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## COLLECTION

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OF

## THEOLOGICAL TRACTS,

### IN SIX VOLUMES.

## By RICHARD WATSON, D.D. F. R. S.

### LORD BISHOP of LANDAFF,

AND

REGIUS PROFESSOR of DIVINITY in the UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE.

### VOL. VI.

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## COLLECTION

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THEOLOGICAL TRACTS,

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## CONTENTS.

Eight Charges delivered to the Clergy of the Diocefes of Oxford and Canterbury. To which are added, Inftructions to Candidates for Orders. By THOMAS SECKER, LL.D. late Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. Lond. 1769. p. 1.

The Vifitation Charges which have been publifhed, at different times, by the Bifhops of the Church of England, relative to the paftoral duties of the Clergy, are many and good; and thefe by Archbifhop Secker deferve as much attention as the beft of them. *Herbert's* Country Parfon; *Burnet's* Paftoral Care; *Oftervald's* Lectures on the Exercife of the Sacred Miniftry; not to fpeak of *Chryfoftom* and the other Ancients, who have written on the fubject, may be very ufefully read by ferious minded men.

A Treatife concerning the Caufes of the prefent Corruption of Christians, and the Remedies thereof. By J.F.OSTERVALD. Translated into English by C. MUTEL. 2d Ed. 1702. P.115.

This book was highly effeemed by Bp. Burnet; and indeed all the writings of Mr. Oftervald have been very favourably received in the world in general.

The Defign of Christianity: or, a plain Demonstration and Improvement of this Proposition, viz. That the enduing Men with inward real Righteousness, or true Holinefs, was the ultimate End of our Saviour's coming into the World, and is the great Intendment of his bleffed Gospel. By ED. FOWLER, D.D. Bishop of Gloucester. 3d Ed. Lond. 1699. P.314.

This work was first published in 1676, there have been feveral editions of it fince; but not fo many, as, from the worth of it, might have been expected. *Lucas*' Practical Christianity; *Scott*'s Christian Life; The whole Duty of Man; Holy Living and Dying; and Thomas a Kempis, of the Imitation of Christ, are works of a fimilar tendency. Bp. Burnet, in speaking of such kind of books, very truly fays, "by the frequent reading of these books, by the relist that one has in them, by the delight they give, and the effects they produce, a man will plainly perceive, whether his foul is made for divine matters or not; what fuitablenefs there is between him and them; and whether he is yet touched with fuch a fense of religion, as to be capable of dedicating himself to it."

Appendix.

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#### THE

### C H A R G E

#### O F

### THOMAS Lord Bishop of OXFORD,

#### TO THE

### CLERGY of his DIOCESE,

IN

### His PRIMARY VISITATION 1738.

## 

#### Reverend Brethren,

A M very fenfible, that you cannot meet together on this occafion, without making deep reflexions on the lofs, which you have fuffered, for the publick good, by the removal of a paftor, whom the experience of fo many years hath taught you to efteem and honour fo highly. It is your farther unhappinefs, that he is fucceeded by a perfon, very unequal to the care of this configuous and important diocefe. But your humanity and your piety will, I doubt not, incline you, both to accept and to affift the endeavours of one, who can affure you, with very great truth, that he is earnefly defirous of being as ufeful to you all, as he can; and ferioufly concerned for the interefts of religion, and of this church. Would to God there were lefs need of expreffing a concern for them, than there is at prefent !

Men have always complained of their own times: and always with too Vol. VI, A much much reafon. But though it is natural to think those evils the greatest, which we feel ourfelves; and therefore miftakes are eafily made, in comparing one age with another : yet in this we cannot be miltaken, that an open and profeffed difregard to religion is become, through a variety of unhappy caufes, the diffinguishing character of the prefent age; that this evil is grown to a great height in the metropolis of the nation; is daily fpreading through every part of it; and, bad in itfelf as any can be, muft of neceffity bring in most others after it. Indeed it hath already brought in fuch diffoluteness and contempt of principle in the higher part of the world, and fuch profligate intemperance, and fearlefsnefs of committing crimes, in the lower, as must, if this torrent of impiety ftop not, become abfolutely fatal. And God knows, far from ftopping, it receives, through the ill defigns of fome perfons, and the inconfideratenefs of others, a continual increase. Christianity is now ridiculed and railed at, with very little referve : and the teachers of it, without any at all. Indeed, with respect to us, the rule, which most of our adversaries appear to have fet themfelves is, to be, at all adventures, as bitter as they can: and they follow it, not only beyond truth, but beyond probability: afferting the very worft things of us without foundation, and exaggerating every thing without mercy: imputing the faults, and fometimes imaginary faults, of particular perfons to the whole order; and then declaiming against us all promiscuously, with such wild vehemence, as, in any cafe but ours, they themfelves would think, in the higheft degree, unjust and cruel. Or if fometimes a few exceptions are made, they are ufually made only to divide us amongft ourfelves : to deceive one part of us, and throw a greater odium upon the other. Still, were thefe invectives only to affect us perfonally, dear as our reputations are and ought to be to us, the mifchief would be finall, in comparison of what it is. But the confequence hath been, as it naturally muft, that difregard to us hath greatly increased the difregard to public worship and instruction : that many are grown prejudiced against religion; many more, indifferent about it and unacquainted with it. And the emiffaries of the Romill church, taking the members of ours at this unhappy difadvantage, have begun to reap great harvefts in the field, which hath thus been prepared for them by the labours of thofe, who would be thought their most irreconcileable enemies.

Yet, however melancholy the view before us appears, we have no reafon to be difcouraged : for let us take care of our duty, and God will take care of the event. But we have great reafon to think ferioully, what our duty on this occafion is; and flir up each other to the performance of it: that where-ever the guilt of thele things may fall, it may not fall on our heads. For it must needs be, that offences come : but wo to that man, by unbom the offence cometh (a). Our grief for the decay of religion might be attended with much comfort in regard to ourfelves, could we but truly fay, that no faults or infirmities of ours had ever given advantages againft it. But though, God be thanked, we are far from being what our adverfaries would reprefent us; whofe reproaches perhaps were never lefs deferved, than now when they are the moft violent: yet, it muft be owned, we are not by any means, even the bef of us, what

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(a) Matth. xviii. 7.

what we ought to be. And the prefent flate of things calls loudly upon us, to correct our miftakes, to fupply our deficiencies, and do all we are able for the honour of God, and the happiness of mankind.

If we can be unconcerned now, we have neither piety nor common prudence in us. And if we are concerned in earneft, we fhall be very defirous, both to avoid all wrong methods of fhewing it, and to make use of all right ones.

Complaining of our fuperiors for thofe evils, which perhaps they cannot prevent; or complaining of them with diffefpech, for what we may apprehend they could prevent, would both be undutiful and imprudent conduct: would give our adverfaries joy, and do our caufe harm. Indeed to beg earneftly of God, that he would direct the hearts of thofe, who prefide over the public welfare; and humbly to reprefent to them, on all fit occafions, the declining flate of religion, the importance and the means of preferving it; thefe things are unquefitonable duties. But then we mult always approve ourfelves, at the fame time, confcientioulfly loyal both in word and deed; reafonable in our expectations; fincerely grateful for the protection, which we are affured of enjoying; and duly fenfible, that every thing of value to us, in this world, depends on the fupport of that government, under which we now live. We cannot be good men, if we are bad fubjects : and we are not wife men, if we permit ourfelves to be fufpected of it.

A fecond proper caution is, That to fpeak unfavourably of liberty, religious or civil, inftead of carefully diffinguifhing both from the many abuses of them, which we daily see; or to encourage any other restraints on either, than public utility makes evidently needful; can only ferve to increase that jealoufy, which being in former ages grounded too well, hath been most industriously heightened, when there never was fo little pretence of ground for it; that the claims of the clergy are hurtful to the rights of mankind. It concerns us greatly to remove fo dangerous a prejudice against us as this: not by renouncing those powers, which the Gofpel hath given us; for we are bound to affert them : but by convincing the world, that they are perfectly innocent; and avoiding all appearance of affuming what we have no right to : by fhewing our abhorrence of tyranny, especially over the consciences of men; and fatisfying them fully, if poffible, that we preach not ourfelves, but Chrift Jefus, the Lord; and ourfelves, their fervants for his fake (b). Then, with refpect to the privileges, that we derive from human authority : as, on the one hand, receding from any of them without caufe is only inviting freth encroachments, and giving needlefs advantages to fuch as will be fure to lofe none: fo, on the other, ftraining them too far is the likelieft way to deftroy them all at once : and both our ufefulnefs and our fecurity depend very much, on our appearing plainly to defire nothing inconfiftent with the common good; to have the trueft concern for all reafonable liberty, and to be zealous only against licentiousness and confufion.

Thirdly, If we fhould be tempted to oppofe profanenefs, by encouraging the oppofite extreme of fuperflition : this also would be unjuftifiable in itfelf; would have bad effects upon as many as we might mif-

(b) 2 Cor. iv. c.

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lead ;

lead; and give great opportunities to all that fhould fee them mifled, either of accufing religion, or expofing us, as corrupters of religion. Not that we are to give up inconfiderately, whatever fome perfons are pleafed to charge with fuperfiltion: for there would be no end of conceffions at that rate : but only to avoid encouraging any thing, that can be juftly charged with it; and then we fhall ftand upon fure ground. For nothing can be more unjuft, than those imputations of it, which our adyerfaries are fo fond of throwing, fome upon Chriftianity itfelf, others on the doctrine and worfhip of that church, of which, through God's merciful Providence, we have the happinefs to be members.

Another very pernicious error would be, if we should think to ferve our caufe by intemperate warmth in it. Chriftian zeal indeed is a duty. that never was more needful, and never lefs fhewn. But paffion will do no good. If expressed against those, who are indifferent about religion, it will turn them into enemies: if against the enemies of religion, it will make them yet more vehement enemies. Befides, the extravagant things, that men tay and attempt against us and our profession, are not always defigned injuries; but frequently the effects of mifreprefentations, and prejudices, that have imperceptibly taken hold on perfons, who otherwife mean tolerably well. Now mildnefs to fuch as thefe, is but juffice : and to all others, it is prudence. Railing is the province which our adversaries have chosen : and let us leave it to them. For whatever fuccefs they may meet with that way, as indeed they excel in it, we fhall meet with none; but only make the fpirit of Christianity be mifunderftood and ill spoken of, by our own want of it. Therefore, how injurioufly foever we may be treated, let us return neither injurious nor harfh treatment for it : nor endeavour to mark out those perfons for objects of popular hatred, who are ever fo unwearied in labouring to make us fo. Yet, at the fame time we must never court irreligious men by wrong compliances; never contribute to increase their power of doing harm; never defert our duty, either for fear of them, or fayour from them. But then let us defend both religion and ourfelves, with that fairnefs and decency, as well as courage, which becomes our function : acknowledge ingenuoully whatever can be alledged against us with truth, only claiming equitable allowances; and where charges are untrue, yet use mild expostulations, not reproaches; and try to fhame our oppofers by the reafonablenefs of what we fay, rather than exafperate them by the vehemence of it.' They indeed have little caufe either to complain or to triumph, if, under fuch grofs provocations as they give, our temper fometimes fails : but we have great cause to do our utmost, that it fail not.

And if undue feverity of fpeech muft be forborn towards profeffed enemics; much more to thofe, who may, for aught we know, defign themfelves for friends. Indeed, when it is evident, that men only put on a pretence of wifhing well to Chriftianity, or the teachers of it; and, whill they affect to charge us with uncharitablenefs for queffioning their fincerity, would defpife us for believing them: there we muft be allowed to fee what plainly appears; and to fpeak of them, both as adverfaries, and unfair ones. Or when doctrines, whatever the intention of propagating them be, are inconfiftent either with the whole or any part of bur religion; it is no uncharitablenefs, but our duty, to lay open the fallbood falfhood and the danger of them. Nay, fuppoling only the legal eftablifhment of religion, or fome branch of it be attacked; yet the attempt may both be injurious enough to us, and detrimental enough to the public, to deferve a vigorous oppolition. But to fhew paffion and bitternefs in any of these cases; to take pleasure in making mens mistakes or defigns thought worse than they are; to judge harfhly of them with respect to another world, or expose them to ill utage in this; to refirse them due allowances for human infirmity, or be more backward to own their merits, than to see their faults: fuch behaviour, inflead of promoting truth, will prejudice the world against it; will give unbelievers dreadful advantages, and for ever prevent that union amongst Christians, which would procure us, above all things, the efteem of men, and the bleffing of God.

From these improper methods of supporting religion, let us now proceed to the proper ones. And they will naturally fall under the general heads of our instructions and our lives.

Giving inftruction requires knowledge. And therefore, as a competent degree of it is juftly expected of perfons, before they enter into holy orders : fo, when they enter, the care of making a continual progrefs in it is folemnly promifed by them, and covenanted for with them." What may be a very good beginning, is by no means a fufficient flock to go on with; and even that will leffen, if no pains be taken to increase it. Continued application then is a duty of importance. Perfons of lower abilities and attainments are in danger, without it, of being ufelefs and defpifed : and they, who fet out with greater advantages, are bound to endeavour at doing, in proportion, greater fervices to the church of God. Without exception therefore, all who are engaged in fo ferious an employment as ours, if they have any regard either to their duty or their character, must take care, not to be more remarkable for their diverfions, than their fludies; nor indolently to trifle their time away, inflead of employing it to good purpofes. And though most parts of learning will be useful to us, and all parts ornamental; yet we must be fure to remember, what we have been folemnly admonithed of, that no attention to any thing elfe, ought ever to draw us away from the purfuit of fuch knowledge, as is properly theological. For to excel in other things, and be deficient in that, cannot but caft a grievous reflection ; either on us, for not fludying what we profess; or on our profession, as having little in it worth fludying. Our principal bufiness therefore must be, to obtain a thorough acquaintance with the Christian faith : first the grounds, then the doctrines of it. And the previous qualifications for attempting this are, a due knowledge of the rules of right reafoning, and of the moral and religious truths which nature teaches; of the ftate of the world in its earlier ages, and in that when Chriftianity first appeared. These preparations being made, the great thing requisite in the next place is a diligent fearch into the holy Scripture. For there it is, that both the authentic fyftem of our belief, and the chief evidence for it, are exhibited to our view. Scripture therefore, above all things. the Infidel endeavours to ridicule; the miftaken Chriftian, to wreft in fupport of his errors : and if we defire, either to confute them, or to fatisfy ourfelves; our only way must be, to understand it well. For A 3 which

which end it is quite neceffary, that we make the original language, at leaft of the New Teftament, familiar to us: and were that of the Old more commonly fludied, the advantages would be very confiderable.

In order to fee clearly, on what ground our belief ftands; together with the facred volumes themfelves, the writings of fuch learned perfons, as have proved their authority, and vindicated their accounts of things, muft be carefully read; and attentively compared with thofe objections againft them, which have been revived of late, dreffed up with fo much art, and fpread abroad with fo much diligence. For in our prefent circumftances we are always liable to be attacked: and confider, what an unhappy triumph it would afford, fhould we be found unprovided of a rational defence. It is very true, the general evidence, which we have for our faith, is abundantly fufficient of itfelf, to overbalance many difficulties concerning it, and ever fo many cavils againft it. But yet our being unqualified to give more particular anfwers, where they can be given; as indeed there are few cafes, where they cannot; may often prove a great reproach to us, and a great flumbling-block to others.

Next to the grounds of religion, the doctrines of it, especially the more important and disputed ones, ought to be studied, with such diligence and impartiality, as may best discover to us the nature of every opinion, and the force of every argument : that fo we may neither load Chriftianity with what doth not belong to it : nor betray, inftead of defending it, by giving up what doth ; but faithfully keep that which is committed to our trust (c), both entire and unmixed. To fecure this great end, we must ever adhere strictly to the word of God, fairly interpreted by the help of all fuch means as Providence hath given us; and carefully avoid, on the one hand, fondness of novelty : and on the other, overgreat reverence of antiquity, especially such as comes short of the earlieft. But against the former of these, it is peculiarly needful to caution the rifing generation; whom the rafhness of youth, and the petulant fpirit of the prefent age, too often hurries into a strange vehemence for any imagination, which they have happened to take up; and prompts. them to fly out against established doctrines, without having always the patience even to underftand them. Such therefore fhould be exhorted to learn a proper degree, both of filence and fufpence, till cooler thought, and farther inquiry, make them fitter judges of things. But belides those controversies, to which this caution chiefly relates; that between the Papifts and us deferves at prefent to be well itudied, by fuch of you, as live in the neighbourhood of any. For feldom have they fhewn more zeal or more artifice than of late, in their attempts of making profelytes. And therefore it is of great confequence, that we provide ourfelves against them, with a fufficient knowledge of their real doctrines, their molt fpecious pleas, and the proper answers to them. Another subject, with which we are concerned to be well acquainted, is what relates to the government and worthip, difcipline and eftablishment of our own church. Different parts of our ecclefiaftical conftitution are frequently cenfured, by different forts of perfons, with very different views : though indeed the .

