations in it as this gentleman would have us believe.

However, my lord, I am ready to close with your lordship in this representation, rather than the *Considerer*; and upon occasion of your lordship’s mentioning the people’s *neglect* of the service of the church upon *Saints* days, I will trouble your lordship with an observation of my own, tending to illustrate the value of external religion.

Our common people, it is true, pay little *religious* regard to the feasts of *All Angels* or *All Saints*, but yet I have observed them to celebrate some of our *protestant* festivals, as well as some others of popish extraction, particularly *Shrovetide*, with the several solemnities of *horse-racing*, *bull-baiting*, *cock-fighting*, &c. and with
all

all the ceremonies of *drinking, gaming, swearing,* and *lewdness* incident to, and inseparable from, entertainments of that kind.

Among our politer parties, indeed, pleasure is the employment of every day; and they are free enough from superstition in *this* article to esteem every day alike: Whereas the vulgar always take the advantage of the *church's* appointment for their times of idleness and revelling; and I know, at this hour, several very worthy and very zealous members of the church of *England*, who scruple not to affirm, that the riotous and licentious pastimes of *Christmas, Easter* and *Whitsuntide* contribute more to corrupt the minds and debauch the morals of our common people, than any other assignable cause whatever. If this be true, it were certainly more for the credit of our common christianity that the festivals should be expunged from our books and calendars, than that these brutal, paganish, profane, and therefore wicked pastimes and disorders should claim any alliance, or have any connexion with the solemn commemorations of the birth and resurrection of the spotless and undefiled Saviour of the world.

Upon what grounds the apostolick authority for such forms is alledged, may be judged in part from the tenor of the Scriptures above-

quoted, as well as from others, testifying the disposition of St. *Paul* towards occasional solemnities of that kind.

And there is the stronger presumption that they have no such authority, in that we seldom or never find them enjoined, but we find them also in company with large indulgences to the carnal man; as if the more *conspicuous externals* in religion could not subsist without the aid of the sensual appetite.

Thus, as your lordship has observed, “the *externals* of paganism mixed themselves with the *diversions* of those days.” In popish countries, the people are politically enough prepared for and reconciled to the formalities of Lent, by the licentiousness of a preceding Carnival. Nor have we of the † *reformed* church of *England* been entirely free from this wretched policy. It was once the humour of our great churchmen to magnify *externals*, and to render them as *conspicuous* as they could on all occasions: The nation at that time was not universally disposed to come into this; and some men of reputation enough set themselves

† “The christian world is now divided into the *Reformed* and *Unreformed*: OR RATHER into those **WHO ARE NOT** and those who are members of the *church of Rome.*” Mr. *Jortin.*

to oppose it : In the exigency of her affairs the church bethought herself of purchasing the favour of the people by a *book of sports* : And how far that may have contributed in its day, to perpetuate the *festivities* of these solemn times, and to wear out the *religious* use of them, may be worth the inquiry of those whom it concerns.

Your lordship proceeds : “ Thus they [the people] have no customary admonitions, no public call to recollect the thoughts of God and religion from one Sunday to another.”

And why have they not, my lord ? There is a most express law for it. “ All priests and deacons are to say daily the morning and evening prayer, either privately or openly, not being let by SICKNESS or some other URGENT cause. And the curate that ministreth in every parish church or chapel, being at home, and not being otherwise reasonably hindered, shall say the same in the parish church or chapel where he ministreth, and shall cause a bell to be tolled thereunto a convenient time before he begin, that the people may come to hear God’s word, and to pray with him.”

It is not then the fault of the people, if they have not a *customary admonition* or *publick call*

from one Sunday to another : The *curate* in any parish cannot be *reasonably* hindered every one of the six intermediate days, and every week in the year. And yet we are told by a gentleman who seems to have taken some pains to be informed, “ that in ten thousand churches there “ are not five hundred where a bell *ever* tolls, “ or where morning and evening prayer are said “ upon a *week-day* throughout the year *.”

This gentleman’s account of this neglect seems to be so reasonable and probable, and at the same time so different from what your lordship has suggested, that I will take the liberty to give it at length :

“ To what end, says he, was such an *ap-*
 “ *pointment* set down in the book of common-
 “ prayer ? Did our mother the church vainly
 “ boast of her own piety, or pretend to a *form*
 “ *of godliness, without the power thereof* ? No,
 “ truly, the mother meant well ; but her sons
 “ and daughters are to blame. Like people,
 “ like priest. But indeed, were the clergy
 “ never so willing to discharge their duty in this
 “ respect, not many are the places where they
 “ can have any sort of congregation to join
 “ with them. But is not the *length* of the ser-

* *Virtue Revived, or Britain’s Fall protracted, &c.*
 by a pluralist. Printed for *Oswald*, 1747. pag. 4.

“ vice the unhappy occasion of this neglect?
 “ Would not the people’s attendance upon the
 “ public worship take up *too much* of their *time*,
 “ and too greatly *interfere* with their *secular*
 “ affairs? Does it not cause a *weariness*, and
 “ become *tedious* to delicate ears? Is not the
 “ cold sometimes so piercing, as to make it
 “ *painful* to tender constitutions, to be so long
 “ detained from the fire, especially to hear
 “ psalms and chapters they can almost say by
 “ rote *?”

Your lordship sees that this gentleman is of opinion that there is *too much* of our externals, and that great inconveniencies arise from the *length* of our service, to those who should edify by it; and to this also agrees the author of the *Considerations* before-mentioned †. What then must we think would be the case if those *memorials* were as *frequent* as in *Roman-Catholick* countries?—Our author goes on :

* To these reasons for this common neglect may be added another, viz. the aukward times of saying morning and evening prayer in most places: Ten or eleven o’clock in the forenoon, and two or three in the afternoon, the time when tradesmen and mechanics are in the very throng of their honest labour.

† “ You are not indeed singular in your opinion of
 “ the *too great length* of our service. And to tell
 “ you the truth, my own sentiments upon this head
 “ are pretty concordant with yours.” *Fr. and Imp.*
Considerations, pag. 41.

“ Then again the clergy have journeys and
 “ visits to make, are idle, are not devout, have
 “ their diversions, do not reside upon their
 “ cures, are *hindered*, sometimes *reasonably*, of-
 “ tender without reason. So that, by general
 “ consent of both priest and people, as to any
 “ outward or public acknowledgment of a Deity
 “ for six days out of seven, a foreigner, that
 “ should make an abode with us only for six
 “ days, might have reason to doubt, in the
 “ greatest part of *England*, whether the inha-
 “ bitants of that happy island did, in truth, be-
 “ lieve the existence of that gracious and al-
 “ mighty Being.”

Now, my lord, which way soever we consi-
 der this compounded cause of *neglect*, we cannot
 avoid the question, By whom is it to be redres-
 sed? If the fault be in the body of the clergy,
 by whom are *they* to be reformed? If in the
nature and *frame* of our present forms, by whom
 are these to be amended?

So far indeed as the clergy are accessaries to
 this neglect, it is extremely right in your lord-
 ship to lay it before them. But what would
 your lordship have the clergy to do or say in
 this case? Let them insist as long and as loudly
 as ever they will on the *importance of external*
religion, I am persuaded, their rhetoric and their
 argu-

arguments will be in vain, whilst the people find themselves *incommoded* by the present state of *their own* externals: They will appeal to the *reasonable* and *merciful* design of the gospel, and plead their christian liberty against all human ordinances which not only edify not, but are even burdensome: And they will have reason.

We are now arrived at your lordship's account of the importance of *external religion*, as grounded on the Scriptures.

Before I could procure a sight of your lordship's printed charge, a friend who had seen it, or heard it read (I forget which) had given me a general but pretty just account of this part of it, concerning the *importance of external religion*; which set me upon amusing myself with conjectures by what kind of gospel authority your lordship would revive the credit of a doctrine, which of late years, had not had many abettors among protestants.

I had often thought with myself that the church of *England* had been more pressed upon this matter of *externals* in her controversy with the dissenters, than upon any other article: and I cannot say, that the answers given by our apologists have convinced me that our adherence to some specific rites in our church, in a sort of

contempt of the good effects which might be hoped for from dropping them, is very edifying or very laudable.

Our church claims a power of decreeing rites and ceremonies in her twentieth article, without exhibiting her scriptural warrant for it in any copies of these articles published by authority, that I know of; unless the vice-chancellor of *Oxford's imprimatur* may be allowed to give a public sanction to Mr. *Welchman's* edition of them. Mr. *Rogers's* book indeed carries in its front a pretence to the *lawful authority of the church of England*; but as there is no evidence what that authority was, or how obtained, there is room to doubt; besides, *Rogers*, in explaining the authority of the church with respect to *controversies of faith*, says that this authority is given to the church, and to EVERY MEMBER OF SOUND JUDGMENT in the same*; which, I doubt, will extend the freedom of every member to the usage of ceremonies, *a fortiori*; contrary to Mr. *Welchman's* account, who restrains the authority, in both branches, to those *quos penes est ecclesiastica auctoritas*.

Under this clause, concerning rites and ceremonies, Mr. *Welchman* has referred to *Esther ix.*

* On the XXth article, pag. 103. edit. 1725.

27, 28. and to *John* x. 22, 23. † to which *Dr. Nichols* has added 1 *Maccab.* iv. 56. *

The passage of *Esther* informs us that the *Jews*, in commemoration of their deliverance from the slaughter projected by *Haman*, instituted the feast *Purim* [of lots] and ordained that it should be kept and remembered by the whole people of the *Jews* at an appointed time of the year.—The dedication of the altar by *Judas* and his brethren, and the ordinance for celebrating that incident from year to year, is a fact of the same sort, and the inference commonly drawn from histories is, that the *Jewish* had, and consequently the Christian church has, the authority spoken of in the article.

But I very much question the solidity of this reasoning; for when it is considered that the former of these feasts was appointed by *Esther* and *Mordecai* only, it should seem that the *Jewish church* had about as much to do in this affair as our church has in the appointment of our state-holidays of *Nov. 5th*, *May 29th*, &c. and how much that is, may be seen in the several acts of parliament relating to those days, and his majesty's orders set before the forms of prayer appointed for them.

† XXXIX. *Articuli Eccles. Anglic.* pag. 22.

* *Defence*, pag. 307.

In the latter case, *Judas* and his brethren with the *whole congregation of Israel* ordained, &c. v. 59. but how far our divines, and particularly Mr. *Welchman*, would admit either of these to be the sense in which the word *church* is to be taken in the 20th article, I cannot take upon me to say: “By the power of the church [says the learned Mr. *White*, one of the latest advocates], “to decree rites and ceremonies, is “meant a right in the pastors and governors “thereof to ordain and appoint such things, so “as to make it *ordinarily* the duty of the people “to conform to them*.” Which Mr. *White* must mean exclusively of the right and authority of the civil powers, or he will not get clear of his adversaries objections: And if Mr. *White* will not admit the civil powers into his definition of the church which decrees rites and ceremonies, much less will he take into it the *whole congregation*, because that would be going into the enemies quarters for good and all †.

These precedents, therefore, are neither of them for our purpose, except they may receive

* Defence of three letters, pag. 10.

† Dr. *Nichols* or his translator [for he did not live to translate his book so far himself. vid. *Pierce's* vindication, preface] expresses himself with more room.—“They who have been at the HELM of ecclesiastical affairs have instituted.—Have not we as “much power.” Def. pag. 306.

aid from the subsidiary passage in *John*, which, as we have it in our translation, informs us that *Jesus* was walking in *Solomon's* porch at the time of the feast of the *dedication* and when it was winter; and from that circumstance our commentators determine this to have been the feast instituted by the *Maccabees*: for otherwise the *Jews* had divers *Encœnia*, and the word *Χειμων* may possibly denote only a *storm*, as in *Acts* xxvii. 20.

Well but what of this? “Why,” says Dr. *Nichols*, “this feast was honoured with our Lord’s own presence.” How *honoured*? Did our Lord join in the celebration of it, or in any part of it? The context says not a word of *that*. Our Lord *honoured* the *pharisees* with his presence so far as to eat with some of them: It is great odds but at such a time there might be some *washing of cups and platters*, &c. But will it follow that he did any honour to these traditions by his presence?

The plain truth is, our blessed Lord took no exceptions to times, places, or persons, when, where, and among whom he had a prospect of doing good; and I should think that cause not over-stocked with merits, which wants to draw his appearance among the *Jews*, at a time when great numbers were assembled together, into a

precedent for christian conformity to human rites.

And this consideration will, I apprehend, abate the force of what the pious and learned bishop *Burnet* has offered in behalf of this clause in the XXth article, with respect to our Saviour's conversation among the *Jews*, where he has certainly strained *one* point to favour the church, and that is by applying our Saviour's observation *Matth. xxiii. 23.*—*And not to have left the other undone, to ritus and lesser matters in general* *.

Our blessed Lord is there speaking of the case of tything *only*, and minute and insignificant as those articles may seem to be, about which the pharisees and scribes were so exact, yet had they an express and positive law for tything them *all*, namely, *Levit. xxvii. 30.* *And ALL the tythe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S; it is holy unto the Lord.* A case widely different from that of *rites and lesser matters*, of which the law makes no mention.

For the rest, tho' this excellent prelate has, with a vein of piety and good sense peculiar to himself, said every thing, that can be said with

* *Expos. folio, pag. 193.*

any colour of reason, for externals established by human authority, yet hath he, upon the whole, made a case of it not the most favourable to the present circumstances of our church, and much less such a case as will fall in with your lordship's positions.

Having, as I said, my lord, often reflected on these defences of our externals, without receiving that satisfaction I very sincerely sought for, I was in hopes to meet with some new light from your lordship's discourse on this interesting subject; and was not a little disappointed when I found *not one* text quoted by your lordship from the *New Testament*, and *but one* from the *Old*, relative to the *importance* of external religion: and what that passage will avail your lordship, I am now to examine.

Your lordship, having observed that our people "have no customary admonition, no *public* call to recollect the thoughts of GOD and "religion from one Sunday to another," proceeds thus:

"It was far otherwise under the law. *These words, says Moses to the children of ISRAEL, "which I command thee,"* [your lordship omits THIS DAY, viz. the day when the ten commandments were given in *Horeb*, which words were

were just recited in the foregoing chapter, and are the words here referred to †] “shall be in
 “thine heart. And thou shalt teach them dili-
 “gently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them
 “when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou
 “walkest by the way, and when thou liest down,
 “and when thou risest up.” Deut. vi. 6, 7. To
 which your lordship subjoins: “And as they
 “were commanded *this*, so ’tis obvious how
 “much the constitution of *that law* was adapt-
 “ed to effect *IT*, and keep religion ever in
 “view.”

It was then very ill, or at least very unwisely done, to abrogate that law whose constitution was adapted to so excellent a purpose: But the truth is, my lord, the constitution of the *Jewish* law was just as much adapted to *effect* the performance of, or to keep in view the religion here meant by *Moses*, as the *musick* and *vestments* in:

† Compare *Jerem. vii. 22, 23.* with *Exod. xix. 5, 6.* The right reverend and worthy bishop *Story*, in his admirable treatise on the *Priesthood*, observes that “after *Moses* had been the first forty days with God in the mount, he brought nothing down but the two tables of the moral law, as if NO OTHER law had been THEN intended; but when he found the people—worshipping the golden calf, God seemeth *then* to have resolved—to load them with a number of religious rites and ceremonies, in direct opposition to the customs of the *Egyptians*,” &c. pag. 62.

your lordship's cathedral at *Durham* are adapted to promote *family religion* and the weightier matters of *judgment, mercy, and faith*, in the rest of the diocese.

Moses in the two next verses goes on thus : *And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes ; and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thine house and upon thy gates.* Now both the frequency and proximity of these domestic signs, make it very plain that the great and conspicuous parts of their religion, the public calls which they had by the constitution of their law, were not adapted to effect, what *Moses* in this passage wanted to have effected, viz. obedience to the moral law.

For it is to be observed of these signs, that they were not (like ceremonies properly so called) *symbolic representations*, but the precepts themselves exemplified in writing, which it is true, in process of time, were abused to the purposes of superstition † ; and when that time came, and these natural and simple signs and

† The rabbins in after-times had made these signs so useless to some Jews in respect of their original purpose, that they enjoined them to be written only in one sort of character. “ *Al Phylacteria & Schedae* “ *liminares haud alios quam Assyriacos characteres adhibere licet, in libris vero sacris describendis, literis etiam Græcis uti conceditur, sed his solis,*” &c. *Maimonides apud Wagenfeil SOTA, pag. 970.*

memorials had degenerated into *broad Phylacterics*, &c. they then received their condemnation with other things which had a more natural tendency to such abuse. A sufficient intimation, one would think, to all future times, of the in-croaching nature of superstition, which could convert such expedients of plain and useful instruction, into implements of mere ostentation and hypocrisy.

I should have thought, indeed, that there were some expressions in this passage cited by your lordship, that might have kept any man out of this mistake, and prevented his confounding the *words* there spoken of, with the *words* of the *ceremonial* law; which latter it surely was never intended that fathers and masters of families should teach their households: This kind of teaching was the sole privilege and duty of the priests, who had indeed no commission to teach any thing else †, and that,

† “ We shall find it [what the priests were to teach] “ was *not* the *whole* law of *Moses*, but the *ceremonial* “ law *only*, the laws about *external religion*, or reli- “ gious worship. For as the *essential* part of their “ office was confined to *positive* and *instituted* worship, “ it is natural to believe that their *teaching* was of no “ greater extent.” Bishop *Storcy* on the *Priesthood*, page 26. It is humbly recommended to the reader, being a clergyman of the church of *England*, not to
content:

that, as I said above, made this *moral* teaching, the domestic and familiar signs so much the more necessary.

So that I very much question whether your lordship could have fallen upon any passage in the Old Testament, which relates at all to your subject, that would have been less favourable to your lordship's argument.

But to proceed ; your lordship adds : “ And
 “ without *somewhat of this nature*, piety will
 “ grow languid even among the better sort of
 “ men ; and the worst will go on quietly in an
 “ abandoned course, with fewer interruptions
 “ from within than they would have, were re-
 “ ligious reflections *forced* oftner upon their
 “ minds, and consequently with less probability
 “ of their amendment.” pag. 16.

From what operation of *externals* on the human mind your lordship collects this theory, I cannot presume to say ; I, for my part, believe that the piety of good men may be maintained

content himself with these detached passages, but seriously to read over this valuable performance, where he will have the satisfaction to see how little the ministrations of a christian priest have to do with *ceremonials* and *externals*, and from thence may judge, if he pleases, with what propriety he should employ himself in preaching up the *importance* of them.

in its vigour with *very little* of this nature: and this I am pretty sure of, that if religious reflections must be *forced* upon the mind by *externals*, it is not a small *somewhat of this nature*, that will do the work.

But to speak freely: this method of *forcing* religious reflections by *ceremonies* and *external forms*, I doubt, is stark naught: according to your lordship's doctrine, it should be not only *good policy*, but *wholesome discipline* to *force* men in *England* to come to church, and in *France* to go to *mass*; in both places for the same reason, namely because the dissenters (whose objections to ceremonies and outward forms are the same in both kingdoms) have not *so much* of externals as is *necessary* to *preserve a sense of religion itself upon the minds of the people*.

And yet, my lord, the very best of this force has seldom produced any thing better than hypocrisy †. Probability of amendment there can be

† “ En Poitou & en Xaintonge, &c. les menaces
 “ les plus fieres, les coups de bâton, la terreur & l'
 “ int lence du Soldat suivent de près les premieres
 “ sommations. Par ce moyen on ne manque pas de
 “ gagner beaucoup de gens, dans un siecle où la ve-
 “ ritable devotion est rare par-tout, & la France fort
 “ miserable. Ces Messieurs les convertisseurs ont trop
 “ d'espr t pour n'être pas convaincus que tous ces
 “ changemens sont *faits*. Ils voyent que ces nou-
 “ veaux

be little or none where men attend religious solemnities merely to avoid punishment or censure.

There is then no *forcing* religious reflections this way. But perhaps your lordship might mean, that “*forms* and *externals* have in themselves an inherent and natural virtue to *force* religious reflections upon the mind, and to work piety and repentance upon the heart.” And this, indeed, I should have thought the more obvious sense of your lordship’s words, had it not been that I thought it also the less defensible of the two, because it will be impossible to prove this to be true of *one* sort of forms and not of *another*; and what a door this will open to all manner of superstition and even idolatry, may be easily conceived*: It being

“veaux convertis ne vont à la Messe pour plûpart que le moins qu’ils peuvent, qu’il faut les épier & les menacer, si on veut qu’il y assistent.—Ne voilà-t-il pas un dessein fort Apostolique?” &c. &c. BAYLE *Critique generale de l’Histoire du Calvinisme de Mr. Maimburg, tom. I. let. VIII. pag. 134, 135.*—Here we have ocular testimony of the good effects of *forcing* religious reflections upon the mind by the means of external religion, and as these (and the same will hold good of other systems) are to be thus *seconded* ere they can have even these effects, may we not justly conclude that forms have *naturally* no *force* or efficacy of their own to dispose the mind to religion?

* The prolific nature of *externals* is represented to the life in the excellent bishop Fleetwood’s letter to an inhabitant of the parish of St. Andrew’s Holbourn. Works, fol. 725, 72.

indeed the very principle on which the papists justify the adoration of images. But neither even thus do we get clear of the other kind of force; for if *externals* have this virtue to *inforce religious reflections*, &c. it must be right to compel those who are indisposed to such reflections, to attend these memorials; and if, as your lordship has observed, the people are now in general *negligent* in their attendance, I do not see how compulsion of some kind can be avoided.

