Baron, Richard

THE PILLARS OF PRIESTCRAFT AND ORTHODOXY SHAKEN.

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 LAUD *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.

VOL. IV.

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THE CONTENTS.

THE

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.

First printed in the Year 1716.

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.

SIR,

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

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 proselytes; 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 *prophesies* 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

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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

titles 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

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,

3*dly*, 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 profit-*

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.

4*thly*, 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

if

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.

5*thly*, 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*.

1*st*, 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 the

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

fall

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 consubstantiality* 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 *doctrine of the church* for his guide, has not fallen into.

* See a late book, intitled, *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

which

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 misspent 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 medled 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

of

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 possest 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 excells 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

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 possest 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-*

less 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 medling 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 mean time, 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 *Catholick* church; but the doctrine of the *established* church, will readily be *supposed* to be the doctrine of the *Catholick* 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*

tained 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 confest 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

derstandings of their own, and yet not see or understand, but as they were bid, and that by men who could not see or understand themselves; ὡς ἀργαλέον πρᾶγμα! To make such a blind use of their learning and abilities, was, they thought, to pervert the very end of them, and really to dishonour God, whose service they were given for. Since therefore they could not bear the thoughts of studying the scriptures *on these terms*, no part was left men who could not be idle, but to *turn to some other study*, in which, without fear of danger or offence, they might freely go whither *truth* and *reason* led. The consequence of which, besides the improvements made in arts and sciences, has been, that many of them have separately made more good emendations; and happily explained more difficulties, in the *smallest Pagan* writer; than they have done, take them all together, in two hundred years upon the *whole body of the Scriptures.*

What then I would advise you, is, to follow such examples. Turn yourself to the study of the *heathen historians, poets, orators,* and *philosophers.* Spend *ten* or *twelve years* upon *Horace* or *Terence.* To illustrate a *billet-doux*, or a *drunken-catch*; to explain an *obscene jest*; to make a *happy emendation*, on a passage that a modest man would *blush* at; will do you more credit, and be

of greater ſervice to you, than the moſt uſeful employment of your time upon the *Scriptures*; unleſs you can reſolve to conceal your ſentiments, and ſpeak always with the vulgar. You ſee a preſent example in the great *Bentley*: What a reputation he has acquired by the noble edition he has given us of *Horace*? How are his abilities confeſſed and admired by all? But had the ſame genius, the ſame ſagacity and labour, been applied to the ſtudy of the *Scriptures*; to ſettle the text in doubtful places, to mend corrupted ones, explain hard ones, fix the meaning of obſcure ones, and to trace out the literal ſenſe where it can be done; ſhould he, I ſay, have attempted a work of this kind; inſtead of thanks and applauſe, 'tis more than probable he would have been treated as a raſh man, of no judgment, of little learning, and leſs religion; and, if his works had been ſentenced to the flames, a majority would have been for throwing him in after them.

Conſider well therefore, how you engage where there is no retreat, no repentance, no room for pardon, if you once offend. You have *two* ways before you. *One* will enable you to be uſeful in the world, without great trouble to yourſelf; it will crown your labours with ſucceſs; it will bring you reputation and eſteem;

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,

SIR,

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

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 lightetb every man that cometb into the world*.

THE

CENSURE*

Of the *Lower House of Convocation* upon this BOOK.

1. IT 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 LETTER

Written by the Reverend Mr. John Hales *of* Eaton, *to Archbishop* LAUD, *upon Occasion of his* Tract concerning SCHISM.

May it please your Grace,

WHEREAS of late an abortive discourse, indited by me for the use of a private friend, hath, without lawful 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 scribbled paper, dropt from so worthless and inconsiderable 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 inchoant inertes, fortes 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 *conceits*, 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

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, Ἐγὼ δ' οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως εὐθὺς, &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 befal 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

biass 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 ignoret.* 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 περιαυτολογια, (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 sundry 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 *premises*, where the *conclusion* was nothing else but *peace*.

One

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 *Difficiles 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*.

For

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 Dominii*, 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

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 meerly 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

to

to determine of his own way, *whatsoever* the judgment of his *superiors* be, or *whatsoever event* befal 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 dioceses: *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 dioceses 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.