(c) 1 Tim. vi. 20.

#### first Charge to his Clergy.

the moft opposite of them have appeared, for fome time, unaccountably disposed to unite againft us; and believers to join with Infidels in using their Christian brethren ill. It may therefore be of great use, to inform ourselves diligently concerning every thing of this nature, which is spoken of to our prejudice; and be always ready to shew the genuine state of the case, with mildness and fairness. But no controversies, however needful, must be suffered to divert our attention from what is of all things the most needful, the study of practical religion, and of the common duties of life. These are the things, which mankind are most apt to fail in, and most concerned not to fail in : and therefore spending much time upon them, obtaining a thorough insight into them, and having a deep fense of them, is the very foundation of doing good, both to others and to our own fouls.

A competent provision of knowledge being fuppofed, the next thing is communicating it to those who are under our care, in fuch manner as their circumftances require.

The proofs of religion, both natural and revealed, all men fhould be taught, and especially at prefent, in the most intelligible and convincing manner. As for the objections against either : fuch as it may be fuppofed they have thought or heard of, fhould be diffinctly answered; but the reft obviated only, as occasion offers. For to enter into them farther, would be mifpending time. Next to the truth of religion, they should have its importance laid before them. The necessity of a moral life most men will own in general terms : only what they are pleased to call fo, is often a very immoral one, both with respect to their feilowcreatures, and the government of themfelves. But regard to piety is ftrangely loft, even amongst perfons, that are otherwise tolerably ferious. Many have laid afide all appearances of it : and others, who would icem to keep them up, do it with evident marks of indifference and contempt. It fhould therefore be industriously shewn and inculcated, that an inward fense of love and duty to God, founded on just conceptions of him, and expressing itself in frequent acts of worship, constant obedience and refignation to him, is in truth the first and great commandment (d), the principal and most important of moral obligations. But then, befides those instances of piety, which reason requires of us, there are others, founded on relations equally real, and confequently deferving equal regard, enjoined by revelation. The utmost care therefore ought to be uled, confidering the prefent disposition of the world, to convince men of what moment the doctrines and duties of the Gofpel are. To make reason sufficient for nothing in religion, is to overturn every thing. But to infift on its infufficiency for many most valuable purposes, which revelation is fully fufficient for, and on the neceffity of obferving whatever God hath thought fit to command, this is doing but common juffice, though a very feafonable piece of juffice, to the doctrine of our bleffed Saviour, and the authority of our Maker.

When once men are brought to underftand the value of Chriftianity, the next thing is, to give them a proportionable folicitude for it: to make them observe, how visibly the belief and practice of it decay, and how dreadful the confequences must be and are: to shew them, that re-

ligion

<sup>(</sup>d) Matth. xxii. 38.

ligion is not the concern of the clergy merely, but the common concern of all men; the great thing, on which public and private happinefs depends in this life, as well as eternal felicity in the next: that therefore, if they have any value for thefe important interefts, they muft take the neceflary means of fecuring them: their children, their fervants and dependants muft be diligently watched over and infructed; private devotion muft be practifed, family-worfhip revived, and the fervice of God in the church regularly and ferioufly attended upon. For laying afide thefe things hath almoft banifhed religion from amongft us: and nothing, but reftoring them, can bring it back. Piety is indeed feated in the heart: but to give it no vent in outward exprefiion, is to flife and extinguifh it. Neglecting the public exercise of religion, is deftroying the public regard to it: and teaching men to defpile their own form of religion, is enough very often to make them defpile it under any orm.

Great pains have been taken by our adverfaries to give the world an ill opinion of religious inftruction : and we must take equal pains to give them a good one of it; by reprefenting to them, both the natural influence it hath, and the Divine authority that enjoins it. But after all, the only effectual conviction will be that of experience. And therefore the chief point is, to endeavour that men may feel the benefit of our teaching : feel at least, that it is their own fault, not ours, if they do not become the wifer, the better and happier for it. To this end, we must all dwell often and ftrongly on the great duties, and great failures of duty, in common life : first explaining the obligations of religion fo as that they may be practifed ; then infifting on it, that they muft : entering into the particulars of each with fuch plainnefs, that every one may clearly fee his own faults laid before him; yet with fuch prudence, that no one may fo much as imagine himfelf perfonally pointed at : and taking the ftricteft care, that no part of what we fay may feem in the leaft to proceed from our own passions, or our own interests; but all appear evidently to flow from a true concern for the good of those that hear us. Diligent confideration, what our fubject and our feveral characters will bear us out in, must direct us, when to give our judgment with diffidence, when to lay ftrefs upon it : in what cafes to exhort with all long-fuffering (e); in what, to rebuke with all authority (f). But which foever we do, neither our language should be florid, nor our manner theatrical : for these things only raife an ufelefs admiration in weak perfons, and produce great contempt in judicious ones. Nor yet on the other hand, fhould our expressions be mean, or our behaviour lifeless : but both must be fuitable to the employment we are upon; both be fuch as come naturally from the heart of the speaker, and therefore will naturally move that of the hearer.

To this our public teaching it will be a great help, and indeed a valuable part of it, if we perform the feveral offices of our excellent liturgy devoutly and properly: neither with an irreverent precipitation, nor a tedious flownefs; neither in a flat and languid manner, nor yet with an affected livelinefs, or a vehemence ill-placed or over-done: but fo as may

(e) 2 Tim. iv. 2.

may beft express the fense and the importance of what we read; and, by shewing our own attention to it, engage that of all around us.

Befides our general inftructions, it is very needful, that we give the youth under our care, in particular, an early knowledge and love of religion, that may abide with them; and ftand the trials, to which their riper years will of course be exposed. I hope you are all diligent in that most uleful work of catechizing : and have done your utmost to prepare for confirmation, those whom you present to me. And I earnestly recommend it to you, that the good impreffions, which may well be fuppofed to have been made upon their minds at this feafon, be not fuffered to wear off again; but be improved into fettled habits of religion and virtue, by still farther exhortations, and leading them, as foon as possible, to the holy communion. But, though all the youth deferve our peculiar attention ; yet if any of them be educated in charity-fchools under our infpection, for these we should think ourselves still more nearly concerned, than for the reft; and, by first taking care, to have them taught whatever is proper, and nothing elfe, then making known the good ma. nagement they are under, put an end to those accusations, of their learning idlenefs and pride, fuperifition and difloyalty; which may have been, fometimes one of them, fometimes another, in fome degree deferved; but have been carried, with a wicked indultry most shamefully beyond truth, and leffened the credit of this excellent inflitution, even with many good perfons, to the great detriment of Christianity.

Another very uleful method of fpreading the knowledge of religion, and teaching men a ferious regard to it, is by diffributing, or procuring to be diffributed, fuch pious books, efpecially to the poorer fort, as are beft fuited to their capacities and circumftances. For there is a great variety of them to be had : and at fo very low prices, that much good may be done this way to confiderable numbers at once, in a moft acceptable manner, for a trifling expence.

But nothing will contribute more to make our public inftructions effectual, than private conversation, directed with prudence to the fame end. The better we are known to perfons, the greater influence we may hope to have upon them : and the better we know them, the more diftinctly we fhall fee how to make use of that influence to good purposes. By reprefenting proper truths, at fit times, with a modelt freedom, we may very much abate the prejudices of men, who have any fairnefs remaining, both against religion and ourselves: at least we may prevail on them, for the fake of public order and example, to keep within the bounds of decency; and fo prevent their doing harm, if we cannot make them good. Perfons, that err in particular points of doctrine, friendly difcourfe may fhew us what led them into their miftakes, and enable us to lead them out again. Such as diffent from our church-government and worfhip, talking amicably with them, and behaving in the fame manner towards them, if it doth not immediately bring them over, may however bring them nearer to us, both in judgment and affection. Such as are faulty in their moral conduct, ferious and affectionate remonstrances, given in private and kept private, and joined with a tendernefs to their characters in public, may often do a great deal towards reforming them : and fooner or later, the feed thus fown may fpring up in their hearts, and a produce

#### The Bishop of Oxford's

produce happy fruits. We fhould not indeed prefs upon perfons, when there is no other profpect than that of provoking them : but we ought to watch all opportunities, whilft there is any hope left; and not only make it our endeavour to convert the miftaken and vicious, but ftir up the negligent to ferious thought, and the good themfelves to more eminent goodnefs. Efpecially fuch perfons of rank and influence, as we find well difpoled, these we must earnestly excite to appear and give countenance to the caufe of religion, ever remembring that awful declaration of our bleffed Lord : Whofoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and finful generation, of him alfo shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy Angels (g). We must convince them of the urgent necessity there is, for interposing in behalf of piety and virtue : and fuggeft to them the means for engaging with fuccels in this excellent employment. Yet must we never fpend fo much of our attention on the higher part of the world, as to give the leaft fufpicion of neglecting the lower ; whole number is fo much larger, whole difpolitions are ufually fo much more favourable to religion, and whole eternal happinels is of equal importance to them, and ought to be of equal concern to us; but we must prove we are in carneft in our work; by making it our care, as it was our Mafter's, that the poor have the Gofpel preached to them (b). And one opportunity of preaching it with fingular advantage, both to the poor and the rich, is when ficknels brings near to them the view of another life. At fome times indeed the fick may be incapable of attending to exhortations : at others they may be endangered by them : and at all times great prudence is requifite, to avoid the extremes, of terrifying or indulging them too much. But, provided due caution be used in these respects ; laying before them what they ought to be, and reminding them to confult their own confciences what they have been, is a molt likely method of exciting in them fuch affections and refolutions at that feafon of recollection and feriousness, as, through the bleffing of heaven, may produce the happieft effects.

To these excellent offices therefore we must all of us chearfully apply ourselves, each in such degree as his station requires. If they do require pains, if they do take up time, if they are inconfistent with agreeable amusements, and even interrupt useful studies of other kinds; yet this is the busines which we have folemuly chosen, and the vows of God are upon us: it is the most important and most honourable, it ought to be the most delightful too, of all employments: and therefore we have every reason not to seek the means of evading our duty, but of fulfilling it; and each to take the oversfight of the flock of God, committed to him, not by constraint, but willingly (i). For if we only just do what we can be punished by our superiors for neglecting, we must neither expect fucces

But then to fecure either, the chief thing requifite is ftill behind : that own tempers and lives be fuch, as we fay those of other perfons fould. For if we, who teach religion, live, or fuffer our families to live, with little or no fense of religion, what can we possibly expect, but

(g) Mark viil. 38.

(b) Matt. xi. 5.

(i) Pet. v. 2.

but that men will improve fo palpable an advantage against us to the utmoft : will argue, that we believe not our own doctrine; and therefore it deferves no belief: or, we practife not our own precepts; and therefore they cannot be practifed ? Thus we shall increase that infidelity and wickednefs, which our bufinefs is to oppofe. Too much of it will be really owing to us : and the whole will be laid upon us. The enemies of religion will have the best pretence in the world to ruin us : and the friends of it will grow unconcerned for us, and ready to give us up to them. But, were these confequences not to follow, still very bad ones must follow. Men, irreligious or vicious themselves, cannot be hearty in oppofing irreligion and vice : they cannot do it with boldnefs, if they were hearty : and could they be ever fo bold, it must fit much too ill upon them, to have any good effect. Wrong-minded perfons will be furnifhed with the most plausible excuse imaginable for difregarding them intirely : and the righteft-minded perfons that ever were, cannot, if they would, regard them as they ought. This will be the cafe, even with respect to their public teaching : and as for private admonitions, they will feldom have the face to venture upon them, and never fucceed in them : whereas every word, that comes from an exemplary man, hath great weight; and his bare example is most valuable instruction of itself. But, were a bad life not to hinder at all the fuccels of our ministry; yet we must remember, it will absolutely hinder the falvation of our fouls : and fubject us to that forer punishment, of which he may well be thought worthy, who, teaching others, teacheth not himfelf, but through breaking the law disbonoureth God (k).

Nor is it fufficient by any means for us to be guilty of no vice. This is fmall praife, for one of our order. We are bound to be patterns of the most diligent practice of virtue, and the strictest regard to religion ; and we shall never make others zealous for what we ourselves appear indifferent about. It is very true, that, peculiarly in our cafe, the generality of the world both expect and find fault, quite beyond reafon : and doubtlefs they are much to blame in doing fo. But then furely we are no lefs to blame, if, when we know the feverity, with which our conduct will be examined, we do not watch over it with equal feverity ourfelves; and take the only way to be looked on as good men, that is, being fuch undeniably. And whoever hath a due fenfe of this obligation. will confcientioufly abstain, not only from all evil, but all appearance of it too (1). Such a one, for inftance, far from ever offending against temperance, will be noted for it : and think the imputation of being mighty to drink wine (m) almost as infamous, as that of being overcome by it. Far from being guilty of indecency in his behaviour or difcourfe, he will keep at a diftance from every thing liable to the construction of it. Far from being remarkable for luxury and delicacy in his manner of living or appearing, he will be fure to preferve himfelf, on all occafions, at leaft as remote from indulgence, as he is from aufterity. And though he will never difguft the perfons, with whom he converfes, by a gravity affects. ed or ill timed : yet he will be equally careful, never to expose himself; by

(k) Heb. x. 29. Rom. ii. 21, 23. (m) If. v. 22. (1) 1 Theff. v. 22.

by a lightness of carriage unbecoming his function; nor let any thing be a part of his character, nuch less a diffinguishing part, that can only tend to lower it. For we can never be uleful, if we are despised: and we shall be despised, if we will give opportunities for it. Even they, who seem well pleased with us, will think meanly of us inwardly; and perhaps of the whole order, for our takes.

Yet at the fame time, we shall be greatly mistaken, if we aim to avoid contempt by haughtinefs : which will only add hatred to it. Our rule therefore must be, to express, in every thing, condescention to the lower part of the world, without being improperly familiar; and respect to the upper, without being fervile: recommending ourfelves at once to the love and efteem of both, by a mild kind of dignity and ingenuous fimplicity, kept up through our whole behaviour. Mildnefs of temper is the duty of every man: but especially required of us (n); and absolutely neceflary, both to our preferving regard, and doing fervice in the world. Therefore, whatever provocations we meet with from those, amongft whom we live, as indeed we often meet with great ones, it neither belongs to our character, nor will be for our interest, to take offence and express refentment; but by prudence and patience to overcome evil with good (o) For we shall often do it this way, and never any other. Inftead of being engaged in enmities of our own, it fhould be our endeavour to compose the differences of other persons: not by intermeddling in their affairs, when we are not called to it; but by laying hold on every fit opportunity given us, for disposing them to a mutual good opinion, where there is room for it; or at leaft, to mutual good-will. Too many occasions indeed for friendly interpolition, cur unhappy party-difputes furnish us with, had we no other. Entring into these with vehemence, and that injuffice which never fails to accompany vehemence, is what all men fhould avoid : but we, who must caution them against it, should avoid it with uncommon care : should religiously pay that refpect to every one, which is their due, efpecially to our fuperiors; think well of mens actions and defigns, unlefs we have evident caufe to think otherwife ; judge with modefty, where perhaps we are not qualified to judge; and whatever our opinion be, preferve our behaviour inoffenfive: give the least provocation, that may be, to bad men of any fide ; and act in fuch manner, as may gain us, if poffible, the united efteem of good men of all fides. For theirs is the friendship, of which we ought to be ambitious. Familiarities with profane and vicious perfons, beyond what neceffary civility, or a real prospect of reforming them requires, will, whatever we may promife ourfelves from their favour or intereft, always difcredit and weaken us in general; and much oftner prove hurtful, than advantageous, to any of us in particular. But to cultivate the good opinion of the wife and virtuous, to recommend ourfelves to their protection, and, whatever elfe they may differ about, engage their common zeal in the common caufe of religion; this will procure us both fecurity and honour, and every way promote the great defign of our profession.

Another point, on which our character will not a little depend, is our being,

(n) Matth. x. 16. 1 Tim. iii. 3. 2 Tim. ii. 24. (o) Rom. xii. 21.