But instead of conjecturing how your lordship would explain this matter consistently with protestant principles, I will beg leave to exhibit the very different accounts we have of the beginning and progress of religion from the apostles.

He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, for without faith it is impossible to please God. Heb. xi. 6.

If it be demanded how we may obtain faith, the apostle *Paul* answers, *faith cometh by hearing [or report] and hearing by the word of God. Rom. x. 17.*

Is then faith the whole of religion? N^o. To faith must be added, *virtue, knowledge, temperance,*

rance, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, and charity; For if these things says the apostle Peter, be in you and abound, they make you neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord JESUS CHRIST; that is, they perfect and complete your religion. 2 Pet. i. 5, &c.

But are not *forms* and *externals* necessary to remind the people of these things? I should think not; any farther than hearing the word of God may be so called. If more was necessary, here was precisely the place where Peter should have inserted his ritual*; for in this very place he is endeavouring that his readers might have these things always in remembrance, after his decease, v. 15. and yet nothing appears of these endeavours besides his religious exhortations and instructions in these two epistles.

That external *objects* are in some cases useful, and in others necessary, to remind us of our christian duty and devotion, is true enough.

* Peter not only omitted his ritual here, but unhappily forgot to leave it behind him: For even the papists themselves could never recover more of his *missal* than the Lord's prayer. *Nuda primo hæc erant* (says PLATINA, speaking of the ceremonies of the mass) *et omnia simpliciter tractabantur. PETRUS enim, ubi consecraverat, oratione Pater noster, usus est. Auxit hæc MYSTERIA Jacobus, &c. Vit. SIXTI I.* A hint which protestants should have taken long ago.

The heavens declare the glory of GOD, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work. Ps. xix. To excite us to particular acts of charity, it is sometimes necessary we should SEE *that our brother hath need.* But where a man is blind and deaf to these natural and familiar admonitions, there is, I doubt, but little hopes of his becoming all of a sudden pious and charitable on the *sight of a church, even of a cathedral, a temple made with hands, and where, if the Scriptures deceive us not, we know the Most High dwelleth not, in any higher sense than he dwelleth in other places where two or three are gathered together in his name.*

It was, we may well suppose, some considerations suggested by these and the like passages of Scripture, which gave occasion, “in most
 “ages of the church, to the care of reasonable
 “men to draw the people off from laying too
 “great weight upon *external* things; upon *for-*
 “*mal* acts of piety;” and for this care, your lordship allows, there has been, *for the most part,* occasion. But, your lordship goes on, “the
 “state of matters is quite changed now with
 “us. These [*external*] things are neglected to
 “a degree, which is, and cannot but be at-
 “tended with a decay of all that is good.”

Strange and miserable reverse of things! What was a reasonable care in *most* ages of the christian church, and for which there has been for *the most part* occasion; and a care too, as it plainly appears, excited by the very genius and spirit of the gospel of Christ, is at length superseded by a change of which we have had no warning, nor had any reason to expect; and it is now become *highly seasonable* to lay the weight on, where *reasonable* men had all along taken it off,—“highly seasonable now to instruct the people in the importance of external religion.”

Is then the gospel of Christ so fickle and changeable, that it's provisions and expedients of eternal life may be accommodated, like human politicks, to the humours and interests of every faithless and perverse generation? No, my lord, the means of salvation thro' *Christ* are, like their ever-blessed author, *the same yesterday, to day, and for ever* *. *Other foundation can no man lay, than is laid* †. If in any state of the *christian* church it was reasonable to depreciate the *beggarly elements* of external religion, it is just as reasonable at this very hour.

Far would I be from fixing upon your lordship's words an insinuation, that the care of

* Heb. xiii. 8.

† 1 Cor. iii. 11.

reasonable men above mentioned hath in any degree contributed to the *decay of all that is good*. Yet surely your lordship should have apprized us here, how this *decay* and this *neglect* came in company together; and what dependance they have upon each other: your lordship's silence on this head you will give me leave to supply, from some memoirs of a very good judge of such matters.

“ I have ever esteemed our reformation from
 “ popery a *great* work, and bless God for it
 “ daily; and yet I am sometimes apt to call
 “ some of those, who had the title of reformers
 “ (especially of the latter sets in queen *Eliza-*
 “ *beth's* time) very *little* men; and think *they*
 “ rather deserve the character of reformers,
 “ who laboured, at the expence of their ease
 “ and subsistence, and sometimes of their lives,
 “ to convince the nation that, as christians and
 “ protestants, we had common principles and
 “ precedents enough in the New Testament,
 “ upon which to unite and to edify each other,
 “ without having recourse to idle and unneces-
 “ sary human inventions. These men could
 “ hardly ever obtain an equitable or even a pa-
 “ tient hearing from the people in power; who
 “ never, that I can learn, gave any better reason,
 “ for not taking the course recommended to
 “ them,

“ them, than that “ these outward circumstan-
 “ ces were indifferent things, and that they had
 “ authority to do *as they pleased* about them.”

“ Later ages have had the advantage of ad-
 “ ding to this weighty argument, that of *long*
 “ possession; and what is there that human
 “ authority and antiquity together, have not
 “ coined into religion? And thus it is, that our
 “ externals have been blown up so far beyond
 “ their natural size and significance; and have
 “ so long taken place of better things, that we
 “ seem to have forgot where we began; and
 “ most of us are as much at a loss in *this* age for
 “ true religion as ever. But tho’ these pieces
 “ of antiquity will *do little* for our common
 “ people, who seem, indeed, of late to care as
 “ little for them as wiser men; yet they will
 “ still do for one sort among us: They will save
 “ them a great deal of trouble, and perhaps
 “ something else, which they might otherwise
 “ sustain by being put into a laborious course
 “ of reforming and edifying the people com-
 “ mitted to their care, by the toilsome methods
 “ of the gospel. Let you and I be silent, and
 “ make as good a shift with them as we can;
 “ for, assure yourself, we shall have nothing
 “ better in this age *.”

* From a private Letter written 1738.

Whether *this* account of the *decay of all that is good*, or your lordship's has more of truth and reason in it, must be left to the judgment of the public; in the mean time, permit me humbly to represent to your lordship, that, in our present circumstances, 1. It is not seasonable to instruct the people in the *importance of external religion*; and, were it seasonable, that 2. It is not practicable to revive any greater reverence for *our own* external religion, than it has at present, by any sort of instruction whatever.

1. Instruction in the importance of external religion is not seasonable. That popery is gaining ground upon us daily, is a matter of fact attested by very considerable witnesses. Besides others of no obscure estimation in the world, an eminent and leading prelate * hath on two public occasions, one in 1745, and the other 1750, given the nation warning of it: What the consequence of this may, and if it goes on, must be, is easily apprehended. "Every heart alienated from the *protestant* religion [to use the words of the same judicious bishop with a little variation] carries off with it a pair of

* Bp. Sberlock in his sermon on the late *rebellion*, and in his letter to the clergy and people of *London* and *Wexminster*, upon occasion of the late earthquakes.

“ hands from the defence of our gracious king
“ and his government †.”

I will not say but there may be different ways of accounting for this increase of popery; but of this I am certain, that there is not an argument for it, which can be supposed to influence our common people, that does not derive it's weight from the *value* and *importance* of *external religion*.

And this deserves to be considered by *us* of the church of *England* so much the rather, as the dissenters affirm “ that the converts to popery are gathered from our church by *thousands*, whereas it is hardly ever known that *one* is gained from them *.”

When I first met with this interesting fact, I bethought me of consulting Mr. *White's* defence to see what consolation might be had from *that*: and his answer, which is remarkable, I shall now set down, as greatly to my present purpose.

This gentleman having intimated, “ that the suggestion *may* be groundless, or, if true, may

† Thanksgiving sermon before the commons, June 7, 1716.

* Dissenting gentleman's 1st answer to Mr. *White's* letters, pag. 12.

“ be well accounted for by the disproportion in
 “ the numbers belonging to each party ;” goes
 on thus : “ And if more, in proportion to the
 “ number of each, have been gained from
 “ amongst *us*, the reason *why* is not *that* which
 “ he has suggested [*viz.* the *concessions* in xxth
 “ *article of our church*] but another, even the
 “ multitude of sects that are among us. We,
 “ for the most part, are *educated and instructed*
 “ in just notions of the *nature, unity and commu-*
 “ *nion of the catholick church, maintained in*
 “ the church of *England*, and of the great IM-
 “ PORTANCE and NECESSITY thereof ; while
 “ their people are, generally, so instructed, as
 “ to have no kind of notion of these matters, or,
 “ if any, it is only of the no-necessity, or rather,
 “ the insignificancy thereof. And hence it is
 “ natural for *our people* to be more easily scan-
 “ dalized at those schisms and divisions which
 “ they see among us, and more susceptible of
 “ impressions from the artful insinuations of
 “ *Romish* emissaries concerning them. This is
 “ far more like than that he assigns to be the
 “ true reason that more converts *,” &c.

See here, my lord, the dissenter's charge not
 only confessed, but clearly made out by this
 acute advocate for the church of *England* !——

* 1st Defence, pag. 16.

“*Far more like?*” Why, is it not the very same, only pushed more home, and exemplified in plainer and stronger terms?—The church of *England* claims a power to decree rites or ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith, and thereupon founds the NECESSITY and IMPORTANCE of unity and communion with her.—Here the *Romanist* strikes in and says, “Aye, but the church of *England* does not pretend to be the *catholick church*, and consequently can maintain no such claim. The catholick church is with *us*, and *us* only, and it is *there* that you must look for the *necessity* and *importance* of unity and communion.”

It is therefore for the honour of the church of *England*, to observe that she gives none of her members any such *notions* of unity and communion as Mr. *White* pretends. She acknowledges and prays for all as members of the catholick church, who “call themselves christians, and hold the faith in unity of SPIRIT in the bond of peace and in righteousness of life.” The visible church of Christ, she defines [art. xix.] to be “a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ’s ordinance, in all those things that of *necessity* are requisite to the same;” and what is not “of *necessity* requisite to the same”.

she tells us, art. xxxiv. viz. the rites or ceremonies of every particular or national church “ordained only by MAN’S AUTHORITY.”

What *just notions* now can the church of *England* give, consistently with these her capital doctrines, of the *importance*, and more especially of the *necessity* of communion with *her*, or with any other particular or national church, where the peculiar distinctions are *human rites and ceremonies*, or, in your lordship’s language, *forms and externals*? And how should her members who are *justly* educated and instructed, be scandalized at divisions, at which the church herself is not scandalized? For my own part, if there is any man who teaches or propagates any such notions, as tend to create the scandal and susceptibility of *Romish* insinuations that Mr. *W. H. T.* speaks of, I am for having him severely censured as an unsound member of the church of *England*.

In agreement with these doctrines and definitions, it is absolutely necessary to understand the word *church* in the xxth article. So Mr. *Rogers* understood it, namely for *every member of sound judgment in the same*; and *Rogers*, writing under the wing, and probably by the direction of *Bancroft* [as high a churchman as ever presided in it, *Laud* excepted] was not likely to go
below.

below the sense of the church in his exposition; whatever sense may have been put upon the words since those days, concerning which I think the church of *England* (much, I am afraid, to her loss and detriment) has been too silent and passive.

And here I cannot but stop a while to contemplate the dexterity of our champions in shifting their ground, and changing their batteries against the dissenters. Heretofore it was pretended that our sects were the spawn of the *Jesuits*, that *Jesuits* had been known to mix among them, and that many of their tenets were the same with those of that order of men*, &c. But surely the *Jesuits* were viler politicians than ordinary in this misapplication of their craft; the sectaries, in virtue of their education and instruction it seems, have stood their ground, and bid defiance to all their artifice; while the members of the church of *England*—But forbid it heaven that this should be the truth of the

* There seems to be an inclination in a late learned and spirited writer, to fix a charge of this nature upon the methodists [*enthusiasm of the papists and methodists compared*, part ii. pag. 179. to the end] Whether popery will thrive better in this *new* sect than it has done in those of longer standing, time must shew. However, what this ingenious author says, about the middle of pag. 178. is well worth remarking, and not foreign to the case in hand.

case; and as Mr. *White* himself, and more than he are disposed to question the fact, may I with all deference to your lordship's bench humbly suggest, that this matter may be examined to the bottom, and satisfaction given to all his majesty's faithful and affectionate subjects; which may easily be done by their lordships requiring punctual answers to two short queries, sent to the minister and churchwardens of every parish. *viz.* 1. How many persons in your parish have been perverted to popery within these last --- years? and 2. How many of those so perverted had been of the church of *England*, and how many of them protestant dissenters, and of what denomination? But

2. I am afraid, my lord, instruction in the importance of external religion would, at this time, be unseasonable on another account; the people who would most want these instructions, are, it is doubtful, uninstructed not only in the *importance*, but in the very principles of *any* religion. The ignorance of our common people even in those religious matters which are easiest to understand, as well as to remember, I mean the historical passages of the New Testament, is hardly to be conceived by those who have not had some particular occasion of conversing with them on these subjects; much less do they know the saving truths of the gospel, and the terms of eternal

eternal life grounded on that history; would your lordship have the instruction of this sort begin at the importance of *externals* in religion? These at the best are but useful or edifying as modes of expressing the faith and piety that is already in the *heart*: but what protestant or christian use can *they* make of them, to whom externals have nothing to convey worth their having, and who have nothing to express by their means? But,

2. It is not practicable, I imagine, to revive any greater reverence for our *own* externals, than they have at present, by any sort of instruction. For,

1.) If the stress of this instruction is to be laid on the edifying nature of the things themselves, they have had their weight for a course of no less than two hundred years, and can *naturally* make no stronger impressions than they have done. Every argument has been offered in their behalf which the most ingenious and learned men in the kingdom could think of. And if it might be supposed that new arguments and topics in their favour could be found out; yet, if, as the honest gentleman above quoted has remarked, these externals are inconvenient and disgusting in the practical part, these new arguments will be so far obstructed in their operation, and fail in their effect.

2.) It will be remembered that there have been men in our communion of equal judgment, and, perhaps for the most part, in equal numbers, who have been differently persuaded concerning the edification to be had from our forms: Neither will it be forgot, that these very forms, comprized in the word, *church*, have given countenance and occasion to much disorder and ill temper, and to much faction and fury in the kingdom: and tho' this circumstance of itself should be no argument against the things themselves, yet it will be *made* one, and I doubt more pains must be taken to teach people to *distinguish* in such cases, than the clergy well can, or will be willing to spare from other business. The intrigues of *Charles* the second's time, and the inconsistency of the act of uniformity with *his* two declarations, nothing can gloss over. A late sensible and sufficiently cautious writer, whom I have quoted above, has indeed ventured to hint that the government at *that* time in making this law had some *sense* of *inconveniencies*, and were directed by considerations of *propriety* in the alterations they made in our service. His words are these: "At the time of the restoration of the church and monarchy——our liturgy had been out of use, as well in private as in public assemblies, almost twenty years. Yet it is observable, that *even then*, the government

“vernment was *so sensible* of the *inconveniences*
 “of any great alteration in forms which the
 “people had yet some remembrance of, as to
 “think it *proper* to direct the commissioners,
 “appointed to consider of those things, to avoid;
 “as much as may be, *even all abbreviations* that
 “should be found necessary*.”

Here we see the establishment of *so much more* than some people hoped for, or, considering the declarations abovementioned, had good reason to hope for, is ascribed to *sensibility* and *tenderness* for the people; perhaps this writer may believe so, and persuade some others to be of that mind.

But however that be, the sheets of this pamphlet were scarce dry from the press when another made its appearance, in which the author gives us leave to think very differently of this matter. What *he* says of the *act* of *uniformity* is as follows: “How these words, *to the use of,*
 “came to be omitted out of the express form of
 “words that are ordered to be read in church
 “for a legal qualification, I cannot say, nor
 “whether they were omitted out of neglect or
 “by design: but I own, it seems to me, when
 “I consider the *humour of the times* when that

* Fr. and Imp. Confid. pag. 5, 6.

“ act was made, that it was done with *design* ;
 “ as a SNARE to oblige poor conscientious men
 “ who did not read the act of parliament at
 “ length, to give up their livings, rather than
 “ declare their unfeigned assent and consent to
 “ all and every thing contained in *the book of*
 “ *common-prayer.* *”

Your lordship here sees two very different opinions of the men and times when *the act of uniformity*, which establishes our present externals, was made. If the opinion of the latter is to be regarded, all may not be right with the *externals* themselves in favour of which such a base and cruel artifice was projected. It is true; the other gentleman would give us a different idea of the disposition and councils of those times ; but why should we believe the one, rather than the other ? If, as common fame reports, and the gentleman himself intimates, the Considerer published his work under the wing of authority ; the other declares himself to be a *clergyman of the established church*. And the *essay* speaks sufficiently for his good sense and integrity. And, if he also may have the aid of com-

* The author subjoins this note : “ And accordingly there were 1800 persons, that were actually deprived of their livings rather than submit to the terms prescribed—” and it is worth our notice, *deprived by an abbreviation.*

mon fame, his station in the church. is in the highest rank.

These are difficulties, my lord, which, when they fall in a clergyman's way, will greatly obstruct his instructions in the importance of *our* externals. Nor,

3.) Do I apprehend he will have much better success in urging the *authority of the church*. The time was indeed when the language of *most* of our clergy was, *Stir not a step out of the direct paths of the church* †; and *then* considerable numbers of the people were inclinable enough to listen to them. *But the state of matters is quite changed with us now* in this respect also; and many accidents have intervened, which will prevent our retreating into this *stronghold*, or, however, our fortifying it into a *tenable post*.

The incomparable bishop *Burnet* in the *dedication* of the third volume of his history of the *reformation*, printed 1715, has these remarkable words. “Your majesty, we trust, is designed
“ by GOD to *compleat* the reformation itself; to
“ *rectify* what may be yet *amiss*; and to *supply*
“ what is *defective* among us; to oblige us to
“ live and to labour more suitably to our profes-

† Memorial of the church of *England*, in *Coke's* detection, vol. iii. pag. 247.

“ sion ; and *unite* us more firmly among our-
 “ selves, to bury, and for ever to extinguish the
 “ fears of our relapsing again into popery ; and
 “ to establish a confidence and correspondence
 “ with the protestant and reformed churches
 “ abroad.”

We have here the testimony of *one* bishop how little expedient it was to adhere, without deviation, to the paths of the church : About the same time *more* of them gave their united opinion of the consequences of this doctrine of the *memorial* to this effect :

“ We are the more concerned, &c.—because
 “ some who have valued themselves, and have
 “ been too much valued by others, for a pre-
 “ tended zeal for the *church*, have joined with
 “ *papists* in these wicked attempts †.” &c.

Since this time it hath been observed that our great churchmen in general have, greatly to their honour, laid aside much of this ignorant and impatient zeal of contending to the uttermost for every appendage to the church of *England* ; they are known to be friends to toleration, and to have more moderate and equitable sentiments concerning some particulars in our

† The bishops declaration testifying their abhorrence of rebellion, 1715.

present ecclesiastical establishment, than their forefathers expressed.

In these circumstances it would be in vain for the inferior clergy to attempt to build any great matters in favour of *external religion* upon a zeal for the church; accordingly that spirit hath also greatly subsided among *them*, and one perhaps might go back some years without finding any thing of that furious kind in print, which used to pester the public in the days of *Sacheverel* *.

One thing, indeed, my lord, there is in all this, which I find amuses thinking people a good deal: Since a departure from the *paths of the church* is, of late days, neither so offensive to church or state, as heretofore; but on the contrary, may very well be borne with; it is won-

* So I thought, when I wrote this. But sauntering into a bookseller's shop, not long after, the first thing I laid my hands on was a pamphlet, written, as the title-page imports, by something of *presbyter*, which, on the first opening, exhibited a character of the petition to parliament from the city of *Bristol*, in favour of a bill for the naturalization of foreign protestants, in the decent terms of *an attempt to fill the nation with beggars and schismaticks*. I am told the supposed author is an elderly man. What a miserable time must he have had with this teizing, hungerstarved, solitary dæmon of *Schism* at his elbow for the last twenty or thirty years?---But, *Quære*---What is the proper religious appellation of an English protestant of our national church at *Geneva*?

dered what should hinder a free and impartial inquiry whether the *paths* of the church are really so *direct* as to admit of no just amendment, and especially as some suggestions to the contrary have been offered to the public, which appear to many pious and judicious members of the established church to have great weight, and will, I apprehend, be another means of rendering ineffectual our instructions in the *importance of external religion*, as it is circumstanced in our church at this time.

For my own part, my lord, I am firmly persuaded that if every thing be absolutely right in the church of *England*, our forefathers acted not only more wisely, but more righteously than we, in *compelling* people to come into her, and in distressing those who would not: On this supposition, all who deviate from the church, deviate from the word of God (for that is the church's rule) and ought on no account to be tolerated. But if there is any considerable room for amendment and alteration for the better, we are, upon our own principles of *proving all things by the word of God*, evidently condemned; stirring, in fact and *in practice*, not a *step out of the paths of the church*, even whilst the *most* of us perhaps are conscious that some of these paths are far from being so *direct* as the application of our great rule would make them.