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.

Part of a Letter written to the Author, relative to the subject of these papers.

I Have, as you recommended to me, considered Mr. *Warburton's* * comment on 1 *Tim.* iv. 8. and agree with him that the *bodily exercise* there spoken of has reference to the *ritual observances* of the *Jews*; but whether to those *alone*, as that learned gentleman's argument seems to me to require, I am not so clear.

There are two constructions of the words προς ὀλιγον, either of which will indeed imply that no other but *Jewish* exercises are there intended.

1. The word χρονον may be understood, and then the sense will be, as in the margin of our translation, *for a little time*, that is to say, for so long, and no longer than the *Mosaic* institute continued in force. Or,

2. Προς ὀλιγον may mean *in some degree*, that is, so far as *bodily exercise* has the promise of *this*

* Divine Legation, book v. sect. 6. page 470, of the second edition.

life.) These circumstances, out of all doubt, make this *bodily exercise* peculiar to the *Jewish* dispensation.

But then, if the *profitableness* of *ritual observances* was to determine with that part of the law which enjoined them, or if it was to cease when the promise of *this life* was superseded by the *better* promises of the gospel (as is certainly the case, if the apostle is to be understood as above) I cannot see the reason why "there "*must needs* be some [*ritual observances*] under "the gospel wherever there is a Christian "church," as Mr. *W.* holds; unless such observances are either derived,

1.) From some plain and positive institution of divine appointment; since, if such things are no longer *profitable* by any virtue naturally belonging to them, and have none superadded by divine authority, the Christian church can have no reason for enjoining them; in that case the Christian church, *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*, would fall into condemnation. Or,

2.) If the *profitableness* of rites, be they more or fewer, in the Christian church be derived from some *general expedience* in the things themselves (as I am inclined to understand the apostle's

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 con-"form 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 de-"cency 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 pro-"mote 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 ap-

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 ordain, 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-*
" *vator*, and does it without authority, and is
" fitter to be *punished* than *followed* *," &c.

But, as I have little inclination, and less authority, to put a construction upon your lordship'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 intelligible.

" 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 extend this maxim to the Christian religion.

* Bp. *Fleetwood*'s works, fol. 1737. p. 722.

The

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 *for-*

why for no reason imaginable unless it is—"be-"cause the *power* of godliness cannot be preser-"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

mality 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 expresly 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

preſate 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 affair of religion? But to anſwer more punctually:

I very much queſtion whether your lordſhip'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 lordſhip 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. 371.

dif-

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 better; and also be a means of their doing so." *pag.* 14.

Hardly,

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

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 occured 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 heart, 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

in 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 wery well knows) which

* *Morem mihi habeo, quoque eam simulachrum alicujus Dei inter libellos conditum 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 πεπορευμενους no more agrees with ἡμιν than with ὑμων: 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 specifical 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 πεπορευμενους, it is πορευομενους; 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

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 solem-"nity, 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 cri-"tical 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 re-"store the poor captives to their natural liber-"ty; 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:

"cents, and yet curse you with famine and pes-
"tilence, and all the most hideous execrations,
"in which way these eastern nations have cer-
"tainly the most exquisite rhetoric of any peo-
"ple 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 arti-
"fice of the devil to keep them his own. They
"are a perfect visible comment upon our bles-
"sed 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 re-
"spect 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

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 Catholicks* 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 distin-

guished the *superstition* of the *Roman Catholicks* 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 *moles* and to the *batts?*

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 mufti 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

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
why should our Lord lay all the stres
shipping God in *spirit* and in *truth*, i.
ding to the *word of God?* John xvii.
why should he direct his hearers to go
the meaning of those words of Go
prophet, I will have mercy and not
Mat. ix. 13.