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being, in a reafonable degree, difinterefted. A very large proportion indeed of the clergy have too much caufe to endeavour at bettering their circumstances : and it is barbarous treatment, to accuse them for it, inflead of pitying them. But over-great folicitude and contrivance for advancing ourfelves will always make impreffions to our prejudice, let our condition be ever fo low : though defervedly much ftronger impreffions, in proportion as it is higher. We shall be thought to have no attention, but that, of which we discover too much : and the truth is we cannot ferve two masters (p). Nor will it be fufficient, that we avoid the charge of immoderately defiring more; unlefs we avoid alfo that of felfishness, in the management of what we have already : a matter, in which it is very difficult, and yet very important, to give no offence. We are bound, both to those who belong to us, and those who shall come after us, to take a proper care of our legal dues ; and preferve them faithfully from the encroachments of fuch, as tell us very truly, that we ought not to be worldly-minded; but forget what is equally true, that they themselves ought not to be fo. But then the ftrongeft reasons of all kinds oblige us, never to make unjust or litigious claims; never to do any thing, either hard or rigorous, or mean and fordid : to fhew, that we defire always the most easy and amicable me thod of ending difputes; and whatever method we may be forced to take, never to let any thing force us into the leaft degree of unfairnefs, paffion or ill-will ; but endeavour, by all inftances of friendly behaviour, to win, if poffible, upon the perfon we have to do with; at leaft to convince every body elfe, how very far we are from intending wrong to him, or any one.

And nothing will contribute more, to acquit us from the fufpicion of being felfifh in our dealings with other perfons; than approving ourfelves charitable to the poor : a virtue which becomes us fo extremely, and is fo peculiarly expected from us, and will give us fo valuable an influence: that we fhould willingly ftraiten ourfelves in almost any thing befides, that, to the full proportion of our abilities, we may abound in giving alms. And together with this, would we but, each in his ftation, take the beft care we can to fee justice done them in that provision, which the law hath intended for them, it would generally prove a much more confiderable benefaction, than all that we are able to beftow on them of our own.

To the above-mentioned inftances of right conduct we must always add, what will render them very engaging, the occafional kind offices of good neighbourhood; with a decent hospitality also, if our circumstances will permit it : and then, notwithstanding the cenfures of those, who complain that we are of little use, and endeavour to make us of none, we may furely well hope to do fervice to God, and be efteemed of men: especially if, together with so exemplary a behaviour towards others, we are friendly and compafionate, candid and equitable amongft ourfelves.

Great injustice, I am fatisfied, is done us on this head : and many groundless accusations brought confidently against us, by perfons, who neither enquire into facts, nor confider circumstances. But there are

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#### The Biftep of Oxford's first Charge, Sc.

few things, in which it concerns us more, to clear ourfelves where we are innocent, and to amend ourfelves where we are faulty. For fo long as we are thought in the world, either infolent to our inferiour brethren in general, or void of generofity and pity to fuch of them as we employ; we must not expect to receive better treatment, than we are understood to give. And if we are believed to be chargeable, beyond other men, with mutual bitterness and vehemence, when any kind of controverfy rifes amongft us; this too is a character, fo very different from that which ought to be ours, that the utmost care should be taken to guard against it. Not that we are obliged, either to speak of or behave to men of bad lives, or bad principles, as if they were good ones, becaufe unhappily they belong to our order. Making no diffinction would be on all accounts wrong : and making a proper diffinction will be very ufeful. But then we should never think worse of our brethren, than evidence forces us; never publish our ill opinion, without sufficient reason; nor exceed, when we do publish it, the bounds of moderation : we should be ready to fhew them all fitting kindnefs, even whilft they continue blameable; and receive them back with the most charitable tenderness, when they return to their duty. For there is no manner of need, that we fhould give either fo much advantage or fo much pleafure to the adverfaries of religion, as to let them fee those, who should be the joint-defenders of it, engaged in domeftic wars : and bringing fuch charges, and raifing fuch prejudices, one against another, that it is hard to fay, whether believing or difbelieving our mutual accufations will make the world think worfe of us. Our bleffed Lord therefore, after reminding his Difciples, that they were the falt of the earth; were defigned, by the purity of their doctrine and example, to keep others from corruption; and after giving them that prophetic warning, which we shall find men zealous to fulfil, that if the falt have lost its favour, it shall be cast out and trodden under foot (q); refuming the same figure at another time, concludes his exhortation thus, Have falt in yourfelves, and have peace one with another (r).

To these things, Brethren, if we have any concern for the interests of religion or our own, we must always industriously attend; but especially in fuch times, as by no means admit of negligence or mismanagement. Yet vain will our best endeavours be, unless we constantly add to them our fervent prayers, that God would enable and ftrengthen, both us, and all that ferve him in the Gospel of his Son, to perform our duty with faithfulness and fuccels. For we are not sufficient to think any thing of oursciences: our sufficiency is of God (s). What therefore we ought, every one of us, to beg of him at all times, let us all at prefent jointly address to him for, in the comprehensive and expressive words of our public fervice.

Aimighty and everlafting God, by whole Spirit the whole body of the church is governed and fantified; receive our fupplications and prayers, which we offer before thee for all cflates of men in thy boly church; that every member of the fame, in his vocation and miniftry, may truly and godly ferve thee, through our Lord and Saviour Jejus Chrift. Amen (t).

(9) Matth. v. 13. (s) 2 Cor. iii. 5. (r) Mark ix. 50.

(1) Second Collect for Good Friday. A CHARGE

14

## C H A R G E

A

#### DELIVERED TO THE

## CLERGY of the DIOCESE

OF

## O X F O R D,

#### In the YEAR 1741.

#### Reverend Brethren,

W HE N I had first the pleafure of meeting you, being very much W a ftranger, I could only lay before you fuch general admonitions and libertinism. But having now obtained a fuller acquaintance with things, chiefly from your Answers to my printed Enquiries, which have given me many reasons to efteem and respect you; I shall at prefent defeend into fome farther particulars : and confidering you, not merely as ministers of the Gospel at large, but as ministers of the feveral parishes in which you officiate, remind you of fome plain directions for your doing it more fuccessfully; which I shall deliver with less diffidence, and you you will receive with greater regard, for their being chiefly fuch as have been often recommended with good effect on fuch occafions as this.

I begin with one of the loweff in appearance, but not the leaft important of ecclefiaftical employments: catechizing the children under your care.

The catechifm confifts of the fundamental articles of Chriftian faith and practice. Without learning thefe we know not fo much as what it is we profefs to be; and there is great danger that unlefs perfons learn them at first, they will never learn them throughly : but only pick up from what they hear or read, unconnected and fometimes ill grounded notions, that will never unite into a complete or a confiftent form of found doctrine : as I apprehend we have had too much experience. The Rubric therefore requires, that every perfon learn the catechifm before his confirmation : and the 59th Canon, that every Incumbent shall examine and instruct the young and ignorant of his parish in it for half an hour or more every Sunday. Every fecond Sunday had been appointed before : but that I suppose was judged afterwards insufficient. Not that a strict obfervation of this rule was probably expected, during the winter feafon, in the generality of country parifhes, or where the children being few were more cafily taught. But plainly it was intended, that how much time foever was needful to do this work well, fhould be faithfully employed in it. I thank God, there are very few places in this Diocefe, and I hope there will foon be none, where catechizing is omitted. But I observe that in many it is practifed only during lent. Now I should apprehend that the fummer feafon would in general be much more convenient both for the minister and the congregation. But at least the space of a few weeks is by no means fufficient to fix the knowledge of their Chriftian duty fo firmly in the minds of young people, but that in the many months which pass from the end of one lent to the beginning of another, a great part of it will be to learn again. Therefore whenever this exercife is begun, it fhould be continued much longer : and whenever the conftant repetition of it is left off, it fhould be occafionally refumed for a Sunday or two, at proper diftances of time.

Another defect in fome places is, that barely the words of the catechifm are taught without any exposition. Now the very plaineft expreffions in it will need to be varied into others that are equivalent : elfe children will too often learn nothing but the found : and unless this danger, which is a very great one, be guarded against, you will have spent both their pains and your own but to fmall purpofe. Befides, all fciences have their terms, which must be interpreted to beginners: and fome of those in the catechism are figurative ones; very prudently used, as they comprehend in a little compass much meaning, and lead to the underftanding of the fame figures in Scripture; but undoubtedly used on purpofe to be explained : without which they are liable to make either no impression or a wrong one. And farther still, a system fo short as to be learnt by heart, must have need, were it ever fo clear, to be enlarged on ; the proofs of its truth, the connections and tendency of its doctrines, the use and extent of its precepts to be shewn : and therefore fince the Canon with great reafon enjoins, not only that you examine, but inftruct the children in their catechifm, I hope you will think this a very needful

#### fecond Charge to his Clergy.

needful part of that inftruction. As to the manner of it, that may be different, not only in different places, but in the fame at different times. Sometimes a continued difcourfe of fome length may be requifite : as it will lay before the adult part of your parishioners a methodical fummary of Christian doctrine; which they often want very much for themselves, and will thus be enabled to teach fomething of to their children, after they have heard it together from you.

Sometimes a curfory exposition of the more difficult expressions may deferve the preference. But afking the children queftions, relating to each part, and procuring them to learn texts of Scripture confirming each, will be always beneficial. The words of the catechifm itfelf may be very ufefully broken into fhorter queftions and anfwers : to which others may be added out of any one of the many good expositions that have been made public. Only you fhould endeavour as foon and as much as you can to make this a trial and improvement of the underftanding as well as the memory of young people, by afking fuch things as they fhould reply to in words of their own ; making that eafy to them in every possible way. And indeed, if many of your questions were formed to be answered merely by affirming or denying, it would be a very good method : and there is an exposition drawn up in that manner.

I am fenfible that fome clergymen are unhappily obliged to ferve two churches the fame afternoon: who may therefore plead, that they have fcarce ever time to hear the children repeat their catechifm, much lefs to explain it to them. And God forbid that any needlefs addition fhould ever be made to their burthen. But as I am fure they will be defirous of doing what they are able, in a matter of this importance, fo I fhould hope that in the longer days, at each of their churches alternately, they might hear the catechifm repeated one Sunday and expound part of it another, or hear only part of it repeated and expound that, or find fome way to prevent the intire omiffion of fo neceflary a duty. And if these can do any thing of this kind, there is no doubt but others may eafily do more.

But a farther hindrance which I fear you complain of too justly is, that parents and mafters are negligent in fending their children and fervants ; and the latter efpecially are both unwilling and often ashamed to come. Now the Canon doth indeed make provision for punishing fuch. But perfuading them would be much happier. And furely in fo clear a cafe, well timed and well judged arguments, if perfifted in, must do a great deal. The example of their equals or their betters, if you have any under your care that are wife enough to fet a good one; or however that of your own families, may help very much : and fuch little rewards of good books, or other encouragements as you can give or procure for them, it may be hoped, will completely prevail with them. At leaft fuch as think they are either too old or too confiderable to fay the catechifm themfelves, may be greatly improved by hearing others repeat, and you explain it.

But in fome few places it is pleaded, that the children cannot read, and their parents either cannot or will not get them taught, and therefore the foundation for their learning the catechifm is wanting. But furely tome perfon might be found, within a moderate diftance from every every place, to whom parents might be induced, at leaft if fomething were contributed towards it, to fend their children to be infructed thus far. Or at the worft, they who cannot read might eafily by degrees learn fo much as the catechilin by heart: effecially as the three main parts of it are in every Sunday's prayers. The incapacity of reading was almost general at the time of the reformation : yet even in those days the clergy were able to teach first parents and houfholders, then by their means children and fervants, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments : and afterwards the reft of the catechilin. Now fince that groß darknels hath been fo far enlightened, it cannot be impracticable to dispel the remains of it.

After due inftruction follows confirmation: an appointment derived down from Apoftolical practice; and of fuch acknowledged ulefulnefs that in the times of confusion, a hundred years ago, when bishops were rejected, fome of their adverfaries took upon them to perform this part of their function : and within these few years the church of Geneva hath reftored it in the beft manner their form of church government will admit, and added an office for it to their liturgy. In our own church the ancient effeem of this inflitution is, generally speaking, fo well preferved, that I hope the defire of being confirmed may not a little ftrengthen that of being inftructed, as the only way to it. And yet I must observe, that the numbers from fome parifhes have been in proportion very finall. This may not have arisen from any neglect in the minister: but as it ought to incline me to make the opportunities of confirmation as convenient as I am able; fo it ought to incline you, agreeably to the nature of your function, and the express direction of the 61st Canon, to use your beft endeavours, that your parifhioners may gladly take those opportunities. Yet I must intreat you to endeavour at the fame time, that none be brought, but those who, to speak in the language of the Rubric, are come to years of difcretion, who have learnt, not the words only, but, In a competent degree, the meaning of what was promifed for them in baptifm; who can fay with feriousness and truth, (what furely elfe they ought not to fay at all,) that in the prefence of God and the congregation they ratify and confirm the fame in their own perfons; and who therefore are likely to have useful and lafting impressions made on them by this folemnity. Undoubtedly fome arrive at this capacity fooner than others, and therefore I have mentioned the age of fourteen, not with a defign of abiolutely tying you down to it; but as being, for the most part, full early enough; and that, where you fee it requifite, you may, without giving offence yourfelves, oppofe my order to the indifcreet forwardness of parents; whom however, I hope, it will make eafy, to affure them, as I give you authority, that fo long as it pleafes God to continue my health and ftrength, confirmations shall be frequent in every part of this Diocefe. I must also defire that you will carefully instruct those whom you do bring, in the whole nature of the inftitution, and particularly in this, amongft other more important points, that they are never to be confirmed any more than baptized a fecond time : that you will direct them to make the proper anfwers audibly through the whole of the office, which many of them feem to have no notion of, though it is fo neceffary in the nature of the thing, and tends fo much both to fix their attention,

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tion, and to give the folemnity a decent and edifying appearance. You will caution them likewife not to crowd forward and incommode each other, using this argument for one, that the whole number who come in at the fame time, will be difinified at the fame time alfo : and laftly you will prefs it ftrongly upon their minds, that what they promife at their confirmation, they are to remember and keep to their lives end. I have already defired of you, on these occasions, a list of such as your judge qualified; that fo the numbers and perfons may be known : of this you would do well to keep a copy yourfelves, and if it were written alphabetically, both you and I should be able to confult it upon the spot more eafily. For the abovementioned Canon, the 61ft, plainly directs your attendance along with your parishioners; to take especial care (for fo the words run) that none be prefented but fuch as you know are fit. And as your being prefent to approve or difapprove must needs increase your influence and authority amongft your people; it must likewise make the discharge of my duty fo very much easier and more useful, that I beg you will never let me be without your affiftance in this work, as you shall never be without mine in any thing. And for this purpofe when confirmations are on a Sunday, which is the time I shall usually pitch upon, for the convenience of the people, excepting at the places of my vifitation, you may omit for that day the morning or the evening prayers as you see occasion. I have not indeed hitherto been able to effect, what would greatly fhorten your labour, calling up your feveral parifhes in their order separately. But I shall be very glad to do it, as soon as ever you can introduce this order amongst them, which I earnestly recommend to you : and I hope a continued frequency of confirmations will foon make that feafible without difficulty here, which is now practifed conftantly in the populous cities of London and Westminster.

From confirmation perfons ought to be led on, if poffible, before the impreffions of it are much weakened, to the holy facrament : and it is one material reafon why confirmation fhould not be too early, that with a little farther inftruction given foon after it, you may eafily bring them, fuch as they ought to be, to the Lord's table : which may prove a much harder matter, when once they have been a good while out of your hands: The fmall proportion of communicants which I find there is in most of your congregations, and very fmall in fome, muft undoubtedly (as this ordinance is appointed for all Chriftians, and for a ftanding means of grace to all) be a fubject of very great concern to you. And though it is too true, that the generality of the world, and perhaps the lower fort beyond others, are incredibly obstinate in their prejudices, especially in fuch as at all favour corrupt nature: yet our complaining of these prejudices is not enough; but labouring to overcome them is our bufinefs, and we are not to grow weary of it. Some imagine that the facrament belongs only to perfons of advanced years, or great leifure, or high attainments in religion, and is a very dangerous thing for common perfons to venture upon. Some again difregard it stupidly, because others, they fay, who do receive are never the better for it; or becaufe their friends before them, or their neighbours about them never received at all, or not till fuch an age: and why fhould they? You will therefore represent to them, that whoever receives without benefit, it is his own fault ;

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fault; and that how many foever omit it either for part of their lives or the whole, not their example but the word of God is the rule for Chriftians : that far from being a terrible or enfnaring inftitution, it is in reality a most gracious one : defigned to be celebrated with humility indeed, but with comfort and joy: that all the preparation it requires is within the reach of the plaineft head and the most laborious hand, provided there be only an honeft and pious heart : and that the judgment. which unworthy receivers eat and drink to themfelves, needs no more affright those whom God- in his mercy will confider as worthy; as he certainly will every true penitent ; than the capital punifhments, threatened by the law to crimes, make innocent perfons uneafy : that he whole life unfits him for the facrament, is unfit for the kingdom of heaven alfo; and he, who being qualified for it, neglects it, neglects a dying command of his Lord and Saviour, intended for the greatest good to him ... But your public inftructions on this head will be much more effectual for being followed by feafonable private applications: in which you will. hear and answer their objections, be they of ever to little weight, withgreat meeknefs; not be provoked by any perverfenefs of theirs to thew. anger, but only a friendly concern ; and even if you meet with an abfolute repulse, leave them with an affurance that you shall apply to them' again, in hopes that God will have difpofed them better to obey his precepts.