In the year 1718, when the bill repealing the *occasional and schism acts* was in debate, bishop Kennet defined the church of England to be, *A scriptural institution upon a legal establishment**: with which definition I have always been extremely pleased, and at the same time extremely desirous to have it verified.

Concerning the *legality* of the establishment, there is not, nor can be, any dispute: It will admit of no controversy among those who hold all their civil rights and privileges under the same authority which establishes the church: the question upon which we are chiefly divided, has been concerning the *scriptural institution*. A point, which, in reverence to an higher legislature, should certainly among protestants be equally clear: If this matter is not yet sufficiently decided in our favour †, it is by no means expedient to *take it for granted*, or to consider it in the light of a *point of honour*, since by such indolence, or such arrogance, we are losing the most valuable advantages and benefits of our establishment; the true original end of which undoubtedly is, the edification of the people of

* *Tindal's Continuation*, 8vo. vol. xxvii. pag. 240.

† Whether it is or not, we may form some judgment, perhaps, by the controversy between Dr. Nichols and Mr. Pierce, and more lately between Mr. White and the dissenting gentleman, &c. &c.

God, worshipping him with one heart and with one mouth: nor can we ever be justly vindicated, by barely conniving at, and permitting the separation of so many of our christian brethren, upon scruples so *important* to them, and, as we are oftentimes driven to confess, so *little important* to us.

“ Where unity and peace are disregarded, devotion must be so too, as it were by natural consequence †:” and disregarded out of all doubt they are, whilst we suffer it to remain a question (which has some undeniable probabilities against us) *whence and by whom the offence cometh*. If that may not be clearly determined by the word of God, it will not be very easy to ascertain the grounds upon which so severe a WO. is denounced against the offender.

So that, my lord, in whatever light we consider this subject, it is neither reasonable nor expedient, nor at all conducive to revive practical religion in the hearts of our people, to

† I have borrowed these words from the 17th page of a sermon preached at *Halifax* in *Yorkshire*, July 1751, by *John Watson* A. M. fellow of *Brafen Nose* college in *Oxford* and curate of *Halifax*: which if any man, who has sixpence to spare, will purchase, peruse, and lay to heart, he will lay out his time and his money very well.

preach up the *importance of externals* in general, or of our own in particular.

The *importance of external religion* is the grand engine of the papists, which they play with the greatest effect upon our common people, who are always soonest taken and insnared by *form* and *shew*; and, so far as we concur with them in the principle, we are doing their work, since if externals, as such, are *important*, the plain natural consequence is, *the more of them the better*.

On another hand, our advocates for the church observe and declare, “that our controversy with the protestant dissenters is not about matters of *faith*, for they subscribe the same articles of faith that we do;” consequently the dispute is about *externals* and *forms*; and to instruct the people in the *importance* of our own *peculiar modes*, as distinct from, and exclusive of any other, is to widen this breach, and weaken the protestant interest *this way* too; and not to revive practical religion, but to foment and inflame contention, and every evil work.

In the next place, the excellent author of the *essay on spirit* says, that “a man who subscribes only for peace sake, and the preservation of the outward forms of society, may, for
“pru-

“prudential reasons, honestly subscribe and submit to the use of one established form, though he, in his own private opinion, may think another to be better.” There is, my lord, great reason to believe, that the honest and *thinking* subscribers among the clergy of the church of *England* are, many of them, in these circumstances. With what heart and conscience can these men set about instructing the people in the *importance* of any thing which they believe to be not so edifying as something else in the room of it would be?

Upon the whole, that a practical sense of religion is at a very low ebb among all ranks of our people, I very readily agree with your lordship; that this matter ought to be very seriously considered by christian ministers of all orders and degrees, none will deny; whether the method pointed out by your lordship in this part of your charge, is so likely to revive either the credit or the influence of religion, as some other methods described and enjoined in *St. Paul's* charges to *Timothy* and *Titus*, or whether indeed your lordship's method is at all proper for the purpose in our present situation,—and lastly, whether our externals in religion, and the circumstances, appendages, and conditions relating to them,

do not rather obstruct, than forward true christian edification, is freely submitted to the judgment of the serious, disinterested, and impartial part of the public, and most humbly recommended to your lordship's second thoughts, by,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

most respectful Servant, &c.

P O S T S C R I P T.

IN the 12th page of this charge your lordship speaks of the *law of virtue written upon our hearts*, as a topic proper to be insisted on by the clergy from the pulpit; by which, I suppose, your lordship may mean what is commonly called the *law, or the religion of nature*. Now, my lord, if there is really such a *law written in every man's heart*, will it not clearly follow, that religion may, and indeed must be preserved among mankind, whether there is any *outward form* of it, or not?

I should think too, that, whatever becomes of *external forms* in religion, it greatly concerns your lordship, that this doctrine of a *natural law* should be, not only true in a philosophical theory, but fairly exemplified in a practical system, visible and intelligible to the whole world; your lordship having expressly asserted elsewhere, that “if in *revelation* there be found any passages, the *seeming* meaning of which is contrary to *natural religion*, we may most certainly conclude, that such *seeming* meaning is not the *real* one †.” But who can possibly conclude thus, till he has a *most certain* system

† Bp. Butler's Analogy, pag. 160.

of natural religion to interpret these *seeming* meanings by?

The first time I took particular notice of this passage, was in a controversial pamphlet upon the case of subscription to the xxxix articles of our church, where it was cited, as I remember, to discredit *subscription*, even to the *Scriptures*, explained any otherwise than by *the subscriber's own sense* of them, without admitting any man, or any body of men, to judge of the orthodoxy, the truth, or the propriety of that sense; and I thought this authority from your lordship very full to the writer's purpose.

But how will this agree with the *importance of external religion*, the great support of which, among *us*, is subscription to human forms and compositions? Are these *externals* written in our hearts too, and a part of the *code natural*?

However, it is but justice to your lordship, to observe, that this incautious doctrine of the *analogy* is most effectually confuted by an observation of your lordship's in this very charge, pag. 11, viz. "The infinite greatness of God's
 " scheme of government, both in extent and
 " duration, together with the wise connexion
 " of its parts, and the *impossibility* of accounting
 " for the several parts, without *seeing the whole*
 " plan

“*plan of providence to which they relate; which is beyond the utmost stretch of our understanding.*”

I am very sure your lordship will not make the least difficulty in admitting the several dispensations and circumstances of revealed religion to be *parts of this scheme of government, this plan of providence*: As, therefore, to see the *wisdom, propriety, or connexion of all these parts, or to see the whole plan of providence, is beyond the utmost stretch of human understanding, to which this great interpreter, natural religion, pretends only to be commensurate, what should hinder us from concluding, that many seeming meanings in our bibles may be real ones, any thing to the contrary in natural religion notwithstanding.*

To speak my own sentiments freely, I have no better opinion of the *clearness, certainty, uniformity, universality, &c.* of this *law of virtue written in the human heart*, than I have of the *importance of external religion*: There is a circumstance attending this doctrine which renders the truth as well as the merits of it extremely doubtful, and that is, that in its application to practice, it is not only not useful for want of proper explanation, but, so far as it is understood, exceedingly pernicious to the prin-

principles and morals of our common people, and, to say the truth, to the great as well as the small vulgar.

The certain consequence of referring mankind to a *law of nature or virtue written upon their hearts*, is, their having recourse to *their own sense of things* on all occasions, which being, in a great majority, no better than family superstition, party prejudice, or self-interested artifice (perhaps a compound of all) will be too apt to over-rule the plain, generous, self-denying and humble precepts of the gospel, after all that can be said to disgrace them; and much more when they pass for the *dictate of natural religion*, and people are told into the bargain (which, I am afraid, is too often the case) that these dictates differ no otherwise from those of the gospel, than as the latter are enforced by more explicit promises, and positive authority.

If therefore natural religion (be it what you will as to its intrinsic merit) is liable to be thus mistaken, it is high time to have done with it in the pulpit; very few of our common people are philosophers, or can see far enough into the nature of things to analyse virtue into its component parts; and if they are once led into a mistake so favourable to their own conceits and prepossessions, no subsequent explanations will serve to set them right: For, having sent them

to their own heads and hearts for *a rule of life*, you will be greatly disappointed if you expect they will allow you to manage it for them.

Upon this account, my lord, I would have religion proved, defended, and taught by the christian minister from the BIBLE only; and I would have every such minister plainly and honestly tell his people that he has *no other* proof of its original, its truth, its obligations, its present benefits, or its future rewards, to lay before them, than what is contained in the Scriptures; which I would also have him to exhort them to search and study for themselves with the utmost diligence and application; and then he may safely let the rest be at their own peril.

And here I cannot but take notice, before I make an end, of my singular misfortune in differing from one of your lordship's distinguished merit, and eminent station, in two so considerable articles, as, *A law of virtue written upon our hearts*, and *The importance of external religion*, which, indeed, it is not common to find among the *favourite opinions* of one and the same man.

Perhaps it may be as uncommon to find them in *disgrace* with one and the same man: But so it happens: I have had a long, and, as I am verily persuaded, a reasonable quarrel to them

both, as well on account of the unfriendly contrast between the theories on which they are severally supported, and the genuine grounds of the christian dispensation, as for the incredible mischief they have done to practical religion; being adopted as principles by infinite numbers of our people who neither know the meaning of the one, nor the uses of the other, and to whom they have been, in different ways, instruments to mislead them from the wholesome and living waters of the gospel, to the broken and muddy cisterns of *human sufficiency* and *human authority*. To the first we owe the flourishing state of *infidelity* and its legitimate progeny, a profligate corruption of manners, among all ranks and degrees of our people; to the latter we are beholden for the progress and advancement of *popery* (the basest and most shameless of all superstitions) to the manifest hazard of our civil and religious liberty, which will be no longer safe than our gracious and righteous sovereign, and his protestant descendants, are secure from the incessant and diabolical machinations of *Romish* emissaries; from which may God's good providence continue to protect them; in which prayer, notwithstanding my opinion of the tendency of your lordship's doctrine, I am perfectly assured, your lordship will join with,

My Lord, (once more)

Your Lordship's, &c.

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For the first time in human history the language of civilization is being changed from writing that can be read with the necked eye, to an electronic format that can only be read with special electronic equipment. It is the intent of the Bank of Wisdom to convert to electronic format as much old Scholarly, Historic and Freethought material as possible. We believe there are certain kinds of necessary historic, religious and philosophical information that may be left out of the data banks of the future, factual information that challenges or disproves current ideas and beliefs that the established powers of our society rest upon. Such suppressed information will be necessary for future generations to use to build an upward evolution for their society. The Bank of Wisdom intends to preserve that needed knowledge.

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And no wisdom in superstition.**

T H E
C O M P L A I N T
O F T H E
C H I L D R E N o f I S R A E L,
R E P R E S E N T I N G
T h e i r G R I E V A N C E S u n d e r t h e
P E N A L L A W S ;

And praying,

That if the TESTS are repealed, the JEWS may
have the benefit of this indulgence in common
with all the other subjects of *England*.

I N

A LETTER to a Reverend High Priest
of the *Church by Law established*.

From the EIGHTH EDITION.

By SOLOMON ABRABANEL,
of the *House of DAVID*.

First Printed in the Year 1736.

* Mr. *Arnall*, author of this ingenious tract, and of the *Animadversions* on a certain *Prelate's Remarks*, &c. inserted in the 3d vol. of this work, was a man so singular and extraordinary that a short account of him will be acceptable to the reader.

He was clerk to an attorney, when being recommended to Sir *Robert Walpole* as a man of most ready wit and invention in writing, he took him into his service, and employed him for a course of years in writing *the Free Briton*, and other papers in defence of his administration, for which he assigned him a thousand pounds yearly out of the treasury: and besides those public papers, he wrote several occasional tracts in defence of his Patron, who laid the treasury open to his demands. But when Sir *Robert* resigned, all his supplies being stopped, and having spent his money as fast as he received it, and being in debt a thousand pounds, he died of a broken heart in the 26th year of his age.

His invention was so quick, that Sir *Robert* used to say, no man in *England* could write a pamphlet in so little time as *Arnall*. His expences were boundless, having at one time ready furnished lodgings in three different parts of the city, and keeping a coach and six.

He was author of the *Letter to Dr. Cadex* on his modest instruction to the crown, in the case of Dr. *Rundle*, appointed bishop of *Londonderry*: he also wrote *Opposition no proof of Patriotism*; *Clodius and Cicero*; and many other political tracts, all very ingenious and plausible apologies for the administration of that time. It is said, that he affected to be a gentleman, but behaved in all companies as an attorney's clerk.

T H E
C O M P L A I N T
O F T H E
C H I L D R E N of I S R A E L,
& c. *

Reverend SIR, †

ALTHOUGH I am a JEW, a *circumcised Jew*, it will be allowed me to address myself to a *christian high priest*; nor will the *rabbins* of our religion condemn me for this application, since I come to you in behalf of a numerous *innocent* people, groaning under oppression, obliged to contribute to every public charge, yet excluded from every public employment; and this, on no other account than that of religion, though you know, and; I doubt not, are ready to avow, that the CHRISTIAN religion was never intended, nor ought, to leave

† Dr. Gibson, bishop of London.

the RIGHTS OF MANKIND in a worse condition than it found them.

The truth is, that we, the *Jews* of this kingdom, who have always been peaceable well-meaning men, submitted with patience to this hardship, because we never yet saw our *christian* countrymen agreed in opinion, whether *christians* in general are qualified by *christianity* itself for public employments; and we were led to believe, that if the *faith of Christ* admitted of so much distinction, if *christians* might be separated from *christians*, and only those of a *favourite* complexion entitled to offices, the *Jews* in this case could not hope for much indulgence from a people who have *so little for one another*.

But since this *stumbling block of offence* is likely to be taken away, since it is proposed that no man's RELIGIOUS OPINIONS shall be any longer his *civil* qualification or disqualification, we hope, that *protestant dissenters* will not be the *only men* received within this righteous comprehension, but that *you*, Sir, whose equity we reverence, though we differ from your faith, will be *our patron* on the principle of *universal charity*; that as the *great apostle* of your revelation gloried to be stiled the *apostle of the Gentiles*, you will think it no dishonour to be the BISHOP OF THE JEWS, and that as your Sa-
vour

viour himself said of one in his times, we may say of you with equal truth, *Behold an Israelite in whom there is no guile.* For,

We have an unquestionable right to your *protection*, if you are unquestionable in your *sincerity*; (as who dare even suspect it?) we are told by some *christians* who sometimes attend at church, that in your *pulpit* where you never deceive, and in your *prayers* where you never dissemble, you beseech God for *Jews, Turks, and Infidls*, giving us the preference of those who believe the *Arabian prophet*, as you prefer *Mahometans* before those who believe none at all. Now, it would be unreasonable to throw us wholly on the care of heaven, without shewing some regard to us on your own part: It would be imposing a burthen on the providence of God, and *expecting him to work miracles*, whilst you neglect the natural means of doing us good. If therefore you refuse our *reasonable* requests, and favour us with *unprofitable* prayers, you act the part of *courtiers*, who profess a world of respect for their friends, whilst they avoid every opportunity of serving them, and get rid of them at last by recommending them to *princes* or *great persons*, who have either no leisure to mind them, or no obligation to prefer them.

We hope for greater candour from *you*, Sir, and are therefore thus free to trouble you with

our most reasonable apprehension, that thought from the *rigid* institutions of our religion we every one of us must suffer *certain mutilations of the flesh*, yet we ought not from any consideration, either human or divine, to suffer such a *civil circumcision* as to be cut out of all employments, even in our native country, under a government whose authority we have obeyed, and whose establishment we have supported with such irreproachable fidelity, and such disinterested zeal; that divers *uncircumcised patriots* (not forgetting *his Honour* * in particular) who on certain occasions have been favoured with the trusts and loaded with the bounties of this royal family, would be flattered beyond what their modesty can bear, were it said in their praise, that they have not *behaved to the government* WORSE THAN VERY JEWS.

In fact, our present usage is more grievous than what we endured, even in the *land of Egypt*. We were so far from being under incapacities there, that JOSEPH, a *circumcised Jew*, was king *Pharaoh's* PRIME MINISTER, under whose gentle administration we flourished exceedingly; which is more than we have since done by the *favour of ministers*, though many have been in former times, who wanted *only circumcision* to make them PERFECT JEWS.

* Mr. Pultrny.

This exclusion from the trusts of that society which we belong to, is the more intolerable grievance, because, should you look into all the *offices of business*, whether *civil or ecclesiastical*, we may safely appeal to your candid opinion, whether you know *many* persons employed therein *who behave themselves* BETTER THAN JEWS.

We are not to be answered, as the *dissenters* have been, that *repealing the tests* would be of small advantage to us; for, God, and your *whole order* know, we ever had more scrupulous consciences, than to be *occasional conformists*. And though *bread and wine* are extremely proper to be eat and drank with the *paschal lamb*, yet we strictly adhere to our own *passover*, and never in our lives made free with your *sacrament*.

Nor are we to be answered, as the *papists* very justly are, that we favour the *pretender*; or, that we seek to establish a *foreign jurisdiction* within his majesty's realms: for *you, Sir*, can bear us witness, that we seek for no king but our *long expected Messiah*; and that we solicit no kingdom within less distance than the *holy city*, where we might safely be trusted, could we rescue it out of the hands of the infidels. So that as the *Pope and Turk* would undoubtedly be the chief enemies to our empire, we have all the merit

of protestants in opposition both to *Papery* and *Mahometanism*. And perhaps it may be said with the strictest truth, we have not contributed, like too many *Protestants*, to make our countrymen grosser BIGOTS than *Papists*, and greater SLAVES than *Turks*. But this is so tender a point, that we may not, without incivility, enlarge upon it in an address to you.

However, without giving offence to good protestants by unseemly reflections, we insist that the JEWS are in all respects of equal merit with the *French HUGONOTS*, who shew themselves conscious of our superiority, by their continual attempts to outvy us in the srouziness of their persons, and the sallowness of their complexions, in magnifying the losses they have suffered through persecution abroad, and hoarding up the gains they have acquired by usury at home: nay, we are ready to acknowledge, that, as far as dirt, avarice, and extortion can make them JEWS, they might be convicted upon any statute against *Judaism*; and even *circumcision* is not wanting to most of them, though we will not say AS PROSELYTES. But then you will do us the justice to own, that we were led by wise men and great captains, by *Moses* and *Aaron*, and *Jeshua*, with other extraordinary personages, which will at any time set the children of *Israel* above a rabble of ridiculous enthusiasts, who
were

were led by such *sniveling vermin* as *Prophet Lacy*, and the printer * of the *Old Whig*, or the *Consistent Protestant*.

Not that the *Jews* oppose any indulgence which the legislature may be disposed to grant to the several *ſectaries* in religion: but we hope whatever toleration is granted, that we shall have *our share of it*; that it will not be partial and unjust; or limited to a few, who complain of every church which will not receive them within *the pale of its immunities*; and who, when they are taken in, shut the door upon all who differ from them. Such confine all charity to those who dissent from the *thirty-nine articles*, as if people were not as much to be pitied, that cannot believe the *creed itself*; and, as if more indulgence were allowable to win men over to the church, than to bring them over to the *gospel*.

If the *rights of nature* are alledged in maintenance of this claim to public offices, wherein have the *dissenters* a better title to employments than the *Jews*? Are we not MEN, because we are *circumcised*? Are we not under the protection of the *law of nature*, because we are under

* One W——W——, a *French prophet*, who set up such a *weekly journal*, to have the *tests* repealed for the benefit of his *prophesying brethren*.

the dispensation of the *law of Moses*? If it is of justice due to them——Can it with justice be denied to us? And if an act of parliament is to pass, which shall give this capacity of executing public offices to *all* who live in obedience to public authority——Can such an act be consistent with itself, without comprehending the *Jews*?

If the *natural* right of the *Jews* to such an indulgence might need support from other considerations, I could write a volume, instead of a pamphlet, to shew the *hardships* which we labour under. You have laid hold of the PROMISE which was made to our *father Abraham*, and have taken the *kingdom of heaven* as your inheritance, in right of the *children of Israel*; whilst you have excluded the whole *twelve tribes* from every privilege of the society in which any of them live. You have converted *our* MOIETY of the *Bible* to your own use, and have utterly prohibited us from making any advantage of the *New Testament*, which might satisfy us for our loss of *the Old*. You have violently seized upon MOSES and AARON, and the TEN COMMANDMENTS, which were our natural property, and have placed them over your *communion tables*, yet make this pretence of *christian communion* a reason for excluding us from all advantages as members of the *commonwealth* :

So that *our law* and *our prophets* can afford us no protection, though you have exalted them to your *first places* of worship. You have robbed us of our *priesthood*, of our *Urim* and *Thummim*, and, what *flesh and blood* is scarcely able to bear, you have taken from us our *TYTHES*; yet you have given us nothing in exchange but *reprobation* and *damnation*, if after we have lost our goods and gear, *Satan* can be such a driveling fool as to take us.

For God's sake therefore, look upon us *Jews* as a people whom you have injured, and to whom you are indebted. We are not in the case of *dissenters*, who are said to have injured you: We never turned you out of your *churches*; we never set up *chapter lands* to sale; nor pulled down your *hierarchy*; but, on the contrary, it is to us that you owe your *mitres* and your *revenues*, your *privileges* and *pre-eminences*. If any one asks, whence you derive your *priesthood*? You know in your consciences that *Christ* himself was a *layman*; you fetch your pedigree from the *house of Aaron*, and make more profit to your order of the *five books of Moses*, than of all the *four evangelists*.