Again, if a *great* and *conspicuous* pa
gion was necessary, why did not the
take the appointment of it upon themsl
rather why did they say so many thing
courage such appointment? To what
was *Stephen*'s observation that the *m*
dwelleth not in temples made with hands
should St. *Paul* add to this observat
God is not worshipped or ministered to a
hands, as though he needed any thing †
should he observe *that the kingdom of G*
meat and drink ‡, i. e. is of a differen
from that kingdom which *stood only in m*
drinks, and divers washings and CARNA
NANCES IMPOSED *until the time of* RE
TION §? Why should these men say al
after this time of reformation, *other* ma
temples, *other* conspicuous ordinance

* Acts vii. 48. † Chap. xvii. 25.
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,

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 politics* have produced.

And now, my lord, after so much suggested by your lordship in favour of the *Roman Catholick* 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 *idolatries*, *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 obser-
"vances 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 to

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,

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. *Nichols*. Defence, pag. 168, 169.

as

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.

Con-

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 baptised *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.

* Doctor Dubitantium, pag. 668.

I do

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. 293.

Was

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

lordship thinks it "highly seasonable to instruct "the people in the importance of *external re-* "*ligion.*"

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 con-"venient 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

"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-"tener 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 consider this compounded cause of *neglect*, we cannot avoid the question, By whom is it to be redressed? 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 lordship 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 specifical 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. 1726.

27.

ry 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 reason —"They who have been at the HELM of ecclesia-"stical affairs have institut'd.—Have not we as "much power." Def. pag. 306.

aid

and 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 *Encænia*, 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 *rites* 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 diligently 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 adapted 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 seem-"eth *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

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. "*Ad Phylacteria & Scheda non licitum est haud aliis quam Assiriacos characteres adhibere licet, in libris vero sacris describendis, literis etiam Græcis uti conceditur, sed his solis,*" &c. *Maimonides* apud *Wagenseil* SOTA, pag. 970.

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memorials had degenerated into *broad Phylacteries*, &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 encroaching 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 than,

† "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 *institutad* worship; "it is natural to believe that their *teaching* was of no "greater extent." Bishop *Story* on the *Priesthood*, pag. 26. It is humbly recommended to the reader, being a clergyman of the church of *England*, not as

content

that, as I said above, made this *moral* teachings 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 those 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 *ceremonies* and *externals*, and from thence may judge, if he please, 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'"insolence 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 sort "miserable. Ces Messieurs les convertisseurs ont trop "d'esprit 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, 726.

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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 *inspire 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? No. To faith must be added, *virtue, knowledge, temperance,*

rance, patience, godliness, 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) *& omnia simpliciter tractabantur.* PETRUS *autem, ubi consecraverat, oratione* Pater noster, *usus est, dum hæc* [illegible] JACOBUS, &c. *Vit.* SIXTI I. A hint which protestants should have taken long ago.

The

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

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.

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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 unnecessary human inventions. These men could "hardly ever obtain an equitable or even a patient 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. *Sherlock* in his ſermon on the late *rebellion*, and in his letter to the clergy and people of *London* and *Weſtminſter*, 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 po-"pery are gathered from our church by *thou-"sands*, 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 consolati n 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*

"*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 *impor-* "*tance* 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. *White* 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 show. 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 *inconveniences*, and were directed by conſiderations of *propriety* in the alterations they made in our ſervice. His words are theſe: "At the time of the reſtora-
"tion of the church and monarchy——our li-
"turgy had been out of uſe, as well in private
"as in public aſſemblies, almoſt twenty years.
"Yet it is obſervable, that *even then*, the go-
"vernment

"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. Consid. 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

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;

"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

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

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

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,

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 ſeaſonable 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 *Braſen 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-

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-

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.

POSTSCRIPT.

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 expreſly aſſerted elſewhere, that "if in *revelation* there be found "*any paſſages*, the *ſeeming* meaning of which is "contrary to *natural religion*, we may *moſt cer-* "*tainly* 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

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, togerher 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 *under-* "*standing.*"

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 *dictates* 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 wholsome 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.

THE COMPLAINT OF THE CHILDREN of *ISRAEL*,

REPRESENTING

Their GRIEVANCES under the PENAL LAWS;

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*.

IN

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. Codex 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*.

THE COMPLAINT OF THE CHILDREN of *ISRAEL*, &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 have*

† 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 *Saviour*

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 *Infidels*, 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 though 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. *Pulteney*.