But befides increasing the number of your communicants, it were very defirable, that they who do communicate fhould do it more frequently. In the three first centuries the eucharist was every where celebrated weekly, and in many places almoftedaily. Decay of piety occafioned an injunction in the fixth, that every Christian should receive thrice in the year; which was reduced in the thirteenth, perhaps with a bad intention, to once. Our church requires thrice at the least : which evidently implies, that more than thrice is hoped for. And indeed each perfon will fcarce be able to communicate fo often unlefs the commu-. nion be administred oftener. But befides, it is appointed to be every Lord's day in cathedral and collegiate churches, and part of the office for it. is read every Lord's day in every church, for an admonition of what it were to be wifhed the people could be brought to. This indeed at beft muft be a work of time : but one thing might be done at prefent in all your parifhes, as God be thanked, it is in moft of them : a facrament might eafily be interposed in that long interval between Whitfuntide and Chriftmas : and the ufual feafon for it, about the feaft of St. Michael, (when your people having gathered in the fruits of the earth have fome reft from their labours, and must furely feel fome gratitude to the Giver of all good) is a very proper time. And if afterwards you can advance from a quarterly communion to a monthly one, I make no doubt but you will. Upon this fubject I must observe to you farther, that though in one or two parifhes of this Diocefe the old cuftom is retained, of oblationsfor the minister, as well as alms for the poor, to both which the fentences appointed to be read are plainly adapted : yet in many parifhes there is no offertory at all : though it be certainly a practice of primitive antiquity, a most proper admonition and specimen of charity; which I fear the generality of Christians much want to be reminded of; a mostfeafonable

#### fecond Charge to his Clergy.

feafonable demonftration of our loving our brethren for his fake, who hath loved us; and a thing expressly enjoined in the Rubric of the communion office. Why therefore fhould you not attempt to revive it, where it hath been intermitted? Merely prefenting to perfons an opportunity of giving if they think fit, and only what they think fit, can furely, (if the reafons of it be explained to them beforehand) never keep any one away from the facrament. But then, though all who have not abfolutely nothing, ought undoubtedly to contribute their mite, yet no difagreeable notice fhould ever be taken of any, for giving but little or not giving at all: and whatever is collected, fhould be difpofed of, fo that all perfons may know it, with the greateft faithfulnefs, prudence, and impartiality.

Another part of Divine worfhip, concerning which I think it needful to fpeak, is pfalmody: a part clearly appointed in Scripture, both expreffive and productive of devout affections, extremely well fitted to diverfify long fervices, and peculiarly to diftinguish the feveral parts of our own, which were originally feparate. Our ecclefiaffical laws do not indeed require it under any penalty : becaufe there may not every where be perfons qualified to perform it decently. But wherever there are, the Rubric makes provision for it, and I recommend to you that it be not omitted. You will always endeavour that your parish-clerks be perfons of difcretion as well as skill and feriousness. But however you will be much furer of no impropriety happening in this part of the worfhip, if you either direct them every Sunday to fuitable pfalms, or affign them a course of fuch to go orderly through. And unless the generality of your parifhioners are provided with books and able to make use of them; ordering each line to be read, will both fecure a greater number of fingers and be very inftructive to many who cannot fing. All perfons indeed who are by nature qualified ought to learn, and conftantly join to glorify him that made them, in pfalms and fpiritual fongs. This was the practice of the early Chriftians: it was reftored very juftly at the reformation . and hath declined of late, within most of our memories, very unhappily. For the improvements made by a few in church-mufic, were they real improvements, will feldom equal the harmony of a ge neral chorus; in which any leffer diffonances are quite loft: and it is fomething inexpressibly elevating, to hear the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters and of mighty thunders, to fpcak in the words of Scripture, making a joyful noife to the God of their falvation, and finging his praifes with understanding. Perfons of a ludicrous turn may reprefent every thing in a wrong light: but those of any seriousness, if they will lay afide falfe delicacy, and that prepofterous fhame of religious performances, with which the prefent age is fo fatally tainted, will find themfelves very pioufly affected only by hearing this melody, much more by bearing a part in it : and therefore I beg you will encourage all your parifhioners, efpecially the youth, to learn pfalmody; and excite them, if there be need, with fome little reward : for you will thus make the fervice of God abundantly more agreeable, and their attendance on it more conftant. But then, where any knowledge of the old common tunes remains, you fhould endeavour principally that your learners may perfect themselves in these; that so they may lead and affift the rest of the con-

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gregation, who fhould always join with them : or if you must admit a mixture of new and uncommon tunes, it fhould be no greater than you find yourfelves in prudence abfolutely obliged to. Elfe the confequence will be, what I fear many of you have experienced, that either one part of your people will refent being unjuftly filenced, and this by the introduction of tunes often not fo good as their former ones, and fo your parifh will be divided and uneafy: or if they agree to the change ever fo generally and like it ever fo well, yet your felect fingers will either be weary in a while of what only novelty recommended to them, or grow conceited and ungovernable, or die off, or be dispersed, and the congregation will be left unable to fing in any manner at all. Where indeed the newer tunes have quite blotted out the memory of the old ones, all you can do is, to make use of what you find in use, to get some of "he eafieft of them learnt as generally as you can, and keep to thefe. As d if, in order to inftruct your people in either way of finging, meetings to practife out of church-time be requifite, you will keep a ftrict watch over them, that they may be managed with all poffible decency, and never continued till candle-light, if they confift of both fexes. You will likewife difcountenance, at leaft all frequent meetings, between the fingers of different parifhes, and making appointments to fing alternately at one anothers churches: for this wandring from their own, which by by law they ought to keep to, ufually leads them into excelles and follies.

I am very fenfible, that fome of the things which I have been mentioning, are by no means of equal importance with others. But nothing is without its importance, that relates to Divine worfhip. The merc outward behaviour of those who attend upon it is of fuch use, and good influence, that I must defire you will be diligent in teaching them, (but fo as to perfuade, not provoke them) what reverence belongs to the houfe of God ; particularly how very wrong it is to fit inftead of kneeling when they are or fhould be addreffing themfelves to their Maker, and to fhew how indecent that appearance is of difregard to him, which they would not use on any account to one of their fellow-creatures a little superior to themfelves. If you could only breed up the younger to a right behaviour in this respect, your congregations would grow regular in time. But mild expostulations will furely in fo plain a case produce some effect upon the reft alfo, which will be much facilitated if you take care that proper conveniences for kneeling be provided for them. And if you could convince them also that standing is a more reverent posture to sing pfalms to God in, as well as to read them, than fitting, you would come fo much the nearer to the Apostolical rule of doing all things decently. For as fome of the pfalms contain the nobleft acts of adoration, furely they ought not to be fung in a pofture unfit to express it. Another thing, and no finall one, which I believe many of your parifhioners often want to be admonifhed of, is to come before the fervice begins. Undoubtedly allowance is to be made for neceffary, especially unforeseen, business, and fome allowance for not knowing the time exactly: but I hope you will obviate both these pleas as far as you can, by confulting their convenience in the hour you fix, and then keeping punctually to it. And at the fame time you will remind them, that a due degree of zeal in religion

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ligion would incline them to be rather a great deal too early at the houfe of God, than a little too late : that no part of the fervice can be more needful for them, than that which comes first; the confession of their fins: that instruction in their duty is better learnt from the pfalms and leffons, which are the word of God, than from fermons, which are only our explanations of it: and that by coming fo irregularly, they not only are great losers themselves, but difturb and offend others.

But it is not fufficient to give you directions about fuch as do come to church, without taking notice of the great numbers which I find there are in many, if not most, of your parishes, that omit coming. Now on these your preaching indeed can have no immediate influence. But it may however prevent the increase of them; and furnish others with arguments against them; and with the best of arguments, their experience of its good effects. You will therefore questionless do all you can in this way, without using any expressions in relation to their fault, which if repeated to them may exafperate them. But your chief dependance must be on private application to them, varied fuitably to the occasion of their neglect. If it arises merely from ignorance, or floth, or want of thought, they must be plainly told what they owe to their Maker, and awakened to the hopes and fears of a future life. If it be defire of gain or of pleafure that keeps them away, they muft be asked what it will profit them to gain the whole world and lofe their own fouls ? or fhewn that to be lovers of pleasure more than of God will end in pains eternal. If they defend themfelves, by pleading, as fome will, that nothing can be told them at church but what they are acquainted with already, it will furely not be hard to fhew them that they over-rate their knowledge : that if this were otherwife they may however be reminded of what they did not think of, or excited to what they did not practife : that, were they too perfect to receive any benefit, it would not be decent for them to tell the world fo by their behaviour : that at leaft they ought to fet others an example who may be the better for public inftruction: and laftly, that receiving inftruction is not the whole of Divine fervice, but praying the chief part. And though it is allowed they can pray at home privately, yet without enquiring whether they do, fince God hath commanded, for plain and important reafons, that we worfhip him publicly, and hath excepted no one: by what authority doth any one except himfelf? And what will this end in, but an univerfal neglect of a duty which our Maker hath required to be univerfally practifed ? If it be any fcruple about the lawfulnefs of coming to church that keeps perfons away, fit opportunities fhould be fought with great care, and used with great prudence, to set them right : and such diffenters, for many there are, as do not think our manner of worthip finful, but only prefer another, which perhaps they are often without the means of attending upon, should be feriously entreated to confider, how they can justify feparating from a lawful communion appointed by lawful authority, and even omitting all public worfhip frequently, rather than worthip with us. But then with whichfoever of these perfons we difcourfe, not the leaft perfonal anger must be shewn, nothing but a concern about their future happiness. For by this means if we make them no better, we shall at least make them no worfe, and perhaps may leave

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in their hearts what will fome time or other work there. Perfons who profess themselves not to be of our church, if perfuasions will not avail, must be let alone. But other absenters after due patience must be told in the laft place, that unwilling as you are, it will be your duty to prefent them, unlefs they reform: and if, when this warning hath been repeated, and full time allowed for it to work, they ftill perfift in their obftinacy, I beg you to do it. For this will tend much to prevent the contagion from fpreading, of which there is elfe great danger : and when once you have got them, though it be against their inclinations, within reach of your pulpit, who knows what good may follow? Different cafes may indeed require difference of treatment : and both the fame feverity and the fame mildnefs, that will fubdue one, will harden another. You will therefore act yourfelves and advife your church-wardens to act in this matter according to your difcretion. And after a profecution is begun, it shall still depend on your opinion whether it shall be carried on with rigour, or fulpended a while in hopes of amendment. Only one caution I would give you. Let not any perfon's threatenings, that, if he is profecuted, he will go over to the diffenters, move you in the leaft. Such will feldom do what they threaten : or if they do, 'tis better they flould ferve God in any way than none; and much better they flould be a difgrace to them than to us. I must not conclude this head without defiring you to remind your people, that our liturgy confifts not only of morning but evening prayer alfo : that the latter is in proportion equally edifying and inftructive with the former; and fo fhort, that, generally freaking, there can arife no inconvenience from attending upon it, provided perfons are within any tolerable diftance from the church : that few of them have bulinefs 'at that time of day; and amufements ought furely never to be preferred on the Lord's day before religion : not to fay that there is room for both.

But befides the public fervice, your people fhould be admonifhed to fpend a due part of their fabbath in private exercises of piety. For this is almost the only time, that the far greater part of them have, for meditating on what they have heard at church; for reading the Scripture and other good books; for the ferious confideration of their ways; for giving fuch inftruction to their children and families, as will make your work both eafier and more effectual. And therefore, though one would not by any means make their day of reft wearifome, nor forbid cheerfulnels, and even innocent feftivity upon it, much lefs the expredions of neighbourly civility and good-will, which are indeed a valuable part of the gracious ends of the infitution: yet employing a reafonable fhare of it ferioully at home as well as at church, and preferving an effectial reverence of God even throughout the freer hours of it, is neceffary to make it a bleffing to them in reality, inflead of a feafon of leifure to ruin themfelves, as it proves too often.

But farther, befides your and their duty on the Lord's day, it is appointed, that all minifters of parifhes read prayers on holy-days, on Wednefdays, and Fridays: and undoubtedly your endeavours to procure a congregation at fuch times ought not to be wanting. Were I to repeat to you the ftrong expressions which my great predecedior Bishop *Fell* ufed, in requiring this part of ecclefiaftical duty, they would furprife you. But I content I content myfelf with faying, that public worfhip was from the very first ages conftantly performed on the two ftationary days of each week; that all holydays appointed by the church were carefully obferved by the clergy, and the number of them now is not burthenfome : that where you can get a competent number to attend at these times, you will act a very pious and useful, as well as regular part: that your own houses will fometimes furnish a finall congregation; and what fucces you may have with others, nothing but trials, repeated from time to time, can inform you. But they, whole parishioners are the fewest and the busiest of all, I hope do not fail of bringing them to church at the least on Good Friday, and Chriftmas Day, befides Sundays. For though in fome of your Anfwers to my Enquiries, thefe are not mentioned as prayer days, yet I prefume that this arole from your taking it for granted I fhould underfand they were. But if in any place they be not, I earneftly entreat they may: for at fuch times there can be no difficulty of getting a congregation. I hope likewife, that you are not wanting in due regard to those which are usually called State Holydays: and particularly, that if the public fast, which hath been appointed these two last years, should be continued (as we have but too much reafon to apprehend there will be need) I beg you will endeavour, not only to bring your parishioners to church on that occafion ; but move them to fuch inward humiliation for their own fins, and fuch fervency of prayer for this most corrupt and wicked nation, as may avert, if it be poffible, the just judgments of God which fo visibly threaten us.

You must have understood, Brethren, in all you have heard, that I am not exhorting you to promote in your parifhes a mere form of godlinefs without the power. Outward observances, by whatever authority appointed, are only valuable in proportion as they proceed from a good heart and become means of edification and grace. They are always to be reverently regarded, but never refted in : for perfons may obferve without the leaft benefit, what they cannot omit without great fin. The bufinefs of your parifhioners therefore is, fo to ufe the external part of religion, as to be inwardly improved by it in love to God and their fellow-creatures and in moral felf-government : and your bufinefs is to apply both your public and private diligence, that this happy end be effectually attained. You have under your care great numbers of poor creatures, living very laborious lives in this world, and depending almost intirely on you for their hopes of another. It is a noble employment to direct their behaviour and lighten their toils here, by precepts and motives which lead them on at the fame time to happines hereafter. You will be fure of their acknowledgments at leaft in proportion as you fucceed in this work ; but you will be rewarded by God in proportion as you endeavour it. Think not therefore, that I am laying burthens upon you, but only firring up your minds by way of remembrance, and exhorting you fo to watch for the fouls of men as they that must give account, that you may do it with joy and not with grief. It is very little in my power either to increase or leffen your duty. Our bleffed Master hath fixed it, you have undertaken it : and were I to releafe you from ever fo great a part of it, I fhould only bring guilt on myfelf without acquitting you at all. The injunctions of the New Testament, infinitely stricter than any of men.

men, would continue to bind you as firmly as ever. Take heed therefore to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfil it.

Having a fubject of fuch a nature to fpeak to you upon, and being able to fpeak to you in a body but once in three years, you mult not wonder if I go fomewhat beyond the bounds of a common difcourfe. There are many other things and very material ones, relating to you as parifh minifters, which I could have wifhed to mention now: but I was willing to treat first of fuch matters as belong more immediately to the worship of God. If it pleafe him that I live to another visitation, I shall in that proceed to the reft. Permit me now to add but one word or two more upon a different fubject and I have done.