As you are beholden to us for the most valuable of your *emoluments*, you owe the most useful of your *politicks* to our institutions. You have
learned

learned from us, that the *righteous are entitled to the whole earth*; you have learned from us to *hew your enemies to pieces before the Lord*; you have learned from us to *slay man and woman, infant and suckling*, to make all your enemies *God's enemies*, and to *destroy them with fire and sword*, from pure zeal for his service.

I beg you, by the mutual civility which subsists between us, not to imagine that I lay this debt to the charge of the *orthodox* only: I ought to acknowledge, that the *dissenters* have their due share of all these gifts and graces; and I make the same use of the fact, in reasoning with either side, that since you have purloin'd your most profitable *practical doctrines* from the *children of Israel*, you are ungrateful beyond example, in debarring the *Jews* from the enjoyment of their natural rights.

This injustice is the more unprecedented, because all *other sects* in religion have persecuted only those who either worshipped *other gods*, or made innovations in the ancient and *established form of worship*. In the first case it hath been usual to abuse their DIVINITY himself, before it hath been held decent to *punish* people for adoring him. In the latter case, *schismatics* have had the odium upon them of *breaking in upon the property* of an established religion, and
of

of invading privileges which the national sect had been long possessed of. But *we, the Jews*, are not within the description of either of these cases. You own OUR GOD to be a *true* one, and you know that we were in possession of him *two thousand* years before the name of your opinion was mentioned in the world. In this case, we are neither *infidels, idolaters, nor schismatics*; we neither disown the *true God*, nor adore a *false one*; nor have we been guilty of innovations, but are punished for adhering to our *old forms*, and for not receiving *new*.

We might nevertheless absolve you, in a great measure, of this crying injustice, could we find that *your religion* had imposed it upon you; whereas we are fully satisfied, that *you have imposed it* upon your religion, and have taken measures against the *Jews* which are not to be justified by the gospel of *Jesus*. If the meritorious character of a *Saviour* might be pleaded with those who believe, or pretend *that he died to save them*; is it not manifest, that HE who redeemed you was a *Jew*; that HE whom you preach as a *light to all nations* was a *Jew*; that HE whose cause hath clothed you in purple, hath advanced you to honour, and loaded you with riches, even CHRIST HIMSELF, WAS A JEW? And can you forget, that *your religion*

had

had wanted the evidence of a principal *miracle* to confirm it, had it not been from *his* special regard and tender affection to *us Jews*? For *he raised up the dead*, as we are told in your *New Testament*; and, restored a childless father to his daughter, only because it was told him, that the CENTURION *loved our nation, and had built us a synagogue.*

If then the *founder of christianity* honoured an idolater, an unconverted *heathen*, who loved us, and built us a synagogue; how much greater indulgence would *he* have expected in our behalf from *christians* obliging themselves to obey his precepts, and imitate his example? Would hatred, reproach, or eternal war upon his people the *Jews*; would turning them out of their *synagogues*, or laying them under *penal laws* for resorting to them, have been more acceptable to JESUS *the Jew*, or more endearing to him in the conduct of *christians*, than the contrary usage was in the instance of the hospitable *pagan centurion*?

How opposite such proceedings are to the whole tenor of his *gospel*, the writers of his life, the *acts of his apostles*, and above all, the *epistles* of your great apostle PAUL, may abundantly shew. It was your *Saviour* himself who said, *Salvation is of the Jews*: And are we to have no

retribution but obloquy, hardships, and penal laws? WE, whom the psalmist and all the prophets have boasted to be the dominion, the peculiar, the inheritance of God; to whom, as PAUL himself hath testified, pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises: Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, CHRIST came, who is over all.

It is said of Jesus, in the gospel according to Matthew, that he gave it in his charge to his twelve apostles, *Go not into the way of the Gentiles, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.* In another place he answers to the woman of Canaan; *I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.* And when she came and worshipped him, crying, *Lord, help me,* he said, *It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it before dogs.* PETER, the prince of his apostles, speaking to our nation, says, *Ye men of Israel, YE are the children of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.* PAUL proclaims his mission to be *to the JEW FIRST, and also to the Gentile.* To honour the Jews, he declares to the ROMANS, *I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.* To vie with
 them,

them, he boasts to the CORINTHIANS, *Are they Hebrews? so am I: Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.* And in the epistle to the Hebrews, he tells them of the COVENANT which God almighty had made with the house of Israel, that HE *would be to them a God, and THEY should be to him a people.*

Having all these testimonies in *your own revelation* to entitle us to full protection and indulgence from you, whence is it that we suffer such multiplied oppressions; and, instead of *God's people*, are treated as the *outcast of all the earth?* Do you pretend that the *priests* in the days of our fathers destroyed *Christ*, and persecuted the *first christians?* In truth, they behaved themselves as PRIESTS generally behave, *wickedly, ambitiously, cruelly and impiously.* But, are the whole people to bear the sins and impieties of *their priests* on their heads, through all generations? Seeing that it was *priestcraft*, which either destroyed the innocent, or seduced the vulgar, and that the *common people* had no hands in the iniquity, but through the instigation of their villainous *guides*, who charged it on their consciences, and exacted it of them in the name of the most *high God*, that they should commit barbarities shocking to *human nature.* If, therefore, any zealous *christian* is offended at

the inhumanities of the *Jewish* priesthood, and willing to revenge them on *us* *Jews*, let him make it his own case ; let him think how hard and unjust it would be, to punish him or his family for the wickedness of any *christian* priest, either living or dead, especially of such as acted their injustice *two thousand* years before he was born. Did *Calvin* burn *Servetus* ? Might not then all the followers of *Servetus's* opinions as justly burn all *Calvin's* disciples, as *christians* punish *Jews*, because the *Jewish* priests crucified *Christ* ? Say then, are we more accountable for what was done in our church before we came into the world, than other churches will own themselves to be ? And are we not entitled to the indulgence and toleration of *christians*, by all those principles of equity and charity which they can offer to shew, that *our fathers* ought to have granted this indulgence and toleration to *theirs* ?

It is brought as a reproach upon our *whole nation*, that some of our ancestors put *Christ* to death. It is aggravated by the circumstance that he was the *Messiah of salvation* ; but if our ancestors knew him not to be such, they had not the guilt on their consciences of putting *so divine a person* to death. It is not pretended that they knew any such circumstance, but rather, that their

their hearts were *hardened*, and that their eyes were *blinded*, with other matters, which rather entitle them to *pity* than *reproach*. If then this act of cruelty and tyranny be viewed in its full horror, it was no other than an *act of injustice* to an innocent or righteous person. And if all posterity are involved in guilt and punishment by the casual destruction of innocence and virtue, all nations in the world **must** be accursed to the end of the world, since no age or country hath been without instances where the greatest and worthiest persons have been singled out for destruction by the violence of prevailing parties, frequently attended with popular acclamations.

You, *Sir*, who are an *high-priest* yourself, must own that *Caiaphas* was a man of more decency and temper than some of your own order; for he used no less weighty an argument for the destruction of *Jesus*, than that *it was better that one man should perish than an whole people*. Which of you, *Sir*, would have scrupled a moment to concur in a sentence which was urged by this *plea of necessity*? Or, which of you would not have put an *hundred men* to death, rather than that your own *hierarchy* should be brought into danger?

You must hence allow, that the barbarous act of putting *Christ* to death, and the deceitful
argu-

argument that made it popular and plausible, was a very ordinary effect of *priestly imposture, ambition and cruelty*, which are prone to shed blood, and to make havock of mankind, for the gratification of revenge, or the advancement of tyranny: And this being so common a blemish on the professors and leaders of all religions, *ours*, I hope, are no more to be branded with reproach, than the rest of our neighbours who have not less deserved it.

It is indeed very extraordinary, that the *apostles successors*, as you call yourselves, should take more liberty of abusing *us Jews*, than the *apostles* were allowed to do themselves. A great part of the EPISTLE TO the ROMANS is writ expressly to reprove the *ungrateful Gentiles* for despising and reviling our nation. Your apostle *Paul* loads us with no such unreasonable charge, as the *guilt of blood* which was shed before we were born, nor imputes it to the *Jews* even of that time who had no hand in shedding it. On the contrary he declares, *Brethren, my heart's desire, and prayer to God for Israel, is, that they may be saved. For, I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, though not according to knowledge.* And in the next chapter he affirms prophetically, *All Israel SHALL be saved.*

Even to those who urged their *unbelief* as an argument of their reprobation, he saith, *Hath God*

God

God cast away his people? God forbid; for, I also am an Israelite——Have they stumbled that they should FALL? God forbid, but rather through their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles——I speak to you Gentiles; in as much as I am an apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office——If the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches: And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in amongst them, and with them partakeſt of the fatneſs of THE OLIVE-TREE, boaſt not againſt the branches; but if thou boaſt, thou beareſt not the root, but the root thee——Thou wilt ſay then, the branches were broken off that I might be grafted in. Well; becauſe of unbelief they were broken off, and thou ſtandeſt by faith——BE NOT HIGH MINDED, but FEAR.

I cannot omit the paraphraſe which a great *christian* philoſopher, the late Mr. LOCKE, hath given us, becauſe he hath opened the ſenſe very fully; and the *English* reader will find it more intelligible than this paſſage can be, ſtrictly adhering to the *Hebrew idiom*, in which the New Teſtament is written.

“ If Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, from whom
 “ the *Jewish* nation had their originals, were
 “ holy, the branches alſo that ſprang from this
 “ root

“ root are holy. If then some of the natural
 “ branches were broken off, if some of the na-
 “ tural *Jews* of the stock of *David* were broken
 “ off and rejected, and thou an *heathen* of the
 “ *wild Gentile race* wert taken in and *ingrafted*
 “ into the church of God in their room, and
 “ there partakest of the blessings promised to
 “ *Abraham* and his seed, be not so *conceited* of
 “ thyself as to *shew any* DISRESPECT TO THE
 “ JEWS. If any such *vanity* possess thee, re-
 “ member that the privilege which thou hast
 “ in being a *christian* is derived to thee from
 “ the promise which was made to *Abraham* and
 “ his seed, but nothing accrues to *Abraham* or
 “ his seed from thee.”

From these full and irrefragable proofs it ap-
 pears, that not only the *law of nature*, but the
 LAW OF CHRIST entitles us to the protection
 of society; and it is a monstrous oppression of
us Jews, that we suffer any usage from *christians*
 which is repugnant to *christianity* itself. If all
 the *evange lists* and *apostles* prove the persecutions
 and *penal laws* which we labour under to be
 opposite to the intentions of *Jesus Christ*: If all
 the *different sects* in the *christian* religion main-
 tain, that persecution for *religious* opinions is
 contrary to the *law of God*, and to the *order of*
nature: What argument can be offered to ex-

empt us from any indulgence which can be allowed to *our brethren* of the *dissenting* persuasions ?

And yet it hath happened, as much to our amazement as to our indignation, since the debates concerning the *sacramental test* have been revived in this kingdom, that, having applied ourselves to certain *reverend pastors of dissenting congregations* offering our friendly assistance to them in the prosecution of their design, assuring them of the desire which we sincerely profess to remove these unjust restraints on the *natural rights* of mankind, and proposing to join with them in their petition to the *king's most excellent majesty*, and to *both houses of parliament*; they have utterly refused to countenance or to concur with us; they have found out distinctions to prove that *they have rights by nature*, which *we have lost by unbelief*; that they have a *privilege by grace*, which we cannot lay hold of *but by coming over to their faith*: And in short, have flatly told us, that none but *christians* ought to be capable of employments in a *christian country*. So little does it avail any body of men *to believe in GOD*, that they are nevertheless to be persecuted, as though they *believed in none at all*, unless they subscribe to all the rest of the *creed*.

We told them that we were the *children of Israel*; that MOSES was at least as divinely inspired as CALVIN; that we had as much respect for the TEN COMMANDMENTS, as *presbyterians, independents, anabaptists, or French prophets*; that we thought the observance of our law would make us *good subjects*, though we were not happy enough to be satisfied in our consciences of the *truth of the christian religion*; that no society had any right to exact more of its members than we had always yielded; and, that as we had never been wanting in dutiful submission to our superiours, we hoped it was no immodest demand to be admitted on the same footing with *other sects of dissenters*; that it is true, we are charged with too violent a passion for the *mammon of unrighteousness*, but that we find the most *sanctified christians*, in respect of *worldly lucre*, as little scrupulous of taking the *profit* to themselves, as they are of throwing the *scandal* upon us: That we GET *what we can*, and KEEP *what we GET*, not by any principle of religion, but of convenience; and that this principle reigns in as full perfection amongst the *saints at Hackney*, as among the *children of Israel in Bury street, or Duke's place*.

We cannot but admire at such uncivil usage from *our brethren the dissenters*, who have laid

themselves under so many obligations to *us Jews*, have turned us out of the possession of all our ancient privileges, and allow us as little right in the *old Jerusalem*, as we pretend to have in the *new*. In short, they make as free with *Sion*, as if they were *lords of the manor*; and appropriate the *songs of Sion* to themselves, as if they were *hymns of their own composing*. They have made prize of all the *psalms of David*, as if he had not been *king of Israel*; and all the *blessings of the LAW*, and all the *curses in the PROPHETS* are converted to their own use, as if the *Israelites* had no property in them. After this, it is marvelously strange, that they will share with us none of *their emoluments*, and that they would debar us of *all indulgences* which they lay claim to themselves.

You, *Sir*, who are an *orthodox high priest*, will judge between *us Jews*, and the *dissenters*, whether we have not the same right as the best of them to *employments*? Or, what pretence there can be, that against the constitution of the country in which we live, we, of all other people, should have no share in enacting or executing the laws which we are bound to obey? Why might not the *LAND OF CANAAN* be as profitably represented in parliament as the *KINGDOM OF SCOTLAND*, and with as little prejudice to the *church of England*, from *OUR*

SYNAGOGUE, as from THEIR KIRK? Why may we not adorn one side of *St. Stephen's chapel* with our *flaxen* wigs and *fallow* faces, in as becoming a manner as our *northern* brethren appear on the other side in their *black* ones?

With regard to publick employments, are there not abundance of them in this *happy island*, which are fitter for *Jews*, than for *christians*, and which have insensibly transformed good *christians* into real *Jews*, by the prevalent force of example? What may you think, *Sir*, of us *Jews*, in the capacity of *excise officers*? Or, what think you of *excise officers*, as different in any thing from us *Jews*; but that the **CIRCUMCISED** are in all respects fit to be *excisemen*, and that the **EXCISEMEN** are most of them fit to be *circumcised*?

I could, *Sir*, give you many reasons to convince you, that natural *christian policy* should induce you to favour us *Jews*; that you have many obligations to us as a *clergyman*, though you forget all relation to us as a *christian*; that as *our religion* was the parent of *yours*, our **SYNAGOGUE** is the *buttreffs* of the *christian CHURCH*, an evidence of its extraction, an authority to prove its antiquity, a living record to testify *whence you had your revelation*; and that therefore you cannot be too indulgent to a people,

ple, whose establishment *cannot be destroyed* without removing the foundation of *your own*.

But *that single* article which I have already mentioned, that *divine right* of TYTHES, which is the source of all your plenty, might make the *Old Testament* and the *Jews* of favourite consideration with you; especially when you reflect, that *ALL the sects* in your own religion deny your title to *tythes*; that the QUAKERS hold it *sinful* to pay them, and suffer all extremities rather than act against their consciences in so tender a concern; that the people of *all other* persuasions hold them to be of *human invention*, and belonging to the cognizance of *temporal power*; and, that most who allow them to be *lawful*, do not at all believe them to be *reasonable* or *expedient*.

Your brethren of the *clergy*, in return for this great obligation in the *article of tythes*, might very gratefully and profitably appoint *us Jews* to be your *tythe gatherers*; and this too, without alarming the people who pay them, since they can scarcely believe, that the *Jews* themselves would be more rigid collectors, than the generality of *church officers*.

But instead of expressing your gratitude to us, by such reasonable returns of kindness and confidence as we might expect, you most un-
 naturally

turally call upon us to serve *parish offices*, which you will *not suffer* us to discharge; yet punish us with *fines* and penalties, because we *do not* discharge them. Are you not more cruel in this respect than the *task-masters of Egypt*, who compelled our fore-fathers to make *brick without straw*? For, if they had acted by policies like yours, they would not have suffered us *by any means* to make the *bricks* which they had commanded, yet would have *punished us* for not making *what they would not suffer us to make*.

You have justified this *unmerciful* usage of us, by alledging, that in the same manner *you use one another*; and I owned in the beginning, that we could not expect better of you under this circumstance. But then you have at *present*, an opportunity to do us justice. For, since we are under the same hardships and incapacities with *other dissenters*, you ought to declare, that you look upon the *Jews* with the same tenderness as you look upon *other dissenters*; that when the DISPUTE shall be *adjusted* about *what time is proper*, you will shew the same indulgence to the *children of Israel*, as to the *disciples of Calvin*; that either sect stand in the same predicament with you; and that after the example of the apostle PAUL, you will give toleration to the JEW first, *and also to the Gentile*.

It might be expected, considering how long we have suffered ill usage, that you might think it time to give us better. From a passage which I find inserted in your learned countryman CAMBDEN'S BRITANNIA, by the present Lord BISHOP of LONDON [vol. 1. p. 535.] it appears, that * the JEWS flourished mightily in London a little after the conquest; being encouraged particularly by *William Rufus*. But their wealth, says his lordship, in succeeding times did them great injury, when they were miserably tortured by king *John* to discover and deliver up their hidden treasures. In the 11th of *Edward the first*, their synagogues were all pluck'd down; and in the 16th year of that king they were all banished to the number of fifteen thousand *; but their riches were all to be left behind, and they were not allowed to take any money or goods along with them, save only for the necessary charges of their transportation.'

I was exceedingly glad of this impartial testimony from a *christian bishop* of so great credit and authority; because a learned *English* lawyer,

* Lord Chief Justice *Coke*, who speaks of their expulsion from the view of records, numbers the *Jews* who went away at fifteen thousand and threescore & *Cok. Inst. Statut. de Judaismo.*

the Lord *Chief Justice* COKE, hath adhered to the letter of the law against us, as the truth of our case; he hath assigned our expulsion to no other cause than *our usury*, and relates it to have been effected by no other means than putting a *stop to our usury*; whereas the said *lord bishop* imputes it truly and candidly to the *oppression* and *avarice* of the times, rather than to the *misbehaviour* of our people.

The laborious *antiquary* STOWE, in his *Survey of London*, relates, [B. 3. p. 54.] ‘ That king JOHN, in the 11th year of his reign, commanded all *Jews*, both men and women, to be imprisoned and grievously punished, *because he would have all their money*. Some of them, *says he*, gave all they had, and promised more, to escape so many kinds of torment; for every one of them had at the least *their eyes pluck’d out*. Amongst whom there was one, who being tormented many ways, would not ransom himself till the king had caused (every day) *one of his great teeth* to be pluck’d out by the space of *seven days*; and then he gave to the king *ten thousand marks of silver*, to the end they should pull out no more. The said king at that time spoiled the *Jews* of *sixty-six thousand marks of silver*.’

The same author mentions, that in the preceding reign of *Richard the first*, ‘the **JEWs** at
 ‘ *Norwich, Bury, St. Edmunds, Lincoln, Stamford,*
 ‘ and *Lynn*, were robbed and spoiled; and at
 ‘ *York* to the number of five hundred, besides
 ‘ women and children, entered a tower of the
 ‘ castle, proffering money to be in surety of
 ‘ their lives, but the *christians* would not take
 ‘ it; whereupon they cut the throats of their
 ‘ own wives and children, and cast them over
 ‘ the walls on the *christians* heads, and then en-
 ‘ tering the king’s lodging, they burned both
 ‘ the house and themselves.’

‘ In the 26th of *Henry the third*, the *Jews*
 ‘ were constrained to pay to the king twenty
 ‘ thousand marks at two terms in the year, or
 ‘ else to remain in perpetual prison.’

‘ In his 35th year he exacted inestimable
 ‘ sums of all rich men, namely, of **AARON** a
 ‘ *Jew* born at *York*, fourteen thousand marks
 ‘ for himself, and ten thousand marks for the
 ‘ queen. And before that time he had taken
 ‘ of the same *Jew* as much as amounted in all to
 ‘ thirty thousand marks of silver, and two hundred
 ‘ marks of gold for the queen.’

‘ In the 16th of *Edward the first* all the *Jews*
 ‘ in *England* were (in one day) apprehended by
 ‘ precept

' precept from the king, but they redeemed
 ' themselves for twelve thousand pounds of sil-
 ' ver : Notwithstanding which, in the 19th of
 ' his reign he banished them all, as is afore-
 ' mentioned, giving them only to bear their
 ' charge till they were out of the realm. He
 ' made a mighty *mass of money* of their houses,
 ' which he sold, yet the commons had paid him
 ' a *fifteenth* of all their goods to compensate his
 ' loss in banishing them.' For *Lord Chief Jus-*
tice COKE takes notice, ' That from the 17th
 ' of *December*, in the 50th year of *Henry the*
 ' *third*, until *Shrove-Tuesday* in the second of
 ' *Edward the first*, (being about the space of
 ' *seven* years) the crown had received *four hund-*
 ' *red and twenty thousand pounds, fifteen shillings,*
 ' *and four pence, de exitibus Judaismi* ; at which
 ' time the *ounce of silver* was but *twenty pence,*
 ' and now it is more than *treble* so much.'