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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 *Popery* 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 *frowzineſs 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 *Joſhua*, 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 *shivveling 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.

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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:

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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 drivelling 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, *schismaticks* have had the odium upon them of *breaking in upon the property* of an established religion, and

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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 *schismaticks*; 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 cloathed 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 re-

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

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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 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 appears, 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 *evangelists* 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 maintain, 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*.

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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 SYNA-

SYNAGOGUE, as from THEIR KIRK? Why may we not adorn one side of *St. Stephen's chapel* with our *flaxen* wigs and *sallow* 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 *buttress* 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 peo-

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 *as 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 unnatural-

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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 encou-'raged 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 hiden 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 2 *Cok. Inst. Statut. de Judaismo.*

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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, com-'manded 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 be-'ing tormented many ways, would not ransom 'himself till the king had caused (every day) *one* '*of his great tooth* 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 hund-'red marks of gold for the queen.'

'In the 16th of *Edward the first* all the *Jews* 'in *England* were (in one day) apprehended by

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'precept from the king, but they redeemed 'themselves for twelve thousand pounds of silver: 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 Justice* 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 hun-*'*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 *fourscore* 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*: Insomuch 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

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.

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 iræ,
Occidisse aliquem, sed pectora, brachia, vultum
Crediderint genus esse cibi. Juv. Sat. 16. l. 169.

First printed in the Year 1748.

AN ENQUIRY INTO THE BEHAVIOUR OF OUR Great Churchmen SINCE THE REFORMATION, &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

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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 re-

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 *papists*.

King

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

his designs, he supported and encouraged the most severe and oppressive measures of *churchmen*. 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 inforce 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 com-

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 inforcing 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 prosecutions; 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 compleating the *ruin* of *non-conformists*. *Lamplugh*, 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 begun 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

cuted 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 inforce 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 the

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 proselytes 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 con-

contribute the utmost to our deliverance from this adhering plague and mischief. *Popery*, 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 uncontroulable 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 inslaved 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 *pursuing 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 proselytes. 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

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 IId, who have the lasting reproach of being unanimous in their voting against the repeal of the statute

Dr

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

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 *Cœna 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 fallhood 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 *papacy*; 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 *Cœna 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 8*vo*. 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. 3*i*. *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 bind-

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

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 *popery*. 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 prevaileth. 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.

Ama-

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 gallies, 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 Ist, 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 with-held, 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.*

MACHIAVEL'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.

MACHIAVEL's VINDICATION OF HIMSELF and his WRITINGS, &c.

THE discourse we had lately (dear *Zenobio*) 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 pernicious a person to be a member of their conversation: 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*

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*

despotical 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

en-

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 conscientiæ*; 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 antients, 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 *Turky* or *Muscovy*: and since they have no other remedy

but

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 *Jures*, 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

merely 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 threatning 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

nation 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 unsatiable ambition and avarice, have designedly, as much as in them lies, frustrated the merciful purpose he had in the happy restauration 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 uncapable, 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 inraged 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

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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

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

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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 rights 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, *Wherefoever 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 presignified 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

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 fasts* 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 wholsome 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 hellish 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 solœcisms 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 *temporalities* 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, *stept 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 soveraignty 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 bravo'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 decree 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,*

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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 I 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 that FAMOUS REFORMER**, *fled some years since out of* Piccardy *to* Geneva, who is of so 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 I 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 infest 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

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 any thing; for if* once he halt he will fall and never rise again, *&c.* And so I bid you farewell.

(1 *April* 1537).

REASONS

AGAINST

RESTRAINING

THE

PRESS.

The Author Dr. TYNDAL.

First Printed in the Year 1704.

REASONS AGAINST RESTRAINING THE PRESS*.

IF any restraint is to be put upon the press, it must be either on a RELIGIOUS or CIVIL 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.

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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? Going

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

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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

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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 in-

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

quently 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

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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

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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 hindred 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 unleisured 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

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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 detected 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, so 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 oppreſt 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 publickly 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.

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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

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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 publickly juſtifying themſelves, may miſtake them for their enemies, and careſs 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

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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.

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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 centinel, 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 attone, for not

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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 concealed their names.

The END.

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