Whilft we are ferving Christianity here, with the advantage of a legal eftablishment and maintenance, there are vast multitudes of our fellowfubjects in America, their Negro-Slaves, and the neighbouring Indians, amongst whom the knowledge of God is taught, and the exercises of his worfhip supported, if at all, very imperfectly, and with great difficulty, by the Society for propagating the Gofpel : the income of which depends intirely on the voluntary contributions of good Chriftians; and is now reduced fo low, and burthened with fuch a debt, that they find, it neceffary to propofe, this next year, according to the powers of their charter and with his Majefty's recommendatory letters, a general collection, which they have not had for above 20 years paft, to enable them to go on. Application will probably not be made to every parifh feparately. But I hope every minister will give this excellent defign all the affiftance in his power : fuch, as can afford it, either by becoming ftated contributors and members of the Society; or at least by fome occasional benefaction in this time of need; and all, by recommending the cafe to fuch of their people or acquaintance as they have reason to think will pay regard to it. If any perfon defires a more particular acquaintance with the nature and ufefulnefs and prefent condition of this undertaking, I have given fome account of these matters in a sermon at their anniverfary meeting lately published by me, and shall be ready to give any of you farther information, who fhall either now or hereafter apply to me for it, perfonally or by letter.

But I must not yet conclude, without mentioning also the Society for promoting Christian knowledge: who are carrying on the fame good work in the *East Indies*, which that for propagating the Gospel is in the  $W_{cfl}$ ; and at the fame time are promoting the cause of religion many ways here at home: particularly by felling at very low rates, Bibles, Common-Prayers, and numbers of other religious books, chiefly of finall fizes, for the use of the poor. This they also are supported in by voluntary benefactions: to which whoever is able to contribute, will do a very good work: and whoever can only purchase a few of their books for the use of his parishioners, shall have both my best affistance in it, and my hearty thanks for it.

I do not mean at all in fpeaking of thefe things to prefcribe to you the methods of your charity: but only to lay before you two very deferving ones, which may poffibly have efcaped the notice of fome of you; and to endeavour, that the caufe of our Lord and Mafter may be ferved in as many ways as it can: for you must be fensible how very great need there

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there is that none be neglected. By zealoufly making use of such as are prefented to us, we may possibly be of much more service to others than we expect: but we shall be sure of doing infinite service to ourfelves. And may God flir up the wills of all his faithful people, that they plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works may of him be plenteously rewarded through Jesus Christ our Lord (a).

(a) Collect for the 25th Sunday after Trinity.

## A CHARGE

# C H A R G E

Α

#### DELIVERED TO THE

## CLERGY of the DIOCESE

OF

# OXFORD,

## In the YEAR 1747.

#### Reverend Brethren,

CANNOT fpeak to you thus affembled, without congratulating you in the first place on the happy fupprefion of that unreligion and liberties. Nor will either my duty, or my inclination, fuffer me to omit returning you my heartieft thanks, for the unanimous zeal, you exprefied against it; and I doubt not were ready to exprefs, even before the exhortation to do fo, which I was directed to fend you, and which you received with fo obliging a regard. Your behaviour, and that of the whole Clergy, on this trying occasion, hath abounded with fuch proofs of loyalty and affection to the government, under which God's.

### The Bishop of Oxford's third Charge, Sc.

God's mercy hath placed and continued us, that his Majefty hath declared, he fhall ever have the ftrongeft fenfe of what you have done fot the fupport of his throne, and gladly fhew his gratitude by any proper methods of extending his royal favour to you and to religion. It may be hoped alfo, that our fellow-fubjects will remember, what they owe to our long-defpifed and reproached labours: and learn, how effential a part of the church of *England* is of our prefent effablightment. Indeed, not only the more candid of thofe, who thought amils of us, have acknowledged our merit now; but the *lying lips* are *put to filence, ubith difdainfully and defpitefully* fooke againft us (a). And let us go on, Brethren, to express the warmeft and most prudent zeal for what we doubly felt the value of, when we feared to lofe it: and fo behave in this and all refpects, that they who are af the contrary part may be afhaned, having no evil thing to fay: if us (b). For however imperfectly men may do us juffice, our reward from God. is fure.

I have recommended to you, in the course of my former visitations, various parts of your duty : first in general, as Ministers of the Gospel in a vicious and profane age ; then more particularly, as Incumbents of your respective parishes. Under this latter head, I began with what immediately relates to the worfhip of God : and now proceed to another point, of a temporal nature indeed, as it may feem, but feveral ways connected with fpirituals; the care you are bound to take of the incomes arifing from your benefices. These endowments are facred to the purpoles of piety and charity : and it is neither lawful for us to employ them unfuitably ourfelves, nor to let any part of them become a prey to the avarice of others. The few that may appear to be larger than was nedeflary, are in truth but needful encouragements to the breeding up of youth for holy orders. And were they leffened, either an infufficient number would be deftined to that fervice, or too many of them would be of the loweft rank, unable to bear the expence of acquiring due knowledge, and unlikely to be treated with due regard. Befides, the most plentiful of these revenues may be well applied to religious uses : and therefore, as they have been dedicated, ought to continue appropriated. to them. But the generality of them, it will furely be owned, are fmall enough : and a very great part left fo utterly incompetent, by the ravages of former times, that the little which remains, demands our ftricteft care now. For, without it, poor Incumbents will not be able to maintain themfelves decently, much lefs to exercise hospitality and charity towards others. Yet on these things both their spirit and their success in doing their duty greatly depend. And therefore how indifferent foever any of us may have caufe to be about our own interefts; we ought to confider ourfelves as truftees for our fucceffors. We all blame our predeceffors, if they have not transmitted the patrimony of the church undiminished into our hands. Let us think then what others hereafter will fay of us, and with what reafon, if we are guilty of the fame fault; and give away for ever, what we fhould count it facrilege in any one elfe to take from us.

Indeed fome perfons imagine or pretend that the only danger is of the Clergy's encroaching on the properties of the Laity, not neglecting their

(a) Pfal. xxxi. 20.

(6) Tit. ii. 8,

own.

And we acknowledge there have been times, when that was the own. danger. But they are long paft : and God forbid we fhould defire to revive them. Placing exceffive wealth in the hands of ecclefiaftics, would both endanger others and corrupt them : as the examples of paft ages have too fully fhewn. But the parochial Clergy of those times, instead of being the authors of this error, were the heaviest fufferers by it. And to renew the attempt in these days, would be folly equal to its wickednefs: of which we should fo certainly and immediately be made fenfible, indeed we are fo univerfally fenfible of it already, that there can be no need of giving cautions on this head. All we wish for is, the unmolested enjoyment of what clearly belongs to us, and a reasonable allowance of what is confelledly requilite for us, in order to attain the only ends of our inftitution, the prefent and future happiness of mankind. In how many and fad inftances we fail of poffeffing in peace fuch a competent provision, I need not fay. Let us all behave under whatever utage we receive; with the innocence and the prudence, which our Mafter enjoins. But we shall be wanting in both, if we wrong ourselves and those that will come after us, by improper voluntary diminutions of what is allotted for our support : which, through inconfiderateness and indolence, hath been often done : defignedly, I would hope, but feldom. And we may be guilty of it, either at coming into our benefices, or during our incumbency on them, or when we quit them : to which three heads I fhall fpeak in their order.

Yet indeed, as I am now directing my difcourfe to perfons, moft of them already pollefied of benefices, it may feem too late to give cautions refpecting the time of entering upon them. But all who have acted right then, will at leaft hear with pleafure their conduct approved. If any have acted wrong; which I do not know, that any of you have; on being fhewn it, they may repent of it, they may confider how far they can undo what they have done, or prevent the bad confequences that are likely to flow from it. And both forts may be influenced more flrongly, to take no improper fleps on any future occafion, and to warn their friends againft fuch errors.

I proceed therefore to fay, that benefices ought neither to be given, nor accepted, with any other condition or promife, than that of doing our duty in relation to them. This engagement is always underflood, whether it be expressed or not: and no other should either be required or complied with. For when Bifhops, originally the fole patrons, to encourage the endowment of parisles, gave others a right of prefenting fit porfons to them; or that right was confirmed or granted by the civil power: they must be supposed to give it only to be exercised for the future, as it had been before : when whoever was appointed to any flation in the church, enjoyed the benefit of all he was appointed to, fo long as he behaved well. And therefore attempting to bring the Clergy into a worfe condition, is usfurpation : and fubmitting to the attempt, is encouraging usfurpation.

Yet there is a great difference between the things to which our fubmiftion may be demanded. Some are großly and obvioufly unlawful. If for inftance any perfon, in order to obtain a benefice, promifes to give up fuch a part of the income, to connive at fuch a leffening of it, to accept cept of fuch a composition for it, to allow fuch a pension or make such a payment to any one out of it : these things are in effect the same with laying down beforehand fuch a fum for it : which is the nearest approach, excepting that of bribing for holy orders, to his fin, who thought the gifts of God might be purchased with money, and was answered, Thy money perish with thee (c). Nor can it take away, if it alleviate the guilt, that the payment or penfion, thus referved, is alloted to uses really charita-Still it is buying, what ought to be freely beftowed : this forced ble. charity muft difable a man from voluntary almfgiving, in proportion to its amount: and one compliance in a feemingly favourable inftance, will only make way for another in a more doubtful cafe, and fo on without end. Another excuse I hope nobody will plead; that obligations of this kind may be fafely entred into, fince they are notorioufly void. For we can never be at liberty to make an agreement, merely becaufe it is fo bad a one, that neither law nor confcience will let us keep it.

But fuppofing a perfon binds himfelf to his patron, only that he will quit his benefice, when required : even this he ought not to do. For he hath no right to promife it; and no power to perform the promife. Whoever undertakes the care of a living, must continue that care till the law deprives him of it, or his fuperior releafes him from it (d). Therefore he can only fubject himfelf to a penalty which another may exact at pleafure, unlefs he doth what of himfelf he is not able to do, and knows not whether he shall obtain permission to do. Can this be prudent? Can it be fit? If he pay the penalty, he gives money to the patron, though not for his first possession of the benefice, yet for his continuance in it : besides that he must either distress himself, or defraud religion and charity of what he ought to have beftowed on them. If then to avoid paying it, he begs leave to refign ; he puts his Bifhop under very unreafonable difficulties : who by refufing his requeft, may bring great inconveniences on the poor man : and by granting it, may lofe a minister from a parish, where he was useful, and ought to have continued: may expose himself to the many bad confequences of having an improper fucceffor prefented to him. At leaft he will encourage a practice undoubtedly wrong and hurtful in the main, whatever it may be in the inftance before him. And why are not thefe, fufficient grounds for a denial; fince whatever the incumbent fuffers by it, he hath brought upon himfelf?

Befides, in bonds to refign, where no condition is expreffed, fome unfair intention almost always lies hid. For if it were an honeft one, why hould it not be plainly mentioned, and both fides cleared from imputations? Affuredly unlefs perfons are to a ftrange degree inconfiderate, this would be done if it could. The true meaning therefore too commonly is, to enflave the incumbent to the will and pleafure of his patron, whatever it thall happen at any time to be. So that, if he demands his legal dues; if he is not fubfervient to the fchemes, political or whatever they are, which he is required to promote; if he reproves fuch and fuch vices; if he preaches, or does not preach, fuch and fuch doctrines;

(c) Acts viii. 20.

(d) See Stillingfleet on Bonds of Refignation, in the third volume of his works, p. 731.

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if he flands up for charity and juffice to any one when he is forbidden: the terror of refignation, or the penalty of the bond, may immediately be fhaken over his head. How fhamefully beneath the dignity of a Clergyman is fuch a fituation as this ! How grievoully doth it tempt a man to unbecoming, and even unlawful, compliances ! What fufpicions doth it bring upon him of being unduly influenced, when he is not ! Or however he may efcape himfelf, what a fnare may his example prove to his poor brethren of weaker minds, or lefs eftablifhed characters !

To prevent these mischiefs, both the ancient laws of other churches, and those of our own (e) still in force, have strictly forbidden fuch contracts (f). Particularly the council of Oxford, held in 1222, prefcribed an oath against Simony, for fo it is entitled, by which every clerk shall fwear at his inflitution, that he hath entered into no compact in order to be prefented (g). And Archbishop Courtney, in his injunctions to all the Bishops of his province in 1391, condemns those, as guilty of Simony, who, before prefentation, engage to refign when required (b); and appoints all perfons inftituted to be fworn (i), that they have not given; to obtain prefentation, either oath or bond to refign (k). Again, the Conflitutions of Cardinal Pole, when Archbishop, in 1555, censure, as being fimoniacal, all bargains or promifes for procuring of benefices ; and affert that benefices ought to be given without any condition, and order that the perfon prefented fhall fwear, he hath neither promifed, nor given, nor exchanged, nor lent, nor deposited, nor remitted, &c. any thing, nor confirmed any thing given before (1). And a convocation held

(e) Stilling fleet in his letter about bonds of refignation in Mifcell. Difcourfes, p. 42. &c. fhews feveral forts of contracts that are allowed; and objects not againft trufts and confidences; [as indeed I have been affured that Dr. Benley held a living in truft for the Bifhop's fon] nor againft what is done, in confideration of fervice, without a compact: but only againft a legal obligation on the party, before his prefentation, to perform fuch a condition; and if he do not, to refign.

(f) The Council of Westminster, 1138, appoints that when any one receives investiture from the Bishop, he shall swear that he hath neither given nor promifed any thing for his benefice. Spelm. vol. 2. p. 39. apud Gibfon Cod. p. 845.

(g) The words are, quod propter præsentationem illam nec promiserit nec dederit aliquid præsentanti, nec aliquam propter boc inierit pastionem : where boc most naturally refers to negotium præsentationis understood.

See Conc. Oxon. c. 18. in Wilkins, vol. 1. p. 588. and Lyndwood, L. 2. de Jurejurando, cap. præfenti, in Wake's charge 1709. p. 34. and Stilling fleet on bonds, &c. p. 721. and letter about bonds, p. 39. (b) But it appears, by the preamble, that this was defigned only against

(b) But it appears, by the preamble, that this was defigned only against putting it thus in the patron's power to dispose of the profits, or turn the incumbents out, and give pluralities of livings to such as he favoured.

(i) Wilkins, vol. 3. p. 216. Wake, p. 35, 36.

(k) The injunctions of Ed. 6. in 1547, appoint that fuch as buy benefices, or come to them by fraud or deceit, thall be deprived, Gr. And fuch as fell them, or by any colour beftow them for their own gain or profit, thall lofe their right of prefenting for that time. Wilking, vol. 4. p. 7, 8.

(1) Wilkins, vol. 4. p. 124, 125.

#### thira Charge to his Clergy.

held under him, two years after, complaining that, of late years, perfons have procured benefices et prælaturas, [parish-priests are prælati see Index to Lyndwood in prælatus :] not only vacant, but likely to become fo, non precibus & obsequiis tantum, sed & apertis muneribus, fo that clectionum faluberrimæ formæ quæ per canones liberæ effe deberent, vel fraudibus obtenebratæ funt, vel ad compromissi necessitatem redactæ : directs, that Bishops prevent these things, and take care by themselves and their officers, especially quos in prælatorum electionibus tanquam directores & confultores intereffe continget, that fraudes & pactiones be excluded : and if any one have got, per pecunia & munerum fordes, prælaturam vel beneficium ecclesiasticum, he be punished (m). It is indeed true, that the great evil, at which these several directions were levelled, was giving or promising money for prefentations, or receiving it for refignations (n). And there fore it may be argued, that where no money is directly paid, or taken, or covenanted for, nothing illegal is done. But the opinions delivered, and the judgments pronounced, by the Canon lawyers, plainly extend the prohibition to whatever is equivalent to money (o). And it hath been urged that by how much foever a perfon leffens the value of a benefice to himfelf by a bond of refignation to the patron in order to procure it, as unqueffionably fuch a bond doth leffen it, fo much in effect he pays to obtain it (p). Or allowing, that in fome cafes this doth not hold : yet nothing will prevent unlawful contracts in many cafes, but prohibiting in all cafes abfolute contracts to refign upon demand ; which therefore the abovementioned Constitutions have rightly done. And as the oaths, prefcribed in them, express the denial of having made fuch a contract; the oath prefcribed at this time must naturally be understood to imply the fame thing. For its being lefs explicit is no proof, that, what in common acceptation came under the name Simoniacal before, doth not come under it ftill.

However, we must acknowledge, that bonds of refignation on demand have been declared by the temporal judges valid, and not fimoniacal

#### (m) Wilkins, vol. 4. p. 165.

(n) The tenor of them thews this. Particularly the corrupt refiguations were to get penfions out of benefices, or money for quitting them, or exchanges gainful to the patron or his friends. The *Ref. Leg. Eccl. Tit. de remunciatione*, cap. 3. forbids only refiguations for confideration of gain. See Wake, p. 43. And Tit. *de admittendis ad Beneficia Ecclefaglica*, c. 24. only obliges a perfon at inflitution to fiwear that he neither hath given nor promified, nor will give, any thing. And Tit. *de banoficis confirendis* forbids only compacies by which henchees are leffened. See Wake, p. 36. Who goes too far in faying the words are general againft all manner of contracts or promifes. The preamble of the oath in Can. 40. condemns only buying and *felling* flets in any benefit accruing to the patron, because nonine-emptionis G venditions intelliging or mains contractus new generality.