From this period, *anno 1291*, we had no
 re-admission into *England* till 1655, being kept
 in banishment three hundred and sixty four
 years. It was then the wisdom of *OLIVER*
CROMWELL that brought us into this country
 again, by a treaty with *Manasseh Ben Israel*,
 wherein the *Jewish nation* were restored to the
 exercise of their trade and worship in *England*.

As it is but *four score* years since our re-admission, our fathers, for the most part, were *aliens* by birth, and could not claim a *natural right* to the privileges of the community. They could only be received as *foreigners*, with proper encouragement to trust their families and effects under the public protection. But in this course of time the *Jews* of *Cromwell's* days are dead, and we their children are *natural-born subjects* of *Britain*; so that what incapacity or disability may remain upon us, is entirely to be laid to the charge of religion, and is an hardship upon us for *dissenting from the national establishment*. This is our grievance, and this we hope will at length have redress; that the war which hath been carried on against us almost ever since the *Norman conquest*, may now be brought to a conclusion, and that we may not be oppressed any longer for no other reason, than that *after the way which men call heresy we worship the God of our fathers*.

We ought not to impute any cruel disposition to the good *people of England*, but to the prejudices against us, which were fomented by the *arts of bigotry* and *priestcraft*, or encouraged by the *private views of princes*: Inasmuch that it was our misfortune to be banished from *Rome* by *Tiberius*, for the fraud of a few of our religion,

gion, in seducing a *Roman* lady: We were for no better reason banished out of *France* in 1253; and the catholick king *John the second* forced THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND JEWS in one day out of the dominions of *Spain*.

I have already said, and I cannot but insist with humble submission, that it is time we should be differently treated by the *christian* world; and that as you have taken the *covenant of grace* entirely from us, you ought in common justice to leave us in quiet possession of the *rights of nature*.

In what manner, or to what degree the *legislature* ought to indulge us, must be submitted to their consideration, and must be determined from a variety of circumstances: but whatever they grant to *other dissenters* will by undeniable parity of reason *be due to us*, unless it could appear that we are not *dissenters*, because we are *Jews*; whereas there is not a more common case in this great city, than to see the *Jew* and the *dissenter* blended together in one and *the same person*.

It were needless to name a great number of persons in this predicament, when there are *two* of such notoriety as the venerable P——r W——t——r, Esq; and the worshipful Sir G——e C———l, Knight. The former is so extremely sensible

fensible of having **ALL** *the* marks of *Judaism* upon him, that a woman with a counterfeited pregnancy would not be more afraid of a writ *de Ventre Inspeciēdo* : The latter, God bleſs him, is ſo ſincerely *one of us*, that he is *not aſhamed to own it*. It is a well known circumſtance related of one of theſe gentlemen, that being by the **LENITY** of the *Engliſh* conſtitution admitted to give evidence in courts of juſtice, on the faith of a *chriſtian*, the officer who adminiſtered the oath, though a ſtranger to his perſon, by a right judgment of his phisognomy, gave him the *Old Teſtament* to depoſe on as a *Jew*.

How great analogy there is in general between the *difſenters* and *Jews*, and how eaſily we are to be miſtaken for each other, wants no other witneſſes than the **PASTORS** of each perſuaſion. How happily do they concur in the *black cloak* and the *ſhort bib* ? How perfectly does the *dirty phiz* of a *French refugee* accord with the *sable hue* of a *rabbi* in *Iſrael* ? How exactly alike are the ſize of their *conſciences*, and the reach of their *underſtandings* ; their zeal for works of faith and piety ; and above all, for the *ready penny* ?

This *ſimilitude of circumſtances*, is the ground of our juſt confidence, that there will be no *difference of indulgence*. We are perfectly reaſonable

sonable *in our* desires ; we want no more than what you allow them ; we think ourselves as well qualified to govern *corporations*, to sit in that grave assembly the *CITY common-council*, and to make a jobb of my *lord mayor's house*, as the most religious *elder of Salters hall*. We concur with them entirely, that it is respectively our right by the *law of nature*, and we humbly persuade ourselves, that no distinction will be made by the *law of grace*.

We have now stated our case to the *impartial world*. We are willing to be judged, even by the *reverend bench*, whether our complaints are not well grounded, and our desires just. We have nothing further to propose, than to attend our *dissenting brethren* IN A BODY, whenever a PETITION *for the repeal of the tests* is to be presented : And we accordingly intend, *on that day*, to march in a *solemn PROCESSION* through the streets of *London*, from our *synagogue in Bury street*, with OUR PRIESTS, and OUR LAW, and AARON'S BELLS, at the head of us. If this *moving appearance* shall not have its effect, we must despair of being restored to our *natural rights*. But, as you, *Sir*, have power to assist us in our *picus* design, we hope you will imitate the pattern set before you by the apostle PAUL, *who unto the Jews became as a Jew, that he might gain the Jews*; and if you protect the *children*

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of Israel in this emergent affair, we will promise you, whenever you come amongst us, the *first cut of the paschal lamb*, and the *chief seat in the synagogue*.

I am, with all respect to your person and character,

Your most devoted,

Humble servant,

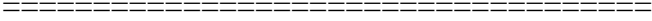
From the place of my sojournment in *Synagogue lane, Bury street*, the 10th day of the 12th month called *Adar*.

Solomon Abrabanel.

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Bank of Wisdom

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AN
ENQUIRY
INTO THE
BEHAVIOUR
OF OUR
Great Churchmen
SINCE THE
REFORMATION,
IN THE
Enacting and Executing
OF
PENAL LAWS
AGAINST
Papists and Protestant Dissenters.

*Faithful are the words of a friend. Prov. xxvii. 6.
Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the
truth? Gal. iv. 16.*

*The time cometh that whosoever killeth you, will think
that he doth God service. Joh. xvi. 2.*

*Aspicimus populos, quorum non sufficit ira,
Occidisse aliquem, sed peiora, brachia, vultum
Crediderint genus esse cibi. Juv. Sat. 16. l. 169.*

A N

E N Q U I R Y

I N T O T H E

B E H A V I O U R

O F O U R

Great Churchmen

S I N C E T H E

R E F O R M A T I O N, &c.

LENITY and good usage have more effectually weakened the strength and numbers of *protestant dissenters*, than harsh and severe measures: On the contrary, the *papists* have ever abused patience and forbearance, by corrupting great numbers, both in their religion and loyalty. What account then can be given of one generation of *bishops*, being *forward* and *zealous*, in enacting and executing all hard and oppressive laws against *dissenters*,
and

and of the present race *refusing* to appear in any manner against the *papists*: Or, is there truth in this prevailing opinion? Let us attend to facts.

In part of queen ELIZABETH's reign, many of them owed their promotions to such as were favourers of *popery*. In the four following ones, the *popish* interest generally prevailed *at court*. When our *princes* and *ministers* have been *bad*, they have constantly and easily had their resemblance in their *prelates*: but the connection has not been so sure and true, when we have had such rulers, as have been tolerably *good*. This may easily be accounted for; there is a full uniformity in iniquity, not so in goodness. Besides, specious appearances and declarations impose on the best, and the most wary are often mistaken in selecting what is good; but evil agents every where abound, and are steady in their ways.

Hierarchical powers and prerogatives have given our *prelates* connections with *popery*. The principles of all *other dissenters* are regarded as unfriendly, and opposite to their high claims. Usage and construction of laws have been in favour of *papists*; especially with regard to the *act of uniformity*, there hath been notorious partiality.

partiality. According to *this* act *no* form of giving orders, excepting what is contained in the *book of common-prayer*, is *legal* and *valid*; therefore our bishops are obliged to *re-ordain* *papists*, as well as *presbyterians*. However, the law has been dispensed with, in favour of *popish* orders. Is not this an high contempt of law in the *ruling clergy*; and mean and low submission in the *laity* and *lawyers*? But to proceed.

In the 35th of queen ELIZABETH, a law was enacted of the utmost harshness and severity, purely, and merely for *separating* from the service of the church. On refusing to sign an acknowledgment of their sorrow for *separation*, and to promise *conformity* for the future, they were obliged within three months to *abjure* the realm, and suffered as *felons*, if they ventured to return: but there was a clause to except *popish recusants*. Receiving and retaining into any family, a servant or visitor for more than one month, who did not go to church, incurred a forfeiture of 12*l.* By another act immediately following, *papists* had the much gentler usage of being only confined not to travel above five miles from their usual places of abode without licence. Such were the proceedings, when the cause of the *church* was principal, and the archbishops and bishops directed
the

the queen's resentments. To them the above laws are solely to be ascribed. From unanswerable reasonings in the house of commons it is notorious, how great the aversion *there* was to *this* bill. But they durst not venture on a refusal, having so often felt the severe and speedy effects of the sovereign's displeasure; who, when this was incurred, shewed no regard to their persons, properties, nor privileges. The high offences and provocations, which produced such terrible effects, arose from the behaviour of some *puritans* and *separatists*, who were *naturally mad*, and of others, who were *made so* by *oppression*.

Rude and indecent behaviour and language to superiours, ever since the *revolution*, has been a prevailing fashion with those, who have assumed to themselves the distinction of being the *only true churchmen*. This manner grew in the late reign; has been greatly improved in the present; and is now advanced to a height far beyond what was then practised by these people. In our time, government has been reviled and despised, because mild and merciful. How great then would be the clamour; how insufferable the outrage did these men endure a tenth part of what had been inflicted on the *puritans*, previous to this oppressive law. Their loyalty and affection to the queen, were real

and undoubted. In the act there are no colours nor suggestions to the contrary. The punishments which were the consequence of this act, and all the hardships with which they were attended, do not appear to have given the queen much concern, though by this means deprived of many useful subjects. All the imputations to their prejudice consisted in rude complaints of hardships and sufferings, and in disowning the queen's *supremacy* in matters *purely ecclesiastical*. This they thought inconsistent with *CHRIST'S* being *head over all things to his church*. But if this was a false and enthusiastic conceit, with regard to the state, it was harmless, compared with the opinion of the *pope's supremacy* and *infallibility*. And was the danger of their *bitter words* in any degree equal to the *treasonable* and *mischievous* practices of the *papists*, who were restless in their endeavours against the government, attended with the utmost bigotry to the *Spaniard*, the queen's most malignant enemies, and the most cruel oppressors of the *protestants*, and had been guilty of plots, conspiracies, and open rebellions. And yet, such was the policy of the *great churchmen*, as to contrive the keeping the one at home, and sending the other abroad.

When the solemn dying speeches of *Penry* and others, were reported, the queen is said to have

regretted the death of such *good* subjects. The *archbishops* and *bishops* were *chiefs* in all *these* prosecutions, and penalties. Sometimes they were convicted, as obstinate and incorrigible, and, after the manner of the *inquisition*, delivered to the civil magistrate: but at other times pursued to death; for the *archbishop* was the first who signed the warrant for *Penry's* execution.

They seem to have reason and truth on their side, who ascribe the *queen's* renouncing of *popery*, not to *aversion*, but *necessity*: For her *legitimacy* and *right* to the crown, she must have been wholly indebted to *Rome*. Many previous conditions burthensome and inconvenient to regal power, would have been stipulated; and in these circumstances, the *subjecting* herself and kingdom to *Spain*, by accepting for a husband, the severe and unrelenting *Philip*, would have been unavoidable. The title of *head of the church*, is supposed to have been the great endearing and engaging particular in her *protestant* profession. Under such a ruler, how naturally and readily were they promoted and encouraged, who entered into all the pride and oppression of *popery*? The courts ecclesiastical with great rigour punished *dissenters*, but favoured and avoided as much as possible the notice of *popists*.

King JAMES I. feared only the power and policy of *Rome*; but he liked many particulars in *their* religion, and had made great professions of regard to *that* court. He hated *puritanism*, on the account of the rigour and rudeness of their *kirk*. In *our* churchmen he found a full compliance and countenance, in all his pretensions to *absolute power*. He readily placed such at the *head* of the church, who were *harsher* in their severities than their predecessors. *Doctrinal errors*, and some gross and rude contradictions of *established* orthodoxy, were crimes punished with *fire* and *fagot*. In the several instances of burning hereticks, which happened in this, and the former reign, in several parts of the kingdom, *the church* begun and denounced the crime, and *the state* concluded with execution. The dominion and power of mean and worthless favourites in this reign, who were the authors of nothing great or good, either at home or abroad, and who procured large grants of the royal revenue, naturally diminished the reverence and influence of the crown.

The temper, principles, and opinions of K. Charles the Ist, disposed him to exercise the *prerogative* in a more ungracious manner than any of his predecessors. In order to promote

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his designs, he supported and encouraged the most severe and oppressive measures of *church-men*. They were the *chiefs* in those courts, where power and prerogative, in opposition to law and equity, prevailed. The vigour of church-discipline, was not applied to encourage sobriety and decency, but to enforce dissoluteness and disorder. Dispensations and deprivations were the sure consequences of refusing to publish the *book of Sports*. *Royal* and *ecclesiastical* ordinances, defeated the obligations of *revealed* and *natural* religion. Was not all this in compliance with the *manners* of *popery*, which was in every respect favoured and encouraged? How much this was the case at court is evident, from the concurrent testimony of all sorts of *historians*. *Sidney's* Letters afford several important additional informations; many other letters and informations have been destroyed by the bigotry and partiality of the successors in other great families; but if what yet remains in private hands becometh public, many more affecting particulars, will be exposed. *Scrupulous protestants*, were distressed and persecuted with all possible heat, while immunities and favours were every where bestowed on *papists*. The language, in which the *church of Rome* had been treated, received then a great alteration. *Idolatry* and the *pope*, being *antichrist*, were the

common imputations of our *first* reformers. The deformities, the detestable ways and qualities of *this false church*, are without any reserve set forth in our *homilies*. But the reviving and repeating these appellatives *then* became matter of *great offence*; soft and honourable colours were only in fashion. The *books* of zealous *protestants* were prohibited, while those of zealous *papists* were either licensed or indulged.

The son, who was his immediate successor, did not give the proofs of his adhering to the *Romish* religion, for which his brother was distinguished; but we have no reason to doubt of his inclinations. No religious considerations could much affect the mind of so profligate and careless a creature while in health, but when the approaches of death forced him into sobriety, then he wholly submitted to the rule and discipline of *this church*. In his reign, laws of the hardest and most unreasonable kind, with regard to the liberty and property of *protestant dissenters*, were enacted and executed with the utmost strictness and rigour. While *the church* was thus avenging itself on its enemies, the *papists* pursued their measures without much disturbance in a private and public way. Far from being disturbed, the principal posts in the government were possessed by such as were well

known or justly suspected. The principal were the duke of *York*, lord treasurer *Clifford*, *Arlington*, and others; yet, no instances occur of the rulers of the church expressing, in those days, any concern for the power and growth of popery; but they earnestly contended for the enforcing of inflaming and ensnaring oaths: This was done by *Ward*, *Morley*, and others, in several sessions of parliament, and they treated non-compliers with all imaginable pastoral severity. The bishops and popish party readily concurred in these cruel and oppressive laws. Revenge and the prospect of subjecting every thing to their power, was a motive with the one, and the prospect of producing lasting hatred and aversion among protestants, directed the other.

Though this was evidently the case, it had no effect in abating the progress of our churchmen's furious zeal. Destruction of dissenters was the favourite point; therefore, during the influence of *French* or *popish* councils, by large grants of supplies they purchased new laws of greater severity, and vigorous revival of persecutions; and towards the conclusion of this reign, when arbitrary and *popish* measures returned with full power, the bishops and their adherents were eagerly employed in completing the ruin of non-conformists. *Lampugh*, of *Exeter*, in 1684, commanded his clergy to publish in their

their churches on *Sunday* an order of the justices promising the reward of *forty shillings* for the apprehending of a *dissenting minister* *.

During the dominion of the *tories*, in the reign of his brother, it was highly criminal to call the duke of *York*, a *papist*; though this was notorious, and it became his *public profession* immediately after his accession to the throne. But this gave *no* apparent concern to the leaders of *high-church*. They began with gratifying the king in the affair of his revenue; and, immediately after this grant, desired him to issue forth his royal proclamation to cause the *penal laws*, to be put in execution *against dissenters* from the church of *England*. All the celebrated names of the party were every where busy in causing the proclamation to have its full effect. Had the king gone on in humouring *their* insolent and oppressive temper, and been contented with the sure and slower methods of promoting *his own religion*, he would have met with no interruption and have been attended with full success. But the court schemes were for *liberty and toleration*; they required the compliance and assistance of the *clergy*, attempted to *punish* them for their non-compliance, and *disturbed* them in their rights and properties. Then

* *Neal's Hist. of Puritans*, p. 526. vol. 4.

their *practice* fully confuted all their solemn *professions* of absolute and unlimited *passive obedience* and *non-resistance*. They, who had treated, as perverseness and unreasonable obstinacy in *others*, the *pleas of conscience*, and *pleas for liberty, rights and privileges*, felt for themselves what they would not see before in the case of their neighbours. How fully then were their eyes opened; how strong were their declarations of sorrow and concern for what was past; and how obliging and many were their vows! When our wonderful deliverance was accomplished, the *toleration act* could not be refused, after the many solemn promises in the days of peril and terror. But several reasonable attempts to end our religious differences were disappointed by those, whose *pre-eminence* and principles give them an aversion to all compliance and moderation. When the *convocation* met, all abatement in point of *ceremony and ritual*, all proposals for the *smallest* reformation and alteration were absolutely rejected. *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutare*, was the *popular*, but a very *unfair* plea. Might not this with equal truth have been urged against the *reformation*, and for the continuance of the sanguinary laws of *popery*? For the same reason the *penal laws* of the church, which, with so much mischief, and in so *anti-christian* a manner, had been executed

cited above 20 years, should not have been repealed by the *toleration act*. The contrivers and abettors of *persecuting* measures have constantly had the distinction of being *for the church*; and the friends of civil and religious liberty, of being *its enemies*. All opportunities *since the revolution* have been improved to revive distresses and persecution. The *bishops*, who have been active on these occasions, have been venerated as true fathers, while they who have been influenced by due regard to the obligations of natural and revealed religion, which enforce mercy and charity, have been treated with all sorts of reproaches.

In the last 60 years the immunities of conscience, and the full rights of all quiet and good subjects, have been stated and explained, in the most satisfactory manner. A *general toleration*, which in the days of our forefathers was treated as impious and abominable, has been since fully justified. They, whose practices, when they have had the fullness of power, have constantly contradicted every principle of this kind; have lately assumed the character of being the most zealous advocates for an unbounded liberty. How great is their truth and modesty! For, have not they, who glory in being the *only true sons of the church*, when they have had full power to pursue their own devices, proceeded from

smaller to the highest oppressions? Such was the *schism* act, the last legacy of *their* glorious queen ANN. Archbishop DAWES took the chair in order to model and finish that *iniquitous* bill.

Bromley, the trusty agent for *Oxford*, at the same time published the *church's* design of *excluding*, in another sessions, ALL sorts of *dissenters*, from their rights of voting in elections for members of parliament, and of being magistrates of corporations. All these great things were done for the *church* in order to have its zealous and active assistance in *undoing* the *state*.

On good assurances of being thus rewarded, the pulpit and press recommended the giving up the fruits of all our victories, of all our blood and treasures. They applauded the scheme for leaving the *house of Bourbon* in possession of wealth and power, terrible and dangerous to the liberties of *Europe*. The delivering us to the dominion of a *popish* pretender, was the notorious purpose of the principal managers. Far from conceiving any sense of danger from such a prospect, this was the general hope and expectation of the *greatest churchmen*. Peace became chiefly desirable, as preparing the way for the success of *hereditary right*. *Doing for the church* doth not import doing any thing for the promotion of piety and virtue, and for
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the restraint of profaneness and immorality. Doing something by way of grievance and distress to *protestant dissenters*, is the meaning of the word, when used by those, who call themselves the ONLY good churchmen.

But has *doing for the church* had as usual application to the affair of *popery*? This is represented as wholly appertaining to the state. But is not the gaining profelytes to an idolatrous superstitious religion, and whose doctrines inculcate perfidy and cruelty, a matter of religious concern? Have not the number of *dissenters*, for many years past, decreased, both in the *capital*, and throughout the kingdom? When the fathers have acquired considerable fortunes, do not the *sons* think it below gentlemen to go to a meeting? When people of any condition of either sex *marry* into the establishment, they generally soon *cease* to be *dissenters*. But the case is quite different with regard to *papists*; the *protestant* is too commonly lost in alliances of *this kind*.

Popery for many years has decayed very inconsiderably in great families. If it has been deserted by some, others have returned to that communion: Strong and very undeserved supports have been procured to this *wicked cause*, by its interests and alliances at home. It has

also had the aid and countenance of all the mighty powers abroad. Far from diminishing, the number of *papists* is justly supposed to have greatly increased in this century. They are wise in their *arts* and *schemes* of government. It is known in fact, that additions are continually making to their *religious funds*. These must be very considerable by virtue of their faith and policy. Nothing can be more properly adapted to make impressions on persons of all ranks and characters. How great is the security promised by *infallibility*! How comfortable and pleasing are the doctrines of *absolution*, of *dispensations* and *indulgencies*! both to saints and sinners!

From these and many other considerations, the *danger* of the prevelancy of *popery* is too evident; but this cannot be pretended of any of *our sects*; no, not on the impossible supposition of their *entire* union. Nothing is more common in the mouths of many *zealous churchmen*, than declaring they would much rather be *papists* than *presbyterians*. But he must be a blind and perverse *zealot* indeed, who can pretend to dispute from which quarter we have most to *fear*. Can any thing be more clear and convincing from just experiments at home, and from what is practised among *papists* and *Calvinists* abroad? As they would be good men and good subjects, it becomes *churchmen* equally with *statesmen* to

contribute the utmost to our deliverance from this adhering plague and mischief. *Papery*, wherever it has a full influence, is the *author of confusion, and every evil work*, and discourageth the most amiable and valuable virtues in society. It is an impossible and vain pretence, that a *real papist* should *really* be a *good* subject. If there is any necessity for producing proofs of this, we have much reason to complain of a careless and unreflecting race of *protestants*.

The papers of *Sheldon*, superiour of the *Jesuits*, seized in *November 1745*, afford many instances of the absolute subjection of the *popish* clergy and laity, and the uncontrollable authority of their directors. For the superiors of other orders may justly be presumed to be equally arbitrary in their influence. We have in these papers proofs of commands being obeyed, when gentlemen of the first rank and their chaplains have been both averse to a separation. None are allowed to chuse their own priests, nor to retain them any longer than is agreeable to the pleasure of the superior. How dangerous must such bigotry and enslaved disposition be to the government, for there can be no doubt of their ready obedience in all other instances?

When there are any of their missionaries, who by reading, conversation, and probity of

mind, are disposed to become converts to our church, how unhappy and dismal are their circumstances; they are sure of feeling all possible effects of the malice and revenge of the party they desert, and have the discouraging prospect of *neglect*, *coldness*, and *suspicion* with which we have thought fit to treat such *converts*. With a very few exceptions this has generally been the case, ever since the revolution. Some of our gentlemen, to their great dishonour, have countenanced mean and profligate characters, and worthy persons have been imposed upon, which are sufficient motives for the utmost care and caution: but do not justify the prudence and piety of a *total neglect*, and an *absolute discouragement*.

Nothing *inconsistent* with *humanity* and *christianity* is required from the *leaders of our church*: Their predecessors, in the case of *protestant dissenters*, have been proved to be concerned in *pur suing them to death*, in signing warrants for their execution. They were the absolute directors of arbitrary and unequitable courts. They were the chief promoters of laws, which subjected every thing valuable to vile informers and viler justices, armed with absolute power. And, since the full light and establishment of liberty, they have bestirred themselves in distressing those, who, as *protestants*, should be regarded as *brethren*. Is it not very inexcusable, that

that their zeal for the *protestant succession* has been the great offence and provocation! This will appear from a careful review of the known temper and designs of the generality of their disturbers.

Precautions against the *papists* are needful, as they are, and must ever remain, *enemies to the government*. Their impudent pretences to *infallibility*; the absurd and impious powers annexed to their *consecrations*; the dishonour done to christianity by many *idolatrous* and *superstitious practices*, are what they are accountable for only to the governor of the universe. But as their *casuistry* and *doctrines* corrupt all true goodness and morality, the *governors of our church* for this reason seem to have as proper and necessary a concern as *the governors of the state*.

The *clergy* have complained, and too often with great reason, of the total neglect of the *civil magistrate*; for, without proceeding to extremities, many things might have been done to discourage the impudence of these enemies of religion and government, and their unfair methods of making profelytes. But the truth is, the *many laws*, now existing, cannot be put in execution. Besides, such *pecuniary* and *sanguinary* penalties as they enact, are quite disagreeable to our mild government, and inconsistent with the manners

of the age. Attempts to execute them have been rare and uncommon, and only in times of great danger, and upon great provocations. They were chiefly made *in terrorem*. Most of them were extorted from those princes under whom they not only enjoyed many immunities, but places and power. The *repealing all these and substituting* in their room ONE *easy and practicable law*, of the *defensive and preservative* kind, is what our times and circumstances *absolutely* require. These laws have afforded matter for clamour and scandal; comparisons from hence have been made betwixt *popish* and *protestant* severities: But in this the clamorous have been equally impudent and ungrateful. Have they not generally been a dead letter, and a mere name without effect? Can any thing then more become the *honour* of our religion, and nation, than *effectually* to remove this reproach? Laws hard and severe, and which *cannot, or are not, to be executed*, procure hatred and contempt; than which, nothing worse can happen to any government. The suspicions entertained of *our bishops* must be groundless. They were promoted on assurances given of their tempers and designs, being quite opposite to *their predecessors* under Charles the 11d, who have the lasting reproach of being unanimous in their voting against the repeal of the statute

De Heretico Comburendo (1677.) We cannot imagine the majority of *this bench* are for the continuance of such severities, and averse to provide for our security, by ONE *sober and reasonable* LAW.

In order to the framing such a *law*, the utmost sagacity and prudence, and all assistances are requisite. And nothing can better deserve the *utmost* care and consideration. What we have seen and felt, should make us sensible of the *true spirit* of *popery*. But as there are too many symptoms of the prevalency of *insensibility* and *inattention*, let us recollect *what an enemy* we *really* have. There are some considerations of a general nature, and some in which we are more peculiarly concerned. The policy and designs of *Rome* are still the same. None of their *antient* claims and practices have been *renounced*. Nor *can* they be given up, though circumstances oblige them to suspension and forbearance: No intervention of time and accidents can weaken, much less destroy what is founded on *divine and infallible right*. Those powers, who have been so mean and senseless, as to continue in their devotion to the *infallible head*, have received great benefit from the *reformation*. The boundless power of *disposing* of crowns and dominions, and *disturbing* states by excommunications and interdicts, are now forborn

forborn on the account of their hazard and danger.

As the power and practices of the successors of St. *Peter* are little regarded and remembered, it will be proper to produce a few instances in the very words of the PAPAL bulls. The *Bullarium Magnum*, printed at *Luxemburgh* 1727. vol. I. at pag. 27. *Anno 1073. Greg. Pap.* affords an account of the *excommunication* of *Henry*, son of the emperor of the same name; of his being *deposed* from royal dignity; and of his *subjects* being *absolved* from their *oaths* of *allegiance*, pag. 28. The prayers, tears, the miserable and humble submissions of this prince procured him *absolution*. But for subsequent offences, the *excommunication* was repeated, and his deposition we have in the following terms, pag. 29. *Omnem potestatem et dignitatem illi regiam TOLLO, et ut nullus Christianorum ei, sicut REGI, obediat INTERDICO; omnesque, qui ei juraverunt vel jurabunt de regni dominatione à juramenti promissione ABSOLVO.*

The *excommunication* of our *Henry VIII.* was in 1535. We have the particulars, p. 710. Among many which might be mentioned, I only recite—*Ipsasque confederationes et obligationes, tam factas quam in posterum faciendas—Nullius roboris vel momenti nullasque, irritas, cassas—ac*

pro infectis habendas fere DESCERNIMUS et DECLARAMUS. As his holiness thus declared, all agreements, promises, and alliances, utterly VOID; so in what followeth, ALL the possessions of his subjects and favourers by sea and land, are declared the lawful prizes of pirates and robbers, bona mercantia, pecunias, navigia, res et animalia, auctoritate, scientia et potestatis plenitudine—captoribus concedimus.

In vol. II. 1570, pag. 324-5. In the excommunication of queen ELIZABETH, he pronounceth—*Quin etiam ipsam pretenso regni prædicti jure necnon omni et quocunque dominio, dignitate, privilegioque privatam.* It afterwards dischargeth all from their oaths—*Proceres, subditos et populos dictæ reginæ, & cæteros omnes qui illi quomodocunque juraverunt hujusmodi, &c.*
 —ABSOLVIMUS.

But the season of zealous and general obedience to all the dictates of Rome, was now over, and the effect was not answerable to what was designed. Such fulminations against particular princes have since ceased. The Roman pontiff contenteth himself with annual denunciations against hereticks in the *Cæna Domini* bull. This is indeed very full and significant, and has from time to time received additions and improvements. All, who have separated from the
church

church of Rome, of whatever denomination, are then solemnly excommunicated.

From whence it plainly followeth, that becoming good and obedient subjects to *protestant* princes is inconsistent with the faith and religious duty of a *papist*. Necessity and fear aweth them into a quiet behaviour; but whenever they have any prospect of success every evil effect of bigotry and wicked zeal is to be expected.

The common plea, of men's being little influenced by religious principles in temporal affairs, must not be here allowed. To our great shame how few are there among us, who have any principles: and therefore no effect can be expected, where there is no cause. But *papists*, who live among *protestants*, are well seasoned with the fundamentals of their persuasion. Of what great and good things are they hereby assured, in this and the world to come? They are confident of having on their side *infallibility*, and *safety* of being secured from all sorts of evils: such a rivetted opinion must produce whatever can be desired. The *decrees* of the *infallible head*, or what their priests assure them are such, are heard with the same veneration by the generality of *papists*, as an immediate voice
from

from heaven. The plainest proofs of the falsehood and vanity of their high and wicked pretensions are insignificant. Groundless and confident conceits are more firmly retained, and operate with greater strength than any reasonable persuasion. Delusion is infinite, and will not suffer us to give any attention to the most mischievous consequences. How else could man, who is a sociable being, receive, without abhorrence, dispensations for taking of oaths, and absolutions from their observance, after they are taken?

These are the *known* doctrines and practices of *popery*; though they have been often disowned with their usual modesty and veracity. According to *their system* the whole affair of *swearing* on any occasion before *heretical* magistrates must be a *nullity*. They are, as *hereticks*, incompetent judges, and are all by virtue of the *Cæna Domini* bull, in a state of excommunication; and as such can have no privileges and powers; all their doings must be illicit and of no effect. They can have no sense of any obligations; and therefore must ever be ready to take any oaths of allegiance and fidelity. But our oaths, as now formed, cannot be swallowed; because, by so doing, they would renounce some of the *principal* points of their religion. Yet for

for great and weighty purposes even *such sort* of swearing is allowed ; but such permissions are only granted to particular and select persons. This can never be general, because it would be a public and repeated disowning their profession.

The pope's power to grant any sort of leave is readily believed. Far from being confined to things lawful and honest, he can bestow what characters and colours he pleaseth, on persons and things, in contradiction to nature and truth. Dispensations for taking unlawful oaths, were they generally known and owned, would be an intolerable dishonour and discredit to this communion. This is what no government should endure. However, there is no doubt of this having been a common practice whenever judged expedient and necessary. A proof of this appeared so late as 1678. Printed journal 8vo. 1680, in page 152, is an account of a faculty under the seal of cardinal *Barberini* for *dispensing* with the taking the oaths, and other things.

This faculty was entered into the *Journal of the House of Commons*, and probably into that of the *Lords*. If this entry was not destroyed in the following years wherein *popish* councils and power prevailed, a present publication would
be

be very seasonable. These *permits* are for those whose religion has not yet made them insensible of honour and honesty in the most solemn transactions with *protestants*. Hereby what they scruple, as unlawful, is not only satisfied, but it becomes a laudable performance. The great end and purpose of serving the *catholick cause* consecrateth every means, especially when directed by such authority.

When *oaths* have been taken with, or without a dispensation, in compliance with *heretical laws*, all their concern must be how to evade or break them with safety. Thus they pay a dutiful regard to their *supreme directors*. They have frequently renewed constitutions and decrees against those who swear or oblige others to swear (*what they call*) *unlawful, impossible and damnable oaths*, and which contradict the rights and liberties of the church, and the decrees of the council of *Trent* (see *Bullarium Magnum*, vol. II. 1584. pag. 513.) *Invocatio constitutionis Nic. 3i. et aliorum sanctionum, contra jurantes et jurare facientes, illicita, impossibilia, damnosa et ecclesiasticæ libertati, ac decretis concilii Tridentini adversantia.*

This has been the constant and continued language of their *sovereign pontiffs*; all oaths and contracts made in the most solemn and
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binding manner, are declared *Nullities* by *Clem.* the XIth, when they contradict what he esteems prior and superior obligations. This is properly applied by the bishop of *Oxford*, in his sermon *on the rebellion*, preached *October 1745*, to vain dependences on the words and assurances of the *pretender* *.

What has been produced, sufficiently proves the points we have under consideration. Multiplying authorities would be needless. However it would be a useful performance to make an entire collection of whatever is to be found on this subject. The decrees of councils, whatever has been published by *popes* in all forms; the occasion and consequences of all these determinations and ordinances, should be explained by short historical narratives. This would expose in full colours and proportions the *man of sin, the son of perdition*; who has long appeared in our world, not for the quiet and welfare, but the disturbance and misery of human societies, and whose true devotees *can never cease to do evil*. As they are not their own masters, but must obey their directors, *they cannot be treated with any sort of confidence and trust*.

From what has been said, it plainly followeth, there can be no entire dependance on the

* Pag. 16. 'The most formal declaration he can make,' &c. See archbishop *Secker's* first volume of *Sermons*.

evidence they give upon oath, either in civil or criminal cases. The penalties of perjury, and the inconveniencies which attend the infamy of being a false witness, are their only restraints. The sense and importance of an oath, because taken before an anathematized, and consequently incompetent judge, cannot be duly regarded. When the controversy is betwixt one of their own communion, and a *heretic*, what arts of falshood and prevarication may not be expected?

The revival of *learning* in the two last centuries, and the *freedom of enquiry*, introduced by the reformation, should naturally have produced the disgrace and diminution of *pspery*. For no cause can be incumbred with grosser absurdities and more offensive fooleries. But *art* and *policy*, great and growing wealth and power, have given it effectual supports, and have caused it to grow and increase both at home and abroad. To the *Jesuits* belong the chief praise of this wonderful management. They have depressed and almost totally extinguished the long boasted rights of the *Gallican* church. All the brave and repeated efforts of parliaments and lawyers have been ineffectual, and have only discovered the power of their adversaries to be great beyond imagination. Nor have they only got the better of law and argument, but have subdued
a spirit

a spirit of enthusiasm, which was raised to their prejudice. Thus the court of *France*, after so many high contests, has been, for some years, *entirely devoted to Rome*. The head of the beast, which seemed wounded to death, has been healed, and all that part of the world wondereth after the beast and worshippeth his image*.

Some plausible and superficial observers among *protestants*, have propagated a groundless conceit, of the abatement of *popish* cruelty. Because the punishments by fire and faggot have ceased; therefore mildness prevaieth. But do not the burnings in *Spain* and *Portugal*, and the dismal apparitions produced to light from the *dungeons of the inquisition*, afford the most joyous spectacle to a multitude of all ranks, which is constantly assembled on these occasions? In *Italy* they have great advantages from travellers, and from none so considerable as the expensive *English*. These refined politicians wisely avoid offending their visitors with such shews. Amongst them, all is performed *within* the impenetrable precincts of their horrid tribunal.

* Since this tract was written, there has been a change in *France* for the better, by the expulsion of the *Jesuits*; which we hope will be productive of greater good in time.

Amazing is the supposition of *an abatement* of the worst kind of *persecution*, while the inquisition subsisteth in its full force, and with all its arbitrary, secret, and most inhuman practices. As *protestantism* has in a great measure been totally extirpated where it prevails; the subjects of its vengeance are greatly diminished; but there is no diminution of its vigour and diligence.

In *France*, when *ministers* are discovered, the painful death of *breaking on the wheel* is commonly inflicted; as for *others*, they are become sensible of the evil policy of losing useful hands; and therefore they are confined to the *perpetual slavery* of the galleys, which, all things considered, of the two evils, is less eligible than the short, *tho' more* shocking punishment of perishing in the flames. How gladly would the other sex change their dismal confinements for martyrdom? As these things are certainly so, how affected must the ignorance be, how great the insensibility of the real *strength* and *true spirit* of *popery*, which for many years hath been so common.

They, of this communion, who live amongst us, have had the *impudence* to *disown* this as much as possible; and for the rest, they have

many disguises. This is one of the many instances of their assurance and falshood. As their whole foundation is false, so every part of the superstructure has been carried on by *lying*, and by all *deceivableness* of unrighteousness. Their *ecclesiastical schemes* and *orders* in *Great Britain* and *Ireland* are known; so are the large sums which are expended on this account both at home and abroad. The many affecting and dangerous proofs we had of their enmity to every thing valuable in our constitution, have been so often, and so lately repeated, as to render all remarks of this kind useless.

Just intimations have been given, how a religion, unsupported by all true reason, and void of every good quality, has been *maintained* and *increased*. As it is not absolutely necessary, we will not attempt to open and explain some of them, for fear of giving high offence to the great people of both sexes. One thing only should not be omitted. Since the marriage of *Charles* the 1st, the *devout* and *holy women* of this *communion* have been its most useful advocates and supports. They have been, and are eminently so in our days. When the husband has been well disposed, the teizing and importunity of the *wife* has *obliged* him to desist from his good designs. And when they have had the resolution to carry them into execution, *domestic*
life

life has generally proved disagreeable. In persons of rank and circumstances, there are few instances, if any, of regard being paid to the better judgment of the man. The endearing benefit of absolution, and a perfect deliverance from frights and fears of the most affecting kind, must be very engaging arguments with the *weaker sex*. Strong and confident assertions, high and mighty promises, with which the agents of Rome abound, are to them far more affecting and convincing, than the utmost clearness and strength of argument. I will not proceed to many other considerations, but conclude with a *very interesting particular*, which seems not to have been commonly known. It must have been of great and comfortable importance, in fixing the adherence of the *ladies* to such faculties and privileges.

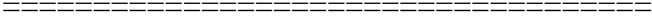
In the collection of letters and other writings relating to the *popish* plot, in the hands of G. Treby, Esq; and published by order of the *House of Commons*, 1680. at pag. 122 and 123. we have the *Latin original*, attended with a translation, *faculties and privileges granted to the right rev. father in God, John Laker, an English priest; to be by him extended unto and executed, in the kingdoms of England and Scotland, and all other the dominions of the king of Great Britain,*

excepting Ireland. The 4th, which is to our present purpose, is as followeth, Of granting a liberty and allowing a right to all from whom due benevolence hath been withheld, or to whom upon any pretence it hath been refused, of *demanding* and *claiming* the duties of the marriage bed.—The Latin is much shorter.—*Restituendi jus petendi debitum amissum.*

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Emmett F. Fields
Bank of Wisdom

Bank of wisdom
P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201
U.S.A.

MACHIAVELL'S
VINDICATION

OF

HIMSELF and his WRITINGS,

AGAINST

The IMPUTATION of IMPIETY, ATHEISM,
and other HIGH CRIMES:

EXTRACTED FROM

His LETTER to his FRIEND ZENOBIUS;

And TRANSLATED into ENGLISH,

By MR. NEVILLE*.

* See the Life of Mr. *Neville*, prefixed to the last edition of his *Dialogues on Government*, printed for Mr. *Millar*, in the Strand.

M A C H I A V E L' S
 V I N D I C A T I O N
 O F
 H I M S E L F and his W R I T I N G S,
 & c.

THE discourse we had lately (dear *Zeno-*
bio) and the pressing importunity of
Guilio Salviati, that I would use some
 means to wipe off the many aspersions cast upon
 my writings, gives you the present trouble of
 reading this letter, and me the pleasure of
 writing it.—

I have yielded, you see, to the entreaty of
Guilio, and the rest of that company, for that I
 esteem it a duty to clear that excellent society
 from the scandal of having so dangerous and per-
 nicious a person to be a member of their con-
 versation: For by reason of my age, and since
 the loss of my liberty, and my sufferings under
 that monster of lust and cruelty, *Alexander de*
 L 4 *Medici,*

Medici, set over us by the divine vengeance for our sins, I can be capable of no other design or enjoyment, than to delight and be delighted in the company of so many choice and virtuous persons, who now assemble themselves with all security, under the happy and hopeful reign of our new prince *Cosimo*; and we may say that tho' our commonwealth be not restored, our slavery is at an end, and that *he coming in by our own choice*, may prove, if I have as good skill in prophesying as I have had formerly, ancestor to many renowned princes, who will govern this state in great quietness, and with great clemency; so that our posterity is like to enjoy ease and security, tho' not that greatness, wealth and glory by which our city hath for some years past, even in the most factious and tumultuous times of our democracy, given law to *Italy*, and bridled the ambition of foreign princes. But that I may avoid the loquacity incident to old men, I will come to the business. If I remember well, the exceptions that are taken to those poor things I have published, are reducible to three.

First, *That in all my writings I insinuate my great affections to the democratical government, even so much as to undervalue that of monarchy in respect of it, which last I do not obscurely in many passages teach, and as it were, persuade the people to throw off.*

Next,

Next, *That in some places I vent very great impieties, slighting and vilifying the church as author of all the misgovernment in the world, and by such contempt make way for atheism and profaneness.*

And lastly, *That in my book of the prince, I teach monarchs all the execrable villanies that can be invented, and instruct them how to break faith, and to oppress and to enslave their subjects.*

I shall answer something to every one of these; and that I may observe a right method, will begin with the first.—

I shall speak to that which is indeed fit to be wiped off, and which, if it were true, would not only justly expose me to the hatred and vengeance of God and all good men, but even destroy the design and purpose of all my writings; which is to treat in some sort, as well as one of my small parts can hope to do, of the *politicks*: And how can any man pretend to write concerning policy, who destroys the most essential part of it, which is obedience to all governments? It will be very easy then for *Guilio Salviati*, or any other member of our society, to believe the protestation I make, *That the animating of private men, either directly or indirectly, to disobey, much less to shake off any government, how*

despoticall soever, was never in my thoughts or writings. Those who are unwilling to believe this, may take the pains to assign in any of my books, the passages they imagine to tend that way, (for I can think of none myself) that so I may give such person more particular satisfaction.