(a) See Wate, p. 18, 24. Stilling flett, p. 719, 722. and letter about bonds, p. 46. Sc. The injunctions of Ed. 6. forbid patrons felling livings, or by any colour beflowing them for their own gain and profit. Wilking, vol. 4. p. 7, 8.

. (p) Stilling feet, p. 722. Vol. VI. 33

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niacal (q). And they are indeed the proper judges, whether they are fuch by the common and flatute law. But whether the ecclefiaftical law permits them, is not fo clearly within their cognizance. Indeed all queffions about this crime feem to have been entirely out of it (r), till an act was made, 31 Eliz. c. 6. which, for the avoiding of fimony and corruption in prefentations and collations, inflicts penalties on those who shall either give or procure them for any fum of money, profit or benefit; or for any promife, bond, or affurance of it, directly or indirectly: but at the fame time allows the ecclefiaftical laws to punifh the fame offences which the act doth, in the fame manner as they did before. Now making these provisions is not faying, that nothing shall be deemed fimoniacal by the fpiritual judge, but what the temporal judge shall think is forbidden by this act (s). And therefore, though the latter may apprehend abfolute bonds of refignation to be confiftent with the ftatute; yet the former may juftly apprehend them to be inconfistent with the conftitutions of the church, which we ought to obey; and with the oath against fimony,

(q) Stilling flett, p. 735. &c. Wake, p. 49. &c. Indeed Stilling flett, p. 735. Asys that the court, having given judgment for fuch a bond in the cafe of Jones and Lawrence, 8 Jac. 1. held, feven years after, wiz. 15 Jac. 1. in the cafe of Pafebel and Clerk, that it was fimony within the flatute; and he cites Ney, 22. for it. But Wake mentions not this: and Waton, c. 5. p. 40. fays it doth not appear by the roll that there was fuch a trial; and if there was, it is of no great authority, nor hath been regarded fince.
(r) See Wake, p. 39, 50. The preamble of 5 Eliz. c. 23. compared with

(r) See Wake, p. 39, 50. The preamble of  $\xi \ Eliz. c. 23.$  compared with  $\S_{12}$ , fufficiently intimates that fimony is an offence appertaining merely to the jurifdiction and determination of the ecclefiadical courts and judges. Yet Stilling fleet, p. 718. cites from Creke, Car. 361. the judges as faying, in the cafe of Mackaller and Tadderick, that the common law before 31 Eliz. took notice of a fimoniacal contract. But Coke in Carwie's cafe, 5th Rep. fol. 8, 9. as cited by Wake, p. 50. puts fimony among the crimes the conufance whereof belongs not to the common but ecclefiattical law, and repeats the fame, p. 40. And Creke, fol. 789, fays that the judges in the cafe of Baker, 42 Eliz. held that it appertains to the fipritual court to determine what is fimony, and not to this court to meddle therewith.

(s) Stilling fleet, p. 718. faith " the words fimony or fimoniacal con-" tract are never mentioned in this flatute." And Wake, p. 50. cites Nov Rep. fol. 25. as faying that " in it there is no word of fimony ; becaufe by " that means the common law would have been judge what fhould have been " fimony, and what not." And Stilling fleet, ibid. allows, that if the word had been there, the judges would have had fufficient reafon to declare what was fimony and what not. Now in truth that part of the act which relates to the prefent affair begins' thus. " And for the avoiding of fimony and " corruption in prefentations, collations, and donations of and to benefi-" ces, &c. and in admiffions, inflitutions, and inductions to the fame, be it " further enacted, that, if any perfon, &c." This may feem to imply that no other things but those mentioned afterwards were fimony : otherwise the act would provide only for avoiding fome forts of fimony. Accordingly Gibson Cod. p. 839. and Stilling fl. Pref. p. 714. and Difc. p. 718. think it only means to punish some particular remarkable forts specified in it : and  $W_{ake}$  agrees that it abrogates no ecclefiaftical law. And this agrees with what is observed here, note (n). But fill the judges, after this act, thought that judging of fimony did not belong to them. See here, note (r).

fimony, which ought to be taken in the fenfe of those who originally enjoined and ftill administer it; and not to have its meaning changed on the supposed authority of their opinions, who neither have undertaken to interpret it, nor, if the judgment of their predecessions be allowed, have a right to do it.

At leaft refufing fuch bonds, on account of the oath, muft be the fafeft fide: efpecially, as the greateft divines of this church have declared againft them; and I think none for them. Though indeed, were the oath out of the queftion; the bonds are apparently to mitchievous, as to be for that reafon alone fufficiently unlawful. It may be faid, that if the patron attempts to make any ill ufe of them, equity will relieve the incumbent. But I have fhewn you, that their confequences muft be very bad, whatever ufe the patron makes of them. And befides, how expensive, indeed how uncertain, this pretended relief will be; how feldom therefore it will or can be fought for; and how much better on all accounts it is to avoid the need of it; every one muft perceive.

But let us now suppose, that a seemingly reasonable condition were expressed in these bonds : for instance, to resign when such a relation or friend of the patron's comes to the age of being prefented, who perhaps hath been educated with a view to the benefice vacant (t). Now I do not fay but a perfon may very lawfully, and fometimes very charitably form an intention of refigning at fuch a period, if circumstances then fhould make it proper; and may also fignify such intention beforehand. But if he bind himfelf to it abfolutely, befides the diftruft of him, which requiring this implies, perhaps when the time comes, the young perfon will refuse to take the benefice, or the patron to give it him : and yet the incumbent must continue in perfect dependance thenceforward : for his cafe is become the fame, as if his bond had been originally without any condition. Befides, this contrivance for procuring an immediate vacancy at fuch a particular time, encourages perfons, even of low rank, to purchase patronages, separate from the manors on which they were anciently appendant, merely to ferve interested purposes. And the generality of thefe, inftead of confidering their right of prefentation as a fpiritual truft, to be confcientioufly difcharged, will of courfe look on it as

(1) Stilling fleet, p. 716. Inppofes this to be the intent, with which an abfolute bond is required; and faith, it is a cafe, wherein a bond may be thought far more reafonable than in others. But he exprefies no pofitive approbation of it; nor doth he mention there giving a bond with this condition exprefied. But, in p. 736. he hath that cafe in view, where he faith, " that there may be a lawful truft in fuch a cafe, I do not queficion:" yet adds, " but whether the perfor who takes this truft can enter into a bond " and take the oath, I very much queftion." And *Wake*, though in p. 22. he names this as one of the molt favourable cafes that can be defired, condemns it notwithflanding; as an obligation, which the patron has no right to impofe, nor the clerk any power to enter into; as contrary to the Canons, and the authority of the Bifhop, and the oath of yielding him canonical obedience, and of doing what in the clerk lies to maintain the right of his fee; but he doth not fay it is contrary to the oath againft fimony.

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as a temporal inheritance, which fince they have bought, they may fairly. fell, at any time, in any manner, for what they can : or at best merely as the means of providing a maintenance for fuch perfons as they pleafe: who therefore, unless they will be caft off intirely by their friends, muft, when they are of age, however unfit for the cure of fouls, however averse from it, fubmit to be presented, and perhaps cannot be rejected. Then further, in proportion as this cuftom prevails, benefices, and particularly the more valuable ones, coming to be of a temporary and precarious tenure, contrary to what they were intended; perfons of character and abilities, and a proper fpirit, will not fo often care to take them. Or if they do, they will not ufually, indeed it cannot fo well be expected they fhould, either defend the rights of them, or exercise hofpitality and charity upon them, in the fame manner, as if they were to hold them for life. Nor will the people, generally speaking, respect those who come in thus, and must behave, and go out again thus, as they ought always to refpect their minifters.

But still perfons may plead that whatever is objected against other engagements from incumbents to patrons, yet if they engage only to be conftantly refident, to do faithfully the whole duty, which the laws of the church enjoin them, or perhaps fomewhat more; this must be allowable. And doubtlefs it is, provided the engagement be only a fincere promife of acting thus, as far as they can with reafonable convenience. Nay if they bind themselves by a legal tie, to do any thing, which either belongs of courfe to their benefice, or hath by ancient cuftom been annexed to it, learned and judicious authors juftify them (u). But covenanting thus to do even a laudable action, as teaching fchool or prefcribing to the fick, if their predeceffors were not, without a covenant, obliged to it, hath been held unlawful and fimoniacal (w) : becaufe it is promifing to fave, which upon the matter is promifing to give, to much money either to the patron, or however to those for whom he interefts himfelf. And indeed, though perfons were to promife only what in confcience they are antecedently bound to; yet if they tie themfelves, either to do this, or to refign; whenever they fail in any one part of it, as to be fure they will in fome, fooner or later, though perhaps very innocently; fuppoling the rigour of their bond infifted upon, (as who can fay it will not?) they are at the mercy of the patron ever after. He becomes their ordinary; and is vested, by their imprudence, with a much greater authority, than the Bifhop hath : an authority of reftraining their liberty, where the wildom of the church hath not reftrained it (x): an authority of proceeding fummarily; and depriving them, for whatever failures he hath thought fit to infert in the bond, without delay and without appeal : and this authority he may exercife ever after, when he pleafes, to just the fame purposes, as if they had covenanted at first to refign when requested.

Still, without queftion, many good perfons have both required and given bonds of refignation of thefe latter forts : and in many cafes, as

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(u) Wake's Charge, 1709, p. 24. Stilling fleet's Letter, p. 54. (w) Wake, p. 18. (y) Wake, p. 25.

### third Charge to his Clergy.

no harm at all hath been intended, fo no particular harm hath been done by them. But in fo many more there hath, and it is fo neceffary to go by general rules; and one fpecious exception doth fo conftantly produce others that are a little lefs fo; till at laft the moft pernicious practices creep in (y), that there is abundant reafon to refue making any contracts whatfoever in order to obtain prefentation: and more effecially there is reafon to refue them, on account of their michievous influence on the revenues of the church: which was the immediate occafion of my fpeaking of them now; though I thought it by no means proper to omit the other arguments againft them.

Perhaps it may be faid : if patrons will have bonds of refignation, what can clergymen do? I answer, if clergymen will not give them, how can patrons help themselves? They must prefent without them, or their right must lapse to the Bishop, who will. It may indeed be replied, that though one perfon rejects the offer, another will accept it : and therefore he may as well. But this would equally be an excuse for the worft of wrong compliances in every kind : and confequently it is an excufe for none. Belides, it may happen, that by arguing with patrons against fuch contracts, they may be convinced; and learn fo just an efteem for those, who refuse them decently and respectfully, as not only to prefent them with double pleafure, but do them afterwards greater fervices, than they intended them before. At least whatever clergyman behaves in fo worthy and exemplary a manner, will affuredly, if the reft of his conduct be fuitable to that part, either by the care of God's Providence, be raifed in the world fome other way; or, by the influence of God's Spirit, be made eafy and happy in his prefent fituation.

But it may be objected further, that Bifhops argue with an ill grace againft bonds at prefentation, while they themfelves take them at inflitution. And it muft be owned, that in feveral Diocefes, particularly that of *Lincoln* out of which this was taken, and of *Peterbaraugb* which was alfo taken from thence (z), there is an ancient and immemorial cuftom, (cuftoms, you are fentible, not being the fame every where;) for the clerk prefented to indemnify the Bifhop and his officers from all fuits at law for inflituting him. And accordingly in this Diocefe, bonds appear to have been taken for that purpofe at all inflitutions for 120 years paff: within which time, there have been nearly, if not quite, 700 given, that are now lying in the registry : and hence we may prefume the practice hath been the fame from the erection of the See. The original of it probably was, that a commifiion of inquiry being formerly fent out, as old registers prove, upon every vacancy (a) alledged, to certify

#### (y) Wake, p. 25.

(z) In Lincoln Diocefe they are taken only when the Bishop hath any the leaft furficion about the patronage: in *Peterborough* and *Litchfield* always: in *Canterbury* whenever a new patron prefents: in *Glaucester* and *Excter* they were taken till the time of the prefent Bishops.

(a) That it was on every vacancy appears from Archbishop Stratford's Constitution, Sæva, A. D. 13;2. in Lindw. p. 222. and from Lindw. p. 217. on

certify the Bifhop, whether the living was really vacant, who was at prefent the true patron, and whatever elfe it was requifite he fhould know in order to inftitute: and the expence of this commission, and of the proceedings upon it, being of neceffity confiderable to the clerk, who bore it (b); the cheaper method of a bond from him to fave the Bifhop harmlefs, was fubstituted in its room. And a further reason might be, that, the Bifhop having 28 days allowed him, after the prefentation was tendered, to confider and inform himfelf, whether he fhould inftitute the clerk prefented or not; the clerk was willing and defirous, rather to indemnify the Bifhop, if he would confent to inftitute him fooner, than to bear the inconvenience, and perhaps charges, of waiting to the end of that time. At least the only defign of this bond was and is, that if the clerk's title to inftitution be queffionable, the Bifhop may not fuffer by granting it. Now a covenant for this end is furely a very lawful one, and fubject to none of the mifchiefs, which, I have fhewn you, attend bonds to patrons. Nor was any conflicution of church or ftate ever pointed against it : nor I believe hath any harm ever happened from it.

But I must own too, that there is another condition added to these bonds, that the clerk fhall refign his benefice if required by the Bifhop, in cafe any controverly arife, whether his inftitution be rightful. But this provision is, in the bond, expressed to be made only for the same purpole with the former, the indemnification of the Bifhop: and the penalty of the bond is fo moderated, as to ferve that purpofe and no other. Accordingly I have not heard, that any one perfon hath ever fcrupled, in point of confcience, to enter into this engagement; the meaning of it being only, that if he prove to have no right, he shall quit : nor indeed, that any one hath found caufe to fcruple it in point of prudence. For as you may be fure the fulfilling it would never be required without necessity; fo I believe it hath never yet been required That neither the intention of this covenant was bad, nor the at all. reafons for it contemptible, you will readily allow, on being told, that it began to be inferted conftantly in this Diocefe, at the time when our prefent most Reverend Metropolitan was placed over it : which feeming innovation was indeed only conforming more exactly to the old example of our mother See (c). But still as it is as a condition, the infifting on which, in fome cafes, might have bad effects, that were not then forefeen (d); though in fuch cafes it probably never would be infifted on,

on Archbishop Peckham's Conflictution per nostram provinciam verb. Inquisitionem, and from Bishop Gibson's Codex, p. 857.

(b) It appears from the above Condition of Stratford, that the clerk paid for the commission, and therefore of course for all that was done upon it.

(c) I have feen a bond from the Bifhop of Lincoln's registry with this covenant in it, printed in the time of *fac. 2.* and the Bifhop informs me the covenant hath been used ever fince the refloration : how much fooner he knows not.

(d) e. g. A fuit may be begun which would have proved ineffectual, Yet if the Incumbent refign, the expence of a fresh presentation and inflitution

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as it never hath: I have determined, with his Grace's intire approbation, to omit it for the future.

And in every thing, I shall not only be careful to make your burthens no heavier, but if it can be fhewn me, that I am able to do it, with juffice and equity, I shall be glad to make them lighter. The fees taken of the Clergy in this Diocefe, whether at inftitutions or visitations, are not varied in any one article from those, which were returned to, and not disapproved by, a committee of Parliament in the time of my predecessor. They are the fame, as he informs me, with those taken in the time of his predeceffor. Nor have I hitherto found proof, though I have inquired with fome care, that they have been increafed at all materially fince the Bifhoprick was founded (e). Those of visitation I am fure have not in the leaft. And yet the diminution of the value of money in that interval hath reduced the fame fum in name and quantity, to perhaps not a fourth of what it was in effect and ufe: on which account proportionable augmentations of fees have been made, I believe, in all temporal courts and offices; and ancient rules to the contrary have been justly deemed obfolete, the reasons of them having ceafed. So that where this hath not been done, or not to any confiderable degree, there is caufe to render to all their dues with great fatisfaction.