I must confess I have a discourse in one of my books to encourage the *Italian* nation, to assume their antient valour, and to expel the Barbarians, meaning, as the antient Romans use the word, all strangers from among us: but that was before the kings of *Spain* had quiet possession of the kingdom of *Naples*, or the emperor of the dutchy of *Milan*; so that I could not be interpreted to mean that the people of those two dominions should be stirred up to shake off their princes because they were foreigners, since at that time *Ludovic Sforza* was in possession of the one, and king *Frederick* restored to the other, both natives of *Italy*. But my design was to exhort our countrymen not to suffer this province to be the scene of the arms and ambition of *Charles VIII*, or *K. Lewis* his successor, who when they had a mind to renew the old title of the house of *Anjou* to the kingdom of *Naples*, came with such force into *Italy*, that not only our goods were plundered, and our lands wasted, but even the liberty of our cities and government

endangered; but to unite and oppose them, and to keep this province in the hands of princes of our own nation, this my intention is so visible in the chapter itself, that I need but refer you to it. Yet, that I may not answer this imputation barely by denying, *I shall assert in this place what my principles are in that which the world calls REBELLION*; which I believe to be not only *a rising in arms* against any government we live under, but acknowledge that word to extend to all *clandestine conspiracies* too, by which the peace and quiet of any country may be interrupted, and by consequence the lives and estates of innocent persons endangered. REBELLION then so described, *I hold to be the greatest crime that can be committed among men*, both against *policy, morality and in foro conscientiae*; but notwithstanding all this, *it is an offence which will be committed whilst the world lasts, as often as princes tyrannize*, and by enslaving and depressing their subjects, make magistracy, which was intended for the benefit of mankind, prove a plague and destruction to it: for let the terror and the guilt be never so great, it is impossible that human nature, which consists in passion as well as virtue, can support with patience and submission the greatest cruelty and injustice, whenever either the weakness of their princes, the unanimity of the people, or any other fa-

vourable accident, shall give them reasonable hopes to mend their condition, and provide better for their own interest by insurrection. So that princes and states ought in the conduct of their affairs not only to consider what their people are bound to submit to, if they were inspired from heaven, or were all moral philosophers; but to weigh likewise what is probable *de facto* to fall out in this corrupt age of the world, and to reflect upon those dangerous tumults which have happened frequently, not only upon oppression, but even by reason of malversation, and how some *monarchies* have been wholly subverted and changed into *democracies* by the *tyranny* of their princes; as we see, to say nothing of *Rome*, the powerful cantons of *Switzerland* brought by that means, a little before the last age, to a considerable commonwealth, courted and sought to by all the potentates in Christendom. If princes will seriously consider this matter, I make no question but they will rule with clemency and moderation, and return to that excellent maxim of the ancients, almost exploded in this age, *That the interest of kings and of their people is the same*: Which truth has been the whole design of my writings to convince them of.

Now having gone thus far in the description of REBELLION, *I think myself obliged to tell you*
what

what I conceive not to be rebellion. *Whosoever then takes arms to maintain the politic constitution or government of his country in the condition it then is, I mean, to defend it from being changed or invaded by the craft or force of any man (although it be the PRINCE or chief magistrate himself) provided, that such taking up of arms be commanded or authorized by those, who are by the order of that government legally entrusted with the custody of the liberty of the people and foundation of the government: this I hold to be so far from rebellion, that I believe it laudable; nay, the duty of every member of such commonwealth; for that he who fights to support and defend the government he was born and lives under, cannot deserve the odious name of REBEL, but he who endeavours to destroy it.* If this be not granted, it will be in vain to frame any mixed government in the world: Yet such is at this day the happy form under which almost all Europe lives, as the people of France, Spain, Germany, Poland, Swedeland, Denmark, &c. wherein the prince hath his share, and the people theirs: Which last, if they have no means of recovering their right, if taken away from them, or defending them if invaded, would be in the same estate, as if they had no title to them, but lived under the empire of Turkey or Muscovy: and since they have no other remedy

but by arms, and that it would be of ill consequence to make every private man judge when the rights of the people are invaded (to which they have as lawful a claim as a prince to his;) which would be apt to produce frequent, and sometimes causeless tumults, therefore it hath been the great wisdom of the founders of such *monarchies*, to appoint *guardians* to their *liberty*, which if it be not otherwise exprest, is and ought to be understood, to reside in the estates of the country; which for that reason (as also to exercise their shares in the sovereignty, as making laws, levying money) are to be frequently assembled in all the regions of *Europe* before mentioned: These are to assert and maintain the orders of the government and the laws established, and (if it cannot be done otherwise) to arm the people to defend and repel the force that is upon them: Nay, the government of *Arragon* goes further, and because in the intervals of the estates or courts, many accidents may intervene to the prejudice of their rights, or *Juros*, as they call them, they have during the intermission appointed a magistrate called *El Justicia*, which is by the law and constitution of that kingdom, to assemble the whole people to his banner, whenever such rights are encroached upon; who are not only justified by the laws, for such coming together, but are severely

verely punishable in case of refusal: so that there is no question, but that if the kings of *Arragon*, at this day very powerful by the addition of the kingdom of *Naples*, and of *Sicily*, and the union with *Castile*, should in time to come invade their kingdom of *Arragon*, with the forces of their new dominions, and endeavour to take from them the rights and privileges they enjoy lawfully by their constitution; there is no question, I say, but they may (*tho' their king be there in person against them*) assemble under *Justicia*, and defend their liberties with as much justice as if they were invaded by the French or by the Turk. For it were absurd to think, since the people may be legally assembled to apprehend robbers; nay, to deliver possession forcibly detained against the sentence of some inferior court, that they may and ought not to bestir themselves, to keep in being, and preserve that government which maintains them in possession of their liberties and properties, and defends their lives too from being arbitrarily taken away. But I know this clear truth receives opposition in this unreasonable and corrupt age, when men are more prone to flatter the lust of princes than formerly, and the favourites are more impatient to bear the impartiality of laws than the sons of *Brutus* were, who complained *leges esse surdas*; that is, tho' they were fine gentlemen, in favour with the ladies and mini-

sters of kings pleasure, yet they could not oppress, drink, whore, nor kill the officers of justice in the streets, returning from their night-revels; but the execution of the laws would reach them as well as others, who in the time of *Tarquin* it seems found the *prince* more exorable. Nay, *the divines themselves help with their fallacies to oppugn this doctrine by making us believe, as I said before, that it's God's will all princes should be absolute; and are so far in conspiracy against all mankind, that they assert, that in the text, this shall be the manner of your kings; God was giving that people the Jus Divinum of government, when in truth he was threatenng them with the plagues of tyrants.* But I spare the *divines* here, since I shall have occasion in discoursing of my next accusation, to shew how that sort of people have dealt with God's truth, and with the interest of men; and to be as good as my word, I shall presently fall upon that point, having been tedious already in the former.

I am charged then in the second place with impiety, in vilifying the church, and so to make way for atheism. I do not deny but I have very frequently in my writings laid the blame upon the church of *Rome*, not only for all the misgovernment of Christendom, but even for the depravation, and almost total destruction of christian religion itself in this province; but that this
discourse

discourse of mine doth or can tend to teach men impiety, or to make way for *atheism*, I peremptorily deny: And although for proof of my innocence herein, I need but refer you and all others to my papers themselves as they are now published, where you will find all my reasons drawn from experience, and frequent examples cited, which is ever my way of arguing; yet since I am put upon it, I shall in a few lines make that matter possibly a little clearer, and shall first make protestation, *that as I do undoubtedly hope by the merits of Christ, and by faith in him, to attain eternal salvation, so I do firmly believe the christian profession to be the only true religion now in the world.* Next I am fully persuaded that all divine virtues, which God then designed to teach the world, are contained in the books of the holy Scriptures, as they are now extant and received among us. From them I understand, that God created man in purity and innocence, and that the first of that species by their frailty lost at once their integrity and their paradise, and entailed sin and misery upon their posterity: That almighty God, to repair this loss, did out of his infinite mercy, and with unparalleled grace and goodness, send his only begotten son into the world to teach us new truths, to be a perfect example of virtue, goodness and obedience, to restore true religion, degenerated among the Jews into superstition, formality and hypocrisy, to die for the sal-

vation

vation of mankind, and in fine, to give to us the holy spirit to regenerate our hearts, support our faith, and lead us into all truth.

Now if it shall appear, that as the lust of our first parents did at that time disappoint the good intention of God in making a pure world, and brought in by their disobedience the corruptions that are now in it; so that since likewise the bishops of Rome by their insatiable ambition and avarice, have designedly, as much as in them lies, frustrated the merciful purpose he had in the happy restoration he intended the world by his Son, and in the renewing and reforming of human nature, and have wholly defaced and spoiled christian religion, and made it a worldly and heathenish thing, and altogether incapable, as it is practised among them, either of directing the ways of its professors to virtue and a good life, or of saving their souls hereafter; if I say this do appear, I know no reason why I, for detecting thus much and for giving warning to the world to take heed of their ways, should be accused of impiety, or atheism; or why his HOLINESS should be so enraged against the poor inhabitants of the vallies in Savoy, and against the Albigenses for calling him antichrist. But to find that this is an undoubted truth, I mean that the popes have corrupted christian.

christian religion, we need but read the New Testament, acknowledged by themselves to be of infallible truth, and there we shall see that the faith and religion preached by Christ, and settled afterwards by his apostles, and cultivated by their sacred epistles, is so different a thing from the christianity that is now professed and taught at *Rome*, that we should be convinced that if those holy men should be sent by God again into the world, they would take more pains to confute this *Gallimaufry*, than ever they did to preach down the tradition of the *Pharisees*, or the fables and idolatry of the *Gentiles*, and would in all probability suffer a new martyrdom in that city under the vicar of Christ, for the same doctrine which once animated the *heathen tyrants* against them. Nay we have something more to say against these **SACRILEGIOUS PRETENDERS** to God's power; for whereas all other false worships have been set up by some politic legislators, for the support and preservation of government, this false, this spurious religion brought in upon the ruins of christianity by the popes, hath deformed the face of government in *Europe*, destroyed all the good principles and morality left us by the heathens themselves, and introduced instead thereof sordid, cowardly, impolitic notions, whereby they have subjected mankind, and even great princes

and states to their own empire, and *never suffered any orders or maxims to take place where they have had power, that might make a nation wise, honest, great or wealthy.* This I have set down so plainly in those passages of my book which are complained of, that I shall say nothing at all for the proof of it in this place, but refer you thither; and come to speak a little more particularly of my first assertion, **That the pope and his clergy have depraved christian religion:** Upon this subject, I could infinitely wish, now letters begin to revive again, that some learned pen would employ itself, and that some person versed in the chronology of the church, as they call it, would deduce out of the ecclesiastical writers, the time and manner how these abuses crept in, and by what arts and steps this *Babel* that reaches at heaven, was built by these sons of the earth. But this matter, as unsuitable to the brevity of a letter, and indeed more to my small parts and learning, I shall not pretend to, being one who never hitherto studied or writ of theology, further than it did naturally concern the politicks; therefore I shall not deal by the New Testament, as I have done formerly by *Titus Livius*, that is, make observations or reflections upon it, and leave you and Mr. *Guilio* and the rest of our society to make their judgment, not citing, like preachers, the chapter

or verse, because the reading the holy Scripture is little used, and indeed hardly permitted among us.

To begin at the top, I would have any reasonable man to tell me whence this unmeasurable power, long claim'd, and now possessed by the bishop of *Rome* is derived; First, of being Christ's vicar, and by that, as I may so say, pretending to a *monopoly of the holy spirit*, which was promised and given to the whole church, that is, to the elect or saints, as is plain by a clause in St. *Peter's* sermon, made in the very same time that the miraculous gifts of the spirit of God were first given to the apostles, *who says to the Jews and Gentiles, Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for this promise is to you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*

Next, to judge infallibly of divine truth, and to forgive sins as Christ did, then to be the head of all ecclesiastical persons and causes in the world, to be so far above kings and princes, as to judge, depose and deprive them, and to have an absolute jurisdiction over all the affairs in Christendom, *in ordine ad spiritualia*; yet all this the canonists allow him, and he makes no
scruple

scruple to assume, whilst it is plain, that in the whole *New Testament* there is no description made of such an officer to be at any time in the church, except it be in the prophecy of the *Apocalypse*, or in one of *St. Paul's* epistles, where he says, *Who it is that shall sit in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.* Christ tells us, his kingdom is not of this world, and if any will be the greatest among his disciples, that he must be servant to the rest; which shews, that his followers must be great in sanctity and humility, and not in worldly power.

The apostle *Paul* writing to the christians of those times, almost in every epistle commands them to be obedient to the higher powers or magistrates set over them: And *St. Peter* himself (from whom this extravagant empire is pretended to be derived) in his first epistle bids us *submit ourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king, or, &c.* And this is enjoined, although it is plain that they who governed the world in those days, were both *heathens, tyrants* and *usurpers*: and in this submission, there is no exception or proviso for *ecclesiastical immunity*. The practice as well as precepts of these holy men, shews plainly, that they had no intention to leave successors, who should deprive *hereditary princes* from their

their right of reigning, for differing in religion, who without all doubt are by the appointment of the *apostle* and by the principles of christianity, to be obeyed and submitted to in things wherein the fundamental laws of the government give them power, though they were Jews or Gentiles. If I should tell you by what texts in Scripture, the popes claim the powers before mentioned, it would stir up your laughter, and prove too light for so serious a matter; yet, because possibly you may never have heard so much of this subject before, I shall instance in a few: they tell you therefore, that the jurisdiction they pretend over the church, and the power of pardoning sins comes from Christ, to St. *Peter*, and from him to them. *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, &c.* From these two *texts*, ridiculously applied, comes this great tree, which hath with its branches overspread the whole earth, and killed all the good and wholesome plants growing upon it: The first *text* will never by any man of sense be understood to say more than that the *preachings, sufferings and ministry* of Peter was like to be a great foundation and pillar of the doctrines of Christ: the other *text*, as also another spoken by our

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Saviour to his apostles, Whose sins ye remit they are remitted, and whose sins ye retain they are retained, are by all primitive fathers interpreted in this manner, *Wheresoever ye shall effectually preach the gospel, you shall carry with you grace and remission of sins to them which shall follow your instructions: But the people who shall not have these joyful tidings communicated by you to them, shall remain in darkness and in their sins.* But if any will contest, that by some of these last texts, that *evangelical excommunication*, which was afterwards brought into the church by the apostles, was here prefigured by our great master; How unlike were those censures, to those now thundered out, as he calls it, by the pope? these were for edification and not destruction, to afflict the flesh for the salvation of the soul; that apostolical ordinance was pronounced for some notorious scandal or apostacy from the faith, and first decreed by the church, that is, the whole congregation present, and then denounced by the pastor, and reached only to debar such person from partaking of the communion of fellowship of that church till repentance should re-admit him, but was followed by no other prosecution or chastisement, as is now practised. But suppose all these texts had been as they would have them; how does this make for the successors of St. Peter, or the rest? Or how can this prove the

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the bishops of Rome to have right to such succession? But I make haste from this subject, and shall urge but one text more, which is, *The spiritual man judgeth all men, but is himself judged of none*: from whence it is inferred by the canonists, that first, *the pope is the spiritual man*; and then that *he is to be judge of all the world*; and last, that *he is never to be liable to any judgment himself*: whereas it is obvious to the meanest understanding, that St. Paul in this text means to distinguish between a person inspired with the spirit of God, and one remaining in the state of nature; which latter, he says, cannot judge of those heavenly gifts and graces, as he explains himself, when he says, *The natural man cannot discern the things of the spirit, because they are foolishness unto him.*

To take my leave of this matter, wholly out of the way of my studies, I beg of you, Zenobio, and of Guilio, and the rest of our society, to read over carefully the *New Testament*, and then to see what ground there is for *purgatory*, by which all the wealth and greatness hath accru'd to these men; what colour for their *idolatrous worship of saints* and their images, and particularly for speaking in their *hymns and prayers* to a piece of wood, *the cross* I mean, *Salve Lignum*, &c. And then *fac nos dignos beneficiorum Christi*,

as you may read in that office ; what colour, or rather what excuse for that horrid unchristian and barbarous engine, called the *inquisition*, brought in by command and authority of the pope ; the inventor of which *Peter*, a Dominican friar, having been slain among the *Albigenses*, as he well deserved, is now canonized for a saint, and stiled *San Pietro Martine*.

In the dreadful prisons of this inquisition, many faithful and pious christians, to say nothing of honest moral Moors or Mahometans, are tormented and famished, or if they out-live their sufferings, burnt publickly to death, and that only for differing in religion from the pope, without having any crime or the least misdemeanor proved or alledged against them ; and this is inflicted upon these poor creatures, by those who profess to believe the Scripture, which tells us, that *faith is the gift of God*, without whose special illumination no man can obtain it, and therefore is not in reason or humanity to be punished for wanting it. And Christ himself hath so clearly decided that point in bidding us let the *tares and the wheat grow together till the harvest, that I shall never make any difficulty to call him ANTICHRIST, who shall use the least persecution whatsoever against any differing in matters of faith from himself, whether*

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the person so dissenting, be heretic, Jew, Gentile or Mahometan.

Next I beseech you to observe in reading *that holy book*, though *christian fests* are doubtless of divine right, *what ground there is for enjoining fish to be eaten, at least flesh to be abstained from for one third part of the year*, by which they put the poor to great hardship, who not having purses to buy wholesome fish, are subjected to all the miseries and diseases incident to a bad and unhealthful diet: whilst the rich, and chiefly themselves and their *cardinals*, exceed *Lucullus* in their luxury of *oysters, turbats, tender crabs and carpioni*, brought some hundreds of miles to feed their gluttony upon these penitential days of abstinence from *beef and pork*. It may be it will lie in the way of those who observe this, to enquire what *St. Paul* means, when he says, that *in the latter days some shall depart from the faith, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving*: but all these things, and many other abuses brought in by these *perverters of christianity*, will I hope ere long be enquired into by some of the disciples of that *bold friar**, who the very same year which I prophesied, that the *scourge* of the church was not far off, began to thunder against their indul-

* *Martin Luther.*

gences, and since hath questioned many tenets long received and imposed upon the world. I shall conclude this discourse, after I have said a word of the *most bellish of all the innovations brought in by the popes, which is, the CLERGY*; these are a sort of men, under pretence of ministring to the people in holy things, set apart and separated from the rest of mankind, from whom they have a very distinct and a very opposite interest by a human ceremony, called by a divine name, viz. *ORDINATION*; these, wherever they are found with the whole body of the monks and friars, who are called the regular clergy, make a band which may be called the *JANIZARIES* of the papacy; these have been the causes of all the solacisms and immoralities in government, and of all the impieties and abominations in religion, and by consequence of all the disorder, villany and corruption we suffer under in this detestable age; these men, by the bishop of Rome's help, have crept into all the governments of Christendom, where there is any mixture of monarchy, and made themselves a third estate, that is, have by their temporal ties which are almost a third part of all the lands in Europe, given them by the blind zeal, or rather folly of the northern people, who over-ran this part of the world, *slept into the throne*, and what they cannot perform by these secular helps, and by the dependency their vassals have upon them,

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they fail not to claim and to usurp by the power they pretend to have from God and his vicegerent at *Rome*. They exempt themselves, their lands, and goods, from all secular jurisdiction, that is, from all courts of justice and magistracy, and will be judges in their own causes, as in matters of tythe, &c. and not content with this, will appoint courts of their own to decide sovereignty in testamentary matters and many other causes, and take upon them to be the sole punishers of many great crimes, as witchcraft, sorcery, adultery, and all uncleanness. To say nothing of the afore-mentioned judicatory of the inquisition; in these last cases, they turn the offenders over to be punished (when they have given sentence) by the secular arm, so they call the magistrate, who is blindly to execute their decrees under pain of hell-fire, as if christian princes and governors were appointed by God only to be their brave's or hangmen: they give protection and sanctuary to all execrable offenders, even to murderers themselves, whom God commanded to be indispensably punished with death, if they come within their churches, cloysters, or any other place which they will please to call *holy ground*; and if the ordinary justice, nay, the sovereign power do proceed against such offenders, they thunder out their *excommunication*, that is, cut off from the body of Christ not the prince only,

but the whole nation and people, shutting the church-doors, and commanding divine offices to cease, and sometimes even authorizing the people to rise up in arms, and constrain their governors to submission, as happened to this poor city in the time of our ancestors, when for but forbidding the servant of a poor Carmelite friar who had vowed poverty, and should have kept none, to go armed, and punishing his disobedience with imprisonment, our whole senate with their *Gonfalonier* were constrained to go to *Avignon* for absolution, and in case of refusal had been massacred by the people. *It would almost astonish a wise man to imagine how these folks should acquire an empire so destructive to christian religion, and so pernicious to the interest of men: but it will not seem so miraculous to them who shall seriously consider, that the clergy hath been for more than this thousand years upon the catch, and a formed united corporation against the purity of religion and the interest of mankind, and have not only wrested the holy Scriptures to their own advantage, which they have kept from the laity in unknown languages, and by prohibiting the reading thereof; but made use likewise, first, of the blind devotion and ignorance of the Goths, Vandals, Huns, &c. and since of the ambition and avarice of*

christian

christian princes, stirring them up one against another, and sending them upon foolish errands to the *holy land*, to lose their lives, and to leave their dominions in the mean time exposed to themselves and their accomplices. They have besides, kept learning and knowledge among themselves, stifling the light of the gospel, crying down moral virtues as splendid sins, defacing human policy, destroying the purity of the christian faith and profession, and all that was virtuous, prudent, regular and orderly upon earth: so that *whoever would do God and good men service, get himself immortal honour in this life, and eternal glory in the next, would restore the good policy (I had almost said with my author Livy, the sanctity too) of the heathens, with all their valour and other glorious endowments; I say, whoever would do this, must make himself powerful enough to extirpate this cursed and apostate race out of the world.* And that you may see this is lawful as well as necessary, I shall say but one word of their calling and original, and then leave the subject. The word CLERGY is a term wholly unknown to the Scriptures, otherwise than in this sense, a peculiar people, or God's lot, used often for the whole Jewish nation, who are likewise called a kingdom of priests in some places. in the New Testament, the word *Cleros* is

taken for the *true believers*, who are also called the elect, and often *the church*, which is the *assembly of the faithful met together*, as is easily seen by reading the beginning of most of *St. Paul's* epistles, where writing to the church or churches, he usually explains himself, *To all the saints in Christ*, sometimes, *To all who have obtained like faith with us*, sometimes, *To all who in all places call upon the name of the Lord Jesus, &c.* by which it appears, that neither the word *CHURCH* nor *CLERGY*, was in those days ever appropriated to the pastors or elders, of the flock, but did signify indifferently ~~all the people assembled together~~; which is likewise the literal construction of the word *Ecclesia*, which is an *assembly or meeting*. In those congregations or churches was performed their *ordination*, which properly signifies no more than a *degree* of such assembly, but is particularly used for an *election* of any into the ministry; the manner was this: *sometimes the apostles themselves in their peregrinations, and sometimes any other eminent member of the church did propose to the society*, (upon vacancy or other necessity of a pastor, elder or deacon) *some good holy man to be elected, which person if he had parts or gifts, such as the church could edify by,*

was

was chosen by the lifting up of hands, that is, by suffrage; and oftentimes hands were laid upon him, and prayer made for him: these men so set apart did not pretend to any consecration or sacredness more than they had before, much less to become a distinct thing from the rest of mankind as if they had been metamorphosed, but did attend to perform the several functions of their calling, as prophesying, that is, preaching the gospel, visiting the sick, &c. and never intermitted the ordinary business of their trade or profession, unless their church or congregation was very numerous, in which case they were maintained by alms or contributions, which was laid aside by every member, and collected the first day of the week by the deacon; this was said to be given to the church, and was employed by suffrage of the whole collective body to the poor and to other incidencies: so far was it from sacrilege in those days to employ church-goods to lay-uses. From these words, Church, Clergy, Ordination, Pastor, (which last hath been translated of late years Bishop) you see what conclusions these men have deduced, and how immense a structure they have raised upon so little a foundation; and how easily it will fall to the ground, when God shall inspire christian princes and

states to redeem his truths and his poor enslaved members out of their clutches, and to bring back again into the world the true original christian Faith with the apostolical churches, pastors and ordination, so consistent with moral virtue and integrity, so helpful and conducing to the best and most prudent policy, so fitted for obedience to magistracy and government; all which the world hath for many years been deprived of by the execrable and innate ill quality which is inseparable from priest-craft, and the conjuration or spell of their new invented ordination, by which they cry with the poet,

*Jam furor humanum nostro de pectore sensum
Expulit, & totum spirant præcordia Phœbum.*

Which makes them so sacred and holy, that they have nothing of integrity, or indeed of humanity left in them. I hope I shall not be thought impious any longer upon this point, I mean for vindicating christian religion from the assaults of these men; who having the confidence to believe, or at least profess themselves the only instruments which God hath chosen, or can choose to teach and reform the world, though they have neither moral virtues nor natural

parts

parts equal to other men, for the most part, have by this pretence prevailed so far upon the common sort of people, and upon some too of a better quality, that they are persuaded their salvation or eternal damnation depends upon believing or not believing of what they say. I would not be understood to dissuade any from honouring the *true apostolick teachers* when they shall be re-established among us, or *from allowing them* (even of right, and not of alms or courtesy) *such emoluments as may enable them cheerfully to perform the duties of their charge, to provide for their children, and even to use hospitality,* as they are commanded by *St. Paul.* But this I will prophesy before conclude, that *if princes shall perform this business by halves and leave any root of this clergy or priest-craft as it now is in the ground; or if the FAMOUS REFORMER**, fled some year since out of Piccardy to Geneva, who is of great renown for learning and parts, and who promises us so perfect a reformation, shall not in his model wholly extirpate this sort of men; then say, I must foretel that as well the magistrate, as this workman, will find themselves deceived in their

* Calvin.

expectation, and that the least fibra of this plant will over-run again the whole vineyard of the Lord, and turn to a diffusive papacy in every diocese, perhaps in every parish: So that God in his mercy inspire them to cut out the core of the ulcer, and the bag of this imposthume, that it may never rankle or fester any more, nor break out hereafter to diffuse new corruption and putrefaction through the body of Christ, which is his holy church, to vitiate and infect the good order and true policy of government.

I come now to the last branch of my charge; which is, *that I teach princes villany, and how to enslave and oppress their subjects.* If any man will read over my book of the *Prince* with impartiality and ordinary charity, he will easily perceive that it is not my intention therein to recommend that government, or those men there described to the world; much less to teach men to trample upon good men, and all that is sacred and venerable upon earth, laws, religion, honesty, and what not. If I have been a little too punctual in describing these monsters, and drawn them to the life in all their lineaments and colours, I hope mankind will know them the better, to avoid them, my *treatise* being both a *satire* against them and a true character of them.—

Whoever in his empire is tied to no other rules than those of his own will and lust, must either be a saint or else a very devil incarnate; or if he be neither of these, both his life and his reign are like to be very short: for whosoever takes upon him so execrable an employment as to rule men against the laws of nature and reason, must turn all topsie turvy, and never stick at anything; for if once he halt he will fall and never rise again, &c. And so I bid you farewell.

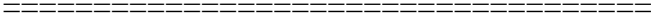
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R E A S O N S

A G A I N S T

R E S T R A I N I N G

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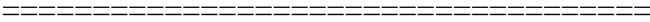
The Author Dr. TYNDAL.

First Printed in the Year 1704.

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If every American does his or her best for America and for Humanity we shall become, and remain, the Grandest of Nations – admired by all and feared by none, our strength being our Wisdom and kindness.

Knowledge knows no race, sex, boundary or nationality; what mankind knows has been gathered from every field plowed by the thoughts of man. There is no reason to envy a learned person or a scholarly institution, learning is available to all who seek it in earnest, and it is to be had cheaply enough for all.

To study and plow deeper the rut one is in does not lead to an elevation of intelligence, quite the contrary! To read widely, savor the thoughts, and blind beliefs, of others will make it impossible to return again to that narrowness that did dominate the view of the uninformed.

To prove a thing wrong that had been believed will elevate the mind more than a new fact learned.

Emmett F. Fields
Bank of Wisdom

Bank of wisdom
P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201
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R E A S O N S
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 P R E S S *

IF any restraint is to be put upon the press, it must be either on a RELIGIOUS or ~~any~~ account.

All that can be pleaded for it on the ~~score~~ of religion, is, that 'tis necessary to prevent mens being led into error; and as a consequence of that, nothing is to be printed that may tempt them to question the truth of any part or point of the established religion.

* I have a copy of this tract, which belonged to *Anthony Collins, Esq;* wherein it is ascribed to *Dr. Tyndal*, and therefore there can be no doubt that he was the real author.

In order to answer this, I must beg leave to observe, that nothing is more certain than that God does not require of men impossibilities, as a means to obtain their future happiness; and consequently all that he desires of them, is to use their rational faculties after the best manner they can, for the discovery of his will. He therefore that ~~does this, tho'~~ never so much mistaken, is as acceptable to God, *who is no respecter of persons*, as he that's not mistaken, since he has done all that God requires of him, and the other could do no more.

To affirm his mistakes are sinful, is to make God the author of sin, in so framing his understanding, that after he had done all he could to avoid error, he necessarily fell into it. And if it be the height of impiety to condemn one of sin for obeying God's commands in impartially examining, it can be no less impious to affirm the opinion unavoidably caused by so doing to be a sin.

How happy would men then be, if, notwithstanding their difference of opinion, they would allow on all sides, that impartiality and sincerity were sufficient to recommend them to God, and by consequence to one another? Go-
ing

ing a step further than this, justifies the severest method of the inquisition : for if men can be guilty of impiety, blasphemy, and other damnable opinions, tho' on the strictest examination they judge them agreeable to the will of God ; and if it be the duty of those that are in power in every nation to prevent this, they are bound to restrain not only the liberty of printing, but of preaching ; and to use the severest methods they can, to hinder the spreading of whatever they apprehend to be such opinions, But,

If God will judge men as they are accountable, that is, rational creatures ; their reward, whether they hit or miss of truth, will be in an exact proportion to the use they make of their reason : and consequently no opinion can be a sin, but for want of an impartial examination ; and according as that has been more or less omitted, so one is more or less accountable.

If this, how paradoxical soever at first sight it may appear to some, is upon examination demonstratively true ; What can be more unreasonable, than on pretence of preventing the growth of dangerous errors, to restrain the press, and thereby hinder men from seeing, and conse-

consequently from examining the reasons that make against the established religion? when without an impartial examination, let our religion be never so true, we hold it guiltily, and with it, though never so false, innocently. But,

What can be more inconsistent with this grand duty of examination, than a restraint on the press, since there can be no other cause assigned why 'tis unlawful to publish arguments against the state religion, but because 'tis unlawful to read them, that being the sole reason of forbidding the publishing of them? And if it be once supposed unlawful to read, it must be as unlawful to hear or think any thing, that inclines one to question the truth of any part or point of the national religion: and consequently it makes it every one's duty, in all countries whatever, to profess that without the least examination. But,

If one has no reason to expect a heaven, who will not be at the pains to examine what 'tis God requires of him, in order to his coming there; what a condition must he be in, who not only neglects this himself, but labours

to obtain a law to make all others do the same?

The examining the reasons on all sides (for prevention of which the press is to be restrained) not only makes the mistaken acceptable to God, but is the only method that can be taken to prevent mistakes; for which end God has commanded every one to *judge of himself, to try the spirits, to prove all things, &c.* And therefore those divines that are for mens trying nothing, or knowing nothing, but what pleases the licensed guides in every country, give God himself the lie, after the worst manner that can be. And

The more people are subject to mistake, the less reason there is to rely on any one side, but with care and diligence to examine the reasons of all, and consequently the press ought to be open to all. And when a discourse is printed, men by viewing and reviewing it, may form a better judgment, than when 'tis only spoken.

In answer to this, 'tis said, and alike said every where, that men may have an impartial

information from the clergy of the established church. But

Are not they under a greater restraint than others, being obliged to profess those opinions to which their preferments are annexed, or else to starve? so that in this case, 'tis not the man, but the bishoprick, the deanery, the prebend, the rectory that ~~preaches and prints~~ *nemine contradicente*, popery in one place, Lutheranism in another, Calvinism in a third; and they possibly may think it but fair to maintain such opinions as maintain them; though to speak the truth, the opinions generally maintain the priests, better than the priests maintain the opinions. Are men, so bound and shackled, likely to give a fair representation of what can be said against them, when the only cause they can alledge for restraining the press, is to hinder people from knowing it? Do not the blind lead the blind, when the guides on which others are wholly to depend, are not trusted to guide themselves?

In a word, all other methods but this of examining, will equally serve to promote any religion, though never so false, and consequently

requently cannot be the way to distinguish the true from the many false ones; but are the pious frauds and holy cheats, of not very pious and very holy men, to keep the people in a blind obedience.

As this method is the only way to discover truth, so 'tis this that makes it most effectual: where men without examination entertain a religion, it will have but little influence on their practice. What does not convince the understanding, can have but a small effect on the will: And as far as the reasonableness of an opinion is seen, so far only can it operate on a rational creature; and the more examination renders it so, the more force it will have on the affections, which are not moved without some sensible connexion between the cause and the effect. For this reason thinking men, truth being endeared to them as the discovery of their own industry, are for the most part very conscientious; while those that owe their religion to the chance of education, have generally no more regard to it, than if they owed it to the chance of a die. If then the freedom of the press contributes not only to endear truth

truth when discovered, but to the discovery of it; and if that fails, to make even error itself innocent, all the arguments on the account of religion do most religiously contend for its entire liberty. To which let me add, that

The noble art of printing, that by divine providence was discovered to free men from the tyranny of the clergy they then groaned under, and without which the protestant religion must have proved abortive, ought not to be made a means to reduce us again under sacerdotal slavery. And

If our ancestors could not secure themselves from more than *Egyptian* bondage, which the pulpits brought on them, without the assistance of the press: What hopes have we to defend ourselves against both, when by the means of the latter, the clergy have much greater opportunities, as well as abilities, to accomplish their designs?

The restraint of the press is consistent enough with popery; but for protestants to attempt it, is striking at the foundation of their religion, which is built on the natural right
every

every one has of judging for himself in matters of religion. But what can favour more of a blind popish compliance, than so entirely to give up the conduct of religion to a few licensing priests, as that nothing shall be published but what they think fit? The learned Dr. *Clagget* saith, (and after the same manner do all our clergy write when they have to do with the papists) “ * They that have a good cause, “ will not fright men from considering what “ their adversaries say by their books, but “ rather encourage them so to do, that “ they may see the difference between truth “ and error, reason and falshood, with their “ own eyes. This is the effect of a well- “ grounded confidence in truth, and there is “ the sign of a good cause apparently discern- “ able, in the application of the clergy of the “ church of *England*, both to their friends “ and enemies. They desire the one and “ t’other, to consider impartially what is said “ for us, as well as against us; and whensoever “ guides of a party do otherwise, they give “ just cause to examine their doctrines more “ carefully, by how much they are unwilling

● *Persuasive to an ingenuous trial*, p. 28.

“ to have them examined. ’Tis a bad sign,
 “ when men are loth to have their opinions
 “ seen in the day, but love darkness more than
 “ light.”

Every one thinks he has a natural right in all matters of learning and knowledge, except what relates to religion and government, to see what can be said on all sides, in order to form his judgment aright; and there can be no reason why these should be excepted, since to have a right understanding in them, is what is most worthy a rational being.

The more useful any science is to mankind, the greater will its abuses be: Divinity, law, physick are sad instances of this. But how can these abuses be discovered, if the press be in their hands that gain by them? What can be more useful than history, especially of one’s own country? and can we expect a true information, when only one side is to print? And there are few persons, especially at a distance from *London*, but would think it a hardship to be deprived even of such trifles as the common news-papers, which would not be allowed under a restraint of the press. Nay,

we could not then hope for an impartial account even in natural things, since an evident truth in philosophy, has been thought a monstrous error in divinity; and a rational discourse on any subject may be hindered from being printed, lest, as the late bishop of *Worcester* said of the most rational that ever was writ†, it might be applied to other uses than what the author designed.

Nothing can more discourage men of abilities from writing, than to subject their discourse to the mercy of an ignorant, or at least an unlicensed licenser: such a hardship on the commonwealth of learning, will be apt to make an *imprimatur* signify no more, than that the book is foolish enough to be printed.

As the people retain a right to offer their advice to their representatives, so there cannot but happen several things, wherein they may receive satisfaction from what is published by those without doors (as happened in the case of the standing army, and several other matters) which may in a great measure be hindered, by the licensers of the press being in-

† The Essay on Human Understanding, by Mr. *Locke*.

fluenced by those, who have an interest to stifle truth.

In a word, as many things as are worth understanding aright, so many arguments are there for the liberty of the press; though the only reason that is pleaded for its restraint upon a civil account, is to prevent false representations of peoples designs and actions, especially of such as are dignified with a publick character. But

Though this may be done by speaking, who ever thought it reasonable, that all but one party of men should have a padlock on their lips? And yet this is all that's meant by a restraint on the press, since what is to be printed, is left to the arbitrary will of men of this or that party. And there can be no manner of reason, why writing and talking should not be on the same foot, since what's contrary to law is in both cases equally punishable; and a restraint of the press cannot hinder books from coming out by stealth.

What can be more unconscionable, considering how the nation is divided, than to have all but one party restrained from writing in their
own

own defence, whilst that is at liberty to use them as barbarously as they please? With what unchristian temper and inhumane insolence will partymen treat those they are employed to write against? and what misrepresentations, lies and calumnies will they not then be guilty of? 'Tis the danger of being detested and exposed, that makes men write with more temper, as well as more regard to truth.

If the honourable house of commons have, upon a solemn debate, thought fit to publish their proceedings to prevent being misrepresented, why should they deny those they represent the same liberty? And when both houses have thought it necessary to print, (and one may venture to add, that neither house, without this liberty, would have thought their reputations safe) it cannot be presumed that either house will be putting such a hardship on the nation.

As honour and reputation secure their votaries from committing ill and base actions, for they incite them to all good ones; but if the press be in the hands of designing people, it

may have a quite different effect, and be wholly employed to traduce, as it was in former reigns, the best men both in church and state. And

It will be a great encouragement for men above the ordinary reach of the law, to crush those beneath them, when the press shall speak only in their favour, and the injured are deprived of the last satisfaction that oppressed virtue has, of appealing to the people, and justifying their innocence to the world. And therefore I cannot see how one, that has any value for his reputation, will be content to run the hazard of having it put out of his power, to justify himself as publicly as he is injured. Whether what is said of truth, that none is against truth but where that is first against them, may be applied to the press, I will not determine; but those whose actions cannot bear examination, will, no doubt, be glad of its restraint, and possibly may add iniquity to iniquity, by pretending they desire it out of affection to the government, or zeal to the church.

The restraining the press may not be so much for the interest of any party, as some fondly imagine; because their being for it, will be apt to make men believe the very worst things their enemies say to be true; and that 'tis the fear of having their pernicious designs discovered, which makes them take a method, that till now they themselves opposed, and which in former reigns was made use of to advance slavery and popery. But

If this be of no weight, let it be considered, that the press, jackanapes like (as a *Scots* gentleman said of their king) may be made to bite whomsoever they, in whose custody it chances to be, think fit; and a restraining law no sooner made, but the scene of affairs may so alter, that the party which promoted it, may be scourged with rods of their own providing, and be themselves debarred of that liberty they designed to exclude others from. And possibly some may be glad of such a bill, the better to deprive them of those advantages, which without it they would not think prudent to attempt. But though this might not be the consequence at present, who can be sure

sure in what hands the press hereafter may be placed ?

As the chief happiness as well as dignity of rational creatures, consists in having the liberty of thinking on what subject they please, and of as freely communicating their thoughts : so all good governments that have allowed this freedom, were so far from suffering by it, that it wonderfully endeared them to their people. And no ministry can be hurt by the liberty of the press, since they have a number of dependents, ready upon all occasions to write in justification of their conduct ; nay, to gild over the worst of their actions, and give a fair colour to their most pernicious designs ; and at the same time so to misrepresent the true patriots of their country, that the people, their real friends, being deprived of the liberty of publicly justifying themselves, may mistake them for their enemies, and care for those that are truly so.

The liberty of the press must keep a ministry within some tolerable bounds, by exposing their ill designs to the people, with whom if
they

they once lose their credit, they will be very unfit tools for a court to work with. But

The arts of state in most places being to enslave, or keep the people in slavery, it became a crime to talk, much more to write about state-matters. And the press in most countries of *Europe* speaking nothing but court-language; the people, who till the invention of printing had tolerably well preserved their liberty, were by degrees gulled and cheated out of those inestimable blessings. And there's nothing, either with respect to religion or politicks, so destructive to mankind, but may be made, where the pulpit and press conspire together, to pass for divine truths.

The slavish condition the most part of mankind in all ages have been in, shews how much they have been wanting to themselves in not taking alarm soon enough at the chains that were preparing for them. And as there are few, very few instances of people's having perceived the intended slavery, soon enough to prevent it; so there are fewer instances of their having taken arms, but upon very just occasion.

In a word, as there is no freedom either civil or ecclesiastical, but where the liberty of the press is maintained; so where that is secured, all others are safe. That, like a faithful sentinel, prevents all surprize, and gives timely warning of any approaching danger. And therefore 'tis to be hoped, that the trustees of the people's liberties will preserve its freedom entire; for if its sacred liberty is but once affected, though by never so gentle a law, 'tis to be feared that this will be used as an argument to restrain it as much as ever; for then 'twill be easy to engraft a new law, on pretence that the old did not answer the end, as we see 'twas urged in the case of the conformity bill.

As to the obliging authors to set their names to their works, that can only serve to hinder the publishing the most useful books, viz. those designed to rectify abuses. Besides, this prejudices people for or against a book, and serves as a handle for fulsome flatteries, or gross abuses; and we have too frequent instances of mens thinking to atone, for not
 answer-

answering the arguments, by railing at the authors. And therefore those writers, such as the author of *the Whole Duty of Man, &c.* that design the utmost good, have industriously conceal'd their names.

The E N D.