And here I must take the freedom of speaking to you about some dues owing to myfelf, fynodals and procurations. The former are an ancient acknowledgment of honour and fubjection, referved by the Bifhops of the Weftern church, as long ago as when they fettled their own fhare of the tithes, in each parifh, to be the future property of the feveral incumbents : and it took its name from being ufually paid at the fynodal meetings. Now fo fmall a tribute, especially if confidered as a quit rent for fo great a concession, can furely never be thought a hardship. The other, procurations, are also a payment feveral hundred years old, fucceeding in the place of a much more expensive obligation, that of entertaining the Bishop and his attendants, when he visited each parish. Neither of them hath been increased fince their first beginning: the right to both is indifputably legal: and as I am fworn to maintain all the rights of my See, I promife myfelf none of you will force me to do it in a way, that cannot be more difagreeable to you, than it will to me. If any one pleads, that complying with the demand of fo trifling a fum will be inconvenient to him, it shall be more than returned him. If any one doubts, whether it is incumbent on him or not : his reafons for the doubt, when ever he lays them before me, fhall be impartially confidered, and allowed their full weight. But I hope no perfon will think it either decent or just, merely to refuse, without affigning a fufficient caufe: and difuse for fome years is not fufficient, in a matter, like this, of

ftitution will at least be necessary for him: but indeed the patron may prefent another: and in the case of alternate patronage, another will prefent.

(e) i. e. Allowing each of the new inftruments that are required, to caft as much as each of the old ones.

## The Bishop of Oxford's third Charge, &c.

of common right. Moft of my Clergy have very punctually fhewn me this little mark of their regard, amongft many greater. Whether any here prefent have omitted it, I do not know. But I truft you will all have the candor to think I have mentioned it, not from any wrong or mean motive, but becaufe I apprehend it my duty, and have not the leaft doubt of your willingnefs to be informed or reminded of every part of yours.

And with this kind of digreffion I muft conclude for the prefent. If God prolong my life and health to another opportunity, I fhall proceed to the remainder of the fubject. In the mean time, I heartily pray him to direct and blefs you in all things.

cn.lm.

ACHARGE

# CHARGE

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#### DELIVERED TO THE

## CLERGY of the DIOCESE

OF

## O X F O R D.

## In the YEAR 1750.

# 

#### Reverend Brethren,

N the courfe of my former vifitations of this Diocefe, I have recommended to you various parts of your duty, as Miniflers of the Gofpel in general, and of your refpective parifles in particular. After things, more immediately and intirely of fpiritual concern, I proceeded, in my laft Charge, to the care, that you are bound to take of your temporalties, with which you are intrufted, partly for the fervice of religion in your own times, partly for your fucceffors, as your predeceffors were for you : a truft, which if any of them broke, or neglected, you are too fentible they did ill, to be excufable to your own minds, if you imitate them. And dividing this care into the beu haviour, that is requifite at your coming into livings, during your incumbency on them, and when you are to quit them: I went through the first of these heads; giving you proper cautions, more especially against making any contract or promise inconfistent with the oath, then required of you, or prejudicial to your own benefices, or the common interests of the Clergy. Therefore I now go on to the second, the vigilance, with which you ought each to superintend the revenues and poffessions of your church, whilst you continue minister of it.

I have too much caufe, in every thing, to be fenfible of my own unfitnefs to direct: but, in feveral articles, relating to this point, I am peculiarly unqualified: having little experince in them, and a yet lefs thare of the proper abilities and turn of mind for them. However, I ought not to omit being of fuch ufe to you, as I can. There may be thofe amongft you, who are either ftill more unacquainted with thefe matters, or at leaft have not confidered them all in the fame light: as you mult have obferved, that very obvious inftances, both of wifdom and duty, efcape the attention of many, till they are pointed out to them. And a difcourfe, neither complete, nor poffibly free from miftakes, may notwithftanding do fervice, by exciting perfons to think on the fubject, more than they have done hitherto.

Your care, in respect to this subject, consists of two parts: recovering what may be unduly withheld from your church, and preferving what is left.

It is very unhappy, that fo troublefome and invidious an employment, as the former, fhould ever be made neceffary : which yet it hath too often been. Glebe lands have been blended with temporal effates . and pretences fet up, that only fuch a yearly rent, far inferior to the real value, is payable from them. Tithes and other dues have been denied; under falfe colours of exemptions in fome cafes, and of modus's in many. Every unjust plea admitted makes way for more. And thus what was given for the fupport of the Clergy in all future times, is decreafing continually; and becoming lefs fufficient, as it goes down to them. The Laity themfelves, if they would reflect, must fee, that they have by no means any caufe to rejoice in this. For, probably few of them in proportion will be gainers by what we lofe : but the whole body of them, wherever the provision made for us becomes incompetent, must either make another at their own expence, or be deprived in a great meafure of the good influences of our office, with respect to this world and the next. But whatever they are, we ourfelves cannot furely fail to be deeply concerned at the ill alpect, which these encroachments bear towards religion in ages to come. Whoever is indifferent about it, fhews himfelf very unworthy of what he enjoys from the liberality of ages preceding. And whoever is grieved at it, will fet himfelf to confider, not how he can augment the patrimony of the church, where it is already plentiful; or any where, by difhonourable methods: (you are very fenfible, what injuffice and folly there would be in fuch attempts) but how he can retrieve any part of it, which is illegally or unequitably feized and detained.

Now here the foundation of all muft be, a diligent and impartial inquiry into the right of the cafe : for it would be abfurd to deceive ourfelves;

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felves; and unfair to demand of others what we are not well perfuaded is our due. Therefore to avoid both, we fhould afk the opinion of fkilful and upright advifers. If this be in our favour, the next proper steps will be, laying our claim, with the proofs of it, fo far as prudence will permit, before the perfon concerned; reprefenting it, in a friendly and ferious manner, as an affair, in which his confcience is interefted ; procuring the affiftance of those, who have weight with him, if we know any fuch ; taking the opportunity of his being, at any time, in a more confiderate disposition than ordinary ; presling him, not to rely too much on his own judgment, where it may fo eafily be biaffed : yet forbidding him to rely on ours, if he would; and begging him to confult fome other worthy able perfon : offering to pitch on one or more, if circumftances perfuade to it, whole determination fhall conclude us both : and intreating him to fay, whether he would not think this, in any other cafe, very reasonable. If still he cannot prevail on himself to comply: we may endeavour to leffen the difficulty, by proposing to accept a small payment, where none hath been made of fome time; or a fmall variation, where a cuffomary payment is pleaded : in hopes, that either the defire of enjoying, with fome degree of good confcience, the main of what he withholds now with a bad one; or, at leaft, that of avoiding the coft and hazard of a conteft, may win him over.

If none of these methods (which too commonly happens) will operate, after a due feafon allowed them for it; the only remaining remedy is an appeal to the law. But here I would be far from exciting any of you to plainly fruitless or over-dangerous attempts. I am very fensible, how unfavourable the times are to ecclefiaftical pretentions, how enormous the expences of legal proceedings, how finall the incomes of moft benefices, how ftrait the circumftances of moft clergymen : confiderations, that one fhould think would reftrain perfons of any generofity, nay of any compassion, from bearing hard upon them. But they ought not to be pleaded by any of us, to excuse ourfelves from undertaking a neceffary burthen; which perhaps we are as well able to fupport, as any, who will be likely to come in our fread. I am fenfible too, and would have you be fo, that fcarce any thing is a more effectual hindrance to our doing good amongft our parishioners, than the character of being litigious; which many delight to give us: but with how little justice, in general, one fingle obfervation amongft feveral that might be alledged, will more than fufficiently flew; that of 700 fuits for tithes, brought by the clergy into the Court of Exchequer, which is only about one in 14 parifhes, during the fpace of 53 years, from the reftoration to the year 1713, 600 were decided for them. It is true, our obtaining juftice against any man, though in ever fo clear a caufe, is very apt to be refented, by himfelf and his friends at leaft, as grievous injuffice. But uling the previous amicable measures, which I have recommended, muft in fome degree prevent, either fevere imputations upon us, or however the belief of them : and if not intirely, yet, by mildnefs, and prudence, we may certainly regain in time the reputation, we never deferved to lofe. At leaft our fucceffors will enjoy, free from all blame, what we recover to them : whereas if we acquiesce in the detention of our due, they will be ftill more likely to do fo, and thus the lofs of it will be perpetuated.

petuated. Therefore in cafes both fufficiently plain, and of fufficient importance, when all other ways have been tried to no purpofe, and the right will be either extinguished, or much obfcured, by delay; and perhaps the example fpread further: I fee not, how we can excute ourfelves from applying to a proper court of juffice, if we can hope to procure a fentence from it, without abfolute ruin or extream diffrefs. For it is a mean and wicked felfiftnefs, to hoard up wealth, conful our eafe, or court the favour of our fuperiors, by letting the inheritance of the church be impoverifhed, while the guardianthip of it is in our hands.

But then we muft be doubly careful of what all men fhould be abundantly more careful of, than moft are, that we never awe perfons, efpecially poor perfons, unjuftly, by threatning them with law, into a compliance with our demands; and that no difpute of this kind ever entice us to do any thing fraudulent, or provoke us to do any thing ill-natured or vexatious. And particularly, if we have a demand on any of the people called Quakers, we fhould, if we pefibly can, purfue it by that method only, which the act, for the more eafy recovery of fmall tithes, hath provided : and rather fit down with a moderate lofs, than do otherwife. For they are a generation, loud in their complaints, unfair in their reprefentations, and peculiarly bitter in their reflections, where we are concerned : unwearied in labouring to render us odious, and furprizingly artful in recommending themfelves to the great.

But I proceed to the lefs troublefome and difagreeable duty of preferving what we ftill poffers. Now to this end the most obvious way is, keeping the glebe in our own hands, and taking the tithes and all other dues, ourfelves: for which reafon probably, amongft others, both ancient ecclefiaftical conftitutions, and later acts of Parliament, have reftrained and limited leafing of benefices. But many are fo little qualified for this, and would be fo great lofers by it: and others would find it fuch a hindrance to the difcharge of their ministerial office, or the purfuit of uleful fludics : nay, where it hath been long difused, the people might perhaps be fo much offended with the novelty: that I would by no means prefs doing it in all cafes, but only recommend it in proper ones. And where it is done, if a clergyman were to attend to fuch matters too clofely; and, above all, were to be over-watchful and ftrict about fmall demands : it would naturally raife a contempt, if not hatred of him. And therefore it will be much better to content ourfelves with giving parishioners, by prudent instruction, a general fense of their obligation to pay their dues; and by engaging behaviour, a general difpofition to it; than to exact the minuter forts of them with an indecent eagernefs. But still, where rights, that may seem inconfiderable in each particular cafe, amount to more on the whole, than it is convenient to lofe; and yet will be withheld, if not infifted on : we must do it, with as good a grace as we can; and remind perfons, if there be need, that fuch as make this neceffary, are indeed they, who act the mean part : that it is no fault of ours to require what the law hath allotted us for our maintenance; but a great misfortune, that fo much of it confifts in these petty articles.

Whatever tithes it will be incommodious to keep in our own hands, we may compound for with those who should pay them, or lease them to others.

others. The former way will ufually be kinder and more obliging, and fo far more eligible. Yet on the other hand, if we chufe the latter, our leffee will probably find it his intereft to take them in kind, which will preferve our title to them in kind : and therefore it may at leaft be expedient fometimes, in relation to any questionable parts of them. But if a tenant will rather give up fome of our rights, than be at the trouble of afferting them, we may be under a neceffity of doing it ourfelves. And if we let any of our tithes to the proprietor of what they arife from, or to whomfoever we let our glebe, it fhould never be for too long a time at the fame rent : elfe we run a great rifque of being told, that we are intitled to nothing more. The perfon indeed, who makes the agreement with us, cannot think fo : and yet what even he may pretend to our fucceffors, we cannot forefee. But the perfon, that comes after him, may infift on it even to us : and though the evil fhould be delayed longer, it will happen much too foon. Written agreements, difcreetly worded, may be an useful and effectual preventive. Yet these, in course of time, may be loft by various accidents : or conftancy of the fame unvaried payment be alledged as a ftronger argument on one fide, than they are on the other. And if either fhould prove our cafe, contending at law with any parishioner will be a very undefirable thing: and contending with a powerful one may be an impracticable thing. Therefore we ought never to begin cuftoms, that may be dangerous : and if they are begun, even by our predeceffor's fault, and yet more if by our own, we thould think how to ftop them without delay. But the least we can do, is refolutely to refuse authorizing fuch invafions, by giving any thing under our hands, which may but feem an acknowledgment that what we receive is a prefcript and unchangeable payment, unlefs we are very well affured that the law will efteem it fuch. We ought rather to lofe it ourfelves. than procure it by an act, that will prejudice our fucceffors. Barely continuing to accept it unaltered, is doing more than enough to their difadvantage : therefore we ought on no account to go further ; but on the contrary, labour to procure and perpetuate, if we can, fuch evidence, as may be of fervice to them.

Nor fhould we be careful only to preferve our benefices from any diminution of income, but also from any addition of expence, which would amount to the fame thing: for heavy burthens, and very unfit ones, of riotous entertainments in particular, and those fometimes at the most improper feasons, have been introduced and cftablished in many places, by the inconfiderateness and fupimeness of incumbents. We fhall do well, absolutely to break and annihilate fuch customs, if it remains legally possible : and if not, to use our utmost influence towards procuring the confent of the perfons concerned, to change them into fomething elfe, less exceptionable and more useful, to be fecured to them as firmly, as may be; with a covenant added, that they shall be initided to return to their old usage, if ever they are denied the benefit of the new.

Provided the abovementioned precautions be obferved, we are much at liberty to treat our parifhioners as kindly, as we will : and very kindly we ought to treat them : never permitting them, if we know it, to go without any thing, which is their right; to pay any thing, which is not

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due :

due; or even to take any thing too dear: always making them equitable abatements, admitting every tolerable excufe for their delays of payment; and rather chufing to lofe ever fo much by them, than with any fhadow of juffice be accused of cruelty towards them. Yet when we fhew them any indulgence, we fhould let them fee, we are fensible of what we do for them : elfe they may impute it to our ignorance, not our goodnefs. And we ought not to be fo eafy with them, as to fet them against a successor, who cannot afford to imitate us; or disqualify ourfelves, by a promifcuous kindnefs to all, from being efpecially kind to fuch as want. But whatever improvements we make in our benefices, by whatever just means, it will be a prudent guard against envy, as well as a right behaviour on other accounts, to increase, at the same time, either a fober modest hospitality, for neither excess nor vain shew at all become our function; or, which is yet better, and ought never to be excluded by the other, a judicious charity; above all, to the induftrious and virtuous poor, extended to their fouls, as well as their bodies.

For the purpole of recovering or preferving the rights of vicarages, the original endowments of them may be very ufeful. And thele you are to feek for in the register books of the Diocefe of *Lincoln*, out of which this was taken. But I have collected copies of fome; and can direct you to books, printed or manufeript, in which are copies of others; or to that part of the register-books, in which they may be found: and fhall gladly give any of you whatever information is in my power. But you muft not always conclude your prefent rights to be neither more nor lefs, than fuch an endowment fets forth: both becaufe there may be a fubfequent one, with variations; and becaufe, where no fubfequent one appears, long cuftom, in particular cafes, may create a legal prefumption, that there was one, upon which that cuftom was grounded.

For the fame use, in rectories, as well as vicarages, terriers were directed : how anciently, I cannot fay. But the 37th Canon of 1603 enjoins, that the Bishop of each Diocese shall procure them to be taken, by the view of honeft men in every parifh, to be appointed by him. whereof the minister to be one : it specifies the particulars, of which they shall confist, and orders them to be laid up in the Bishop's registry. How often they shall be taken, it doth not mention. But plainly the changes, which time introduces, particularly in the names of the parcels and abuttals of glebe lands, require a renewal of terriers at reafonable diftances. This Canon hath been observed to imperfectly, that of about 200 parifhes, of which this Diocefe confifts, there are terriers in the registry of no more than about 126 : and most of them only one : and of these, not 20, fince the year 1685. In the convocation of 1704, complaints were made of the like omiffions elfewhere: and in those of 1710, 1714, 1715, a scheme was formed, that where no terrier had been made for 7 years then last past, (which looks as if a repetition every 7 years was intended) (a) the minister should make one, with the church-

(a) Pridecux, Directions to Church-wardens,  $\int 99$ . faith, that the Bifhop at every vifitation ufually requires a new terrier. Bifhop Gibson proposes that there should be a new one where there had been none fince the reftoration.

#### fourth Charge to his Clergy.

church-wardens, or fuch parifhioners as the Bifhop fhould appoint : that three indented copies of it in parchment fhould be figned by them ; one to be exhibited at the Bishop's next visitation, the second at the Archdeacon's, and the third put in the parish cheft (b). But these proposals having never received the fanction of due authority, are to be confidered as no more than prudent directions : the Canon of 1603 ftill continues our only legal rule. And I am very defirous to perform the part, which it affigns to me. But then I must beg your affistance in order to my nominating proper perfons, that is, parifhioners of the greateft probity, knowledge, and fubstance, to be joined in the work with you. Terriers indeed are of more use in causes tried before ecclesiastical judges, than temporal : who will not allow the fpiritual judicatures to be courts of record : but ftill, when regularly made, they will have fome weight every where. At least they will be valuable and authentic informations to your fucceffors : and probably the parifhioners of future times will be afhamed to infift on claims, contrary to what they will fee afferted under the hands of their predeceffors, perhaps their fathers or near relations. But then, to produce these good effects, indeed to prevent their producing bad ones, they must be made with great care. If there be a preceding terrier, it must be confulted : if it be defective, the defects must be fupplied : if it be accurate, there must be no variations from it in the new. but where they are neceffary to render defcriptions intelligible; or where other alterations have been made that require them. For contradictory terriers will hurt, if not deftroy, each other's evidence. It will also be right to express in them, what peculiar burthens are incumbent on the minister, or that there are none, as well as what property belongs to him. But if his right, or obligation, to any thing, be doubtful : either no terrier must be made, till the doubt is removed; or it must be fet down there as a doubtful point; but by no means given up, to pleafe any perfon, or ferve any purpofe whatever. For terriers, that make against the Clergy, will do them abundantly more harm, than fuch, as make in their favour, will do them good. And laftly, though it may be needlefs and inconvenient to employ many perfons in drawing up a terrier, yet the more fign it, the better; especially of confiderable perfons; for to omit any of them, and multiply the names of others, will appear fufpicious. And as it may not always be easy to procure fuch hands, as you could wifh; favourable opportunities muft be prudently fought and waited for; and the work undertaken, when they offer, and not before.

Other very ufeful precautions, of near affinity to this of terriers, are, that if any augmentations have been made of your benefices, by payments referved in church or college leafes, by the Queen's bounty, or otherwife : or if any agreement have been entered into, between you, or your predeceffors, and the patron and ordinary, for making any exchange or inclofure, or doing any other act, which affects your income, or any part of it, whether it be confirmed by a legal decree or not : proper evidences

(b) See Wilkins, vol. 4. p. 638, 656. It was also proposed that a calendar should be made of those which were put in the registry and that they should not be delivered out, without fecurity given. dences of these things should both be kept amongs your parochial papers, and deposited in the public office. Indeed the law requires that augmentations, made by ecclesiastical bodies or persons, be entered in a parchment book, to be kept in the Bishop's registry for that end (c). And though acts of Parliament, passed for any of the purposes abovementioned, may be considered as things more notorious: yet without the fame fort of care, the memory of these also may be lost, or some of the provisions made in them controverted.

There is fill one thing more, that, amongft feveral other ufes to which it extends, may be very ferviceable to afcertain the rights of livings: I mean repeating from time to time, the ancient practice of perambulations: which hath been long freed from fuperfition; and, if preferved alfo from intemperance and tumultuous contefls, the laft of which evils may be prevented by friendly difcourfe beforehand with the chief inhabitants of your own and the neighbouring parifhes; the thankfgivings, prayers, and fentences of Scripture, with which the injunctions of Queen *Elizabeth* direct it to be accompanied, will render it a very pious ceremony: and the civil benefits of it may be confiderable. For though, without it, there feldom will arife any queffion, to what parifl, lands, that have been long cultivated, appertain: yet concerning others, in the whole or in part, there often doth. And fome, that are worth but little at prefent, may come hereafter to be of great value.

But, befides preferving the incomes of our benefices from encroachments, we are bound to preferve the lands and edifices belonging to them, in good condition. If therefore we commit wafte on our glebe, or, through covetoufnefs or negligence, impoverifh it, or fuffer our tenant to impoverish it, we act dishonourably and unjustly: as also, if we permit our dwelling-houfes or out-buildings to fall into decay, for want of early or fufficient repair. A fmall expence in time may prevent the neceffity of a much larger afterwards, and thus, by neglecting it, we may hurt ourfelves; which would doubtlefs be unwife : but defignedly throwing the burthen on our fucceffor deferves a harfher name. And if we either fquander extravagantly, or hoard avaritioufly, what we fave thus; it doubles the fault. If mere indolence be the caufe of our omiffion; it is by no means a good principle; and produces effects, as bad, as if it were a worfe. Nay, if we are influenced by the defire of making only a reafonable provision for our families: we have no right to provide for them by wronging our fucceffor; and perhaps depriving our parifhioners of the benefit of having a minister relident amongst them. Possibly fome may fay, that their executors must account for whatever they leave out of order : and therefore they do no harm. But it may be, they will leave them nothing to account with : especially as the common law prefers the payment of other debts before dilapidations (d). At least they well know, that the law, though it will allow more, than executors commonly pretend; and perhaps more, than would have prevented the damage, if applied in time; will not allow enough to repair it afterwards; or however not to compensate moreover for the expence and trouble of taking that remedy: and that therefore, in all likelihood, a fucceffor, to avoid

(c) 29 Car. 2. c. 8. §. 4, 5, 6. (d) See Gibson's Codex, p. 791.

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avoid law, will chufe rather to accept of lefs, than he ought to have. Now driving him to this, is doing him a gross injury; and that very probably when he is just coming into the world in fuch circumstances, that it will weigh heavy upon him, and may put him behind hand for a long time. Some again will plead, that they really cannot afford to repair their houfes. And doubtless the condition of many is very pitiable, and deferves the affiftance, as well as compaffion, of their richer neighbours and brethren. But still what reason is there to think, that they, who come after them, will be better able, when the houfes are grown worfe ? And what must it therefore end in, unless timely prevention be applied? Others may alledge, theirs are in repair; and no dilapidations will be found, when they leave them. But are they in fuch repair, fo fubftantial and fo decent, as a minister's house ought, that belongs to fuch a benefice : or only just habitable, and patched up to hold out a little longer ? Perhaps you keep your house in as good a condition, as you found it. But did you think your predeceffor acted well, when he left it you in no better ? If not, that which was his duty, is now yours. Thefe things all incumbents ought to confider : but fome more efpecially; as they who have large benefices, and they who have two; which may be ordinarily fuppofed equivalent to a large one. Yet thefe latter, in how good order foever they may, for their own fakes, keep the house they ufually refide in, have too often left the other to be treated as a farmer or tenant pleafes: till it hath grown, if not ruinous, yet very unfuitable to its next proper inhabitant. Again, rich perfons, that are poffeffed of poor livings, ought peculiarly to reflect, how noble an opportunity is put into their hands of being benefactors to them : by repairing, or if need be, rebuilding, and fitting up, the houfes; and improving whatever little fpace of ground lies about them, in fuch manner, as will make both comfortable to the fucceeding owners. And the very different method, which they have fometimes taken, of living in better habitations themfelves, and letting thefe run into decay, is extremely ungenerous and illiberal. Yet indeed, on the other hand, making parlonage or vicarage houles, or the appurtenances of them, fo large for their own convenience, as to bring on afterwards too great an expence in fupporting them, would be a mark, either of much vanity, or little confideration.

On this whole fubject I might, inftead of perfuafion, ufe authority alone. But as the latter would be much lefs pleafing to me: fo I hope the former will be as effectual with you. Elfe, the laws of the church in this nation, empower the Bifhop, if incumbents do not repair their houfes in a decent manner (e), to take cognizance of the neglect either on complaint or by voluntary inquiry, and to proceed againft them by ecclefiaftical cenfures; or, after admonifhing them in vain, to make himfelf

(\*) Semper tamen rationabilis confideratio fit habenda ad facultates ecclefix. Conft. Edm. Si Rector; on which Lyndword's note is, Quia in beneficio pinguiori requiruntur ædificia magis fumptuofa quam in beneficio minus pingui. Lib. 3. Tit. 27. de eccl, ædificandis. Verb. Facultates Ecclefix, p. 251.

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himfelf what repair is needful out of the profits of their benefices : and what proportion of them fhall be applied to this purpofe, is left to his diferetion (f): but the injunctions of H. 8. Ed. 6. and Q. Eliz. directed a fifth (g). And a further conftitution of Othobon, published in the year 1268, expressly orders, that such a sequestration be made in the cafe of houses fallen down, as well as decayed (b). And the Ref. Leg. Eccl. had provided in the fame manner for the fame thing (i), in conformity with evident reafon. Indeed, where no houfe hath been for a long time, compelling the incumbent to rebuild one may feem hard. But is it not harder still, that his parishioners and successors should never more enjoy an advantage, intended to be a perpetual one? At leaft, whatever he may think of his legal obligation, he fhould confider, whether he is not in confcience obliged to devote fome fitting fhare of his income to this use. Surely, if he doth not think it a ftrict duty, he must think it, unlefs there be fome peculiar reafon to the contrary, an excellently good action. And fuppofing that what he can lay by, will amount only to a tolerable beginning : yet others may, and probably will, fooner or later, add to it, and complete the work.

But whatever care you ought to take, and I ought to fee that you take, in relation to your houses : there is still a much greater, for the fame reafons and more, due from you, who are rectors, in relation to your chancels : and I am yet more expressly authorized, by Statute-law as well as Canon, to superintend this matter. Chancels are the most facred part of the church : and the whole church ought to be preferved in a condition, worthy of that Being, whole it is; and fit to infpire his worfhippers with reverence. The light of Nature taught the Heathens to adorn their temples (k). God himfelf provided, by express and minute directions, for the beauty of his fanctuary amongst the Jews : the ancient Chriftians imitated these precedents, as soon as ever the danger of perfecution ceafed (1): and if the following ages carried their notions of magnificence and ornament in religious edifices too far, as undoubtedly they did, in heaping up treasures there, which had much better . have been diffributed to the poor, than kept to provoke the envy and avarice of the great : yet in this country, for feveral generations paft, the contrary extreme hath prevailed to fo fhameful a degree, as must needs give Papifts an exceeding great difguft to Protestantism; and Infidels no fmall contempt of Chriffians, as either defpifing inwardly the religion they profefs, or being too fordid to pay it the common outward marks of refpect.

Now what hope can we have of bringing our people back, unlefs we fet them the example? What can we fay to our parifhioners about their churches, or to lay-impropriators about their chancels; or, fay what we,

(f) See Gibson's Codex, T. 32. c. 3. p. 789, Sc.

(g) See Wilkins, vol. 4. p. 5. The Ref. Leg. Eccl. Tit. de Dilapidationibus, c. 2. p. 77. directs only a 7th.

(b) Gibson's Codex, Tit. 32 c. 3. p. 789.

(i) Tit. de Dilap. c. 2. p. 77.

(k) Hor. Od. 15. lib. 2. and Sat. 2. lib. 2. v. 103, 104, 105.

(1) See Bingham.

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we will, how can it be expected they fhould mind us, if we are blameable ourfelves on the fame head ? In respect of their duty in this point, and fome concern, (indeed not a little) which you have with it, I intend to speak at large, if God spare my life and health to another visitation. But at prefent I confine myfelf to what is more immediately and intirely the province of the Clergy. Anciently the repair of the whole church was incumbent on the rector as of common right (m). I believe it continues to be fo ftill in other nations : but the cuftom of ours hath releafed us from the largest part of the burthen : for which reason we ought to bear the remainder very chearfully; and exceed what in ftrictnefs might be demanded of us. Plainnefs of appearance, though carried almost to the borders of neglect, in relation to our own perfons and abodes, may be a judicious and inftructive mark of fimplicity and humility. But it will be much more fo, if, at the fame time, we are liberal in providing for the honour of facred things. And if, inftead of that, we take just the contrary part ; dwell, as the Prophet expresses himself. in ceiled houfs, and let the house of God lie waste (n); fuffer the principal part of it, and that with which we are intrusted, to be in a worfe condition, than any common room we live in ; think nothing too good for ourfelves, and every thing good enough for him and his fervice ; it is an exceeding bad fign; and must have a most undefirable effect on all who observe it. I believe indeed that the chancels, which belong to incumbents, will be generally found in the best condition of any: Yet fome even of these, I fear, have scarce been kept in necessary present repair, and others by no means duly cleared from annoyances, which must gradually bring them to decay: water undermining and rotting the foundations, earth heaped up against the outlide, weeds and shrubs growing upon them, or trees too near them. Where fufficient attention is paid to these things: too frequently the floors are meanly paved, or the walls dirty or patched, or the windows ill glazed, and it may be in part ftopt up, or the roof not ceiled : or they are damp, offenfive and unwholefome, for want of a due circulation of air. Now it is indifpenfably requifite to preferve them not only flanding and fafe, but clean, neat, decent, agreeable : and it is highly fit to go further, and fuperadd, not a light and trivial finery, but fuch degrees of proper dignity and grandeur, as we are able, confiftently with other real obligations. Perhaps they may have been long, or perhaps always, as mean as they are at prefent. But the meannefs which in ages of less elegance might give no offence, may justly give more than a little now: And why fhould not the church of God, as well as every thing elfe about us, partake of the improvements of later times ? In feveral of your chancels, I doubt not, every thing which I have been recommending is done. In others you have refolved to do it : and if any have not rightly confidered the matter before, they must be fensible, that it was my duty to admonish them, and is theirs to regard the admonition. For, as to the excuses, which may be pleaded under this head

(m) See Conft. Othob. Tit. 17, and John de Athon, Verb. Cancellos. (n) Hag. i. 4. head of chancels, they have been obviated, under the former of parfonage-houfes.

It only remains now, that I fpeak briefly to the third point, our obligations in regard to the temporalities of our benefices, when we have a near view of quitting them : whether by death, which may be near us at any time, and muft be fo in old age; or any other way. Some, becaufe they were not to continue incumbents long, have fet themfelves to confult their own interefts, by neglect of all expensive duties, by committing wafte, by allowing others to commit it. A manner of proceeding, in all cafes unjust : when they are removing to a better income, peculiarly difhonourable : when they fee their latter end approach, fhockingly wicked; unlefs the decay of their faculties furnish fome excuse for them. Rejecting therefore all fuch practices with just abomination, we are bound in these circumstances, to confider feriously, what our past faults and omiffions, relating to this article, have been : to undo, as far as we can, what we have done amifs : to do immediately what we ought to have done fooner: to make the amends we as able, if any harm hath happened by the delay; and indeed, fome amends for the chance there was, that harm might have happened. But, how rightly focver we may have acted hitherto, there will ftill be duties, peculiar to the time, which I am now fuppofing : that we fecure to our fucceffors whatever books, deeds, and papers, relating to our benefices, came down to us from our predeceflors ; whatever evidences our own incumbency hath furnished; in a word, whatever notices may be of importance, concerning the rights, or the value, of the living, we enjoy. But particularly, if we have been to inconfiderate, as to make any long agreement, which a fucceeding minister may be in danger of mistaking, or others may be tempted to fet up, for an eftablished prefcription; as may eafily happen if it was done many years ago : we ought to leave them the most authentic proofs of the real state and truth of the cafe. Some have through indolence omitted these things. Others have design-" edly kept in their own power, or left in that of their executors, all fuch means of information ; that their fucceffors, in order to receive them, may be bound to behave reafonably and kindly, as they are pleafed to term it; that is, may be under a neceffity of fubmitting to whatever unreafonable things fnall be demanded of them; in refpect of dilapidations, or any other point. This, you cannot but fee, would be making an unfaithful use of those lights, which have been intrusted with you by others, and an opprefive one of those which you have added yourfelves. Or suppofing that only equitable requefts are made to a fucceffor, and that he refules them: ftill it is not a Christian part, to prevent this injury by threatning, and much lefs to revenge it by doing, what in all likelihood would be a far greater injury; and may extend its bad effects, beyond the perfon, who hath given the provocation, to all that fhall fill his place hereafter, though perfectly innocent; and to every one that might have fhared in the advantage of their enjoying a more plentiful income. Nor is it fufficient, that you difapprove fuch conduct, unlefs you make a due provision, that your reprefentatives when you are gone shall not be guilty of it. You may have a better opinion of them in this respect, than they-

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they deferve : at leaft, there can be no harm in taking a little more care of iuch a matter, than might be abfolutely neceffary.

One powerful motive to be careful in all the points, which I have been mentioning, is, that few things will contribute more to your maintaining while you live, and leaving when you die, the character of men of prohity and honour, amongst your neighbours in general, and your brethren of the Clergy in particular, than your diligent and difinterefted attention to act worthily and kindly in relation to your fucceffors, though probably you know them not, or however have no perfonal connection with them. Nor will many things throw a blacker or more lafting ftain upon perfons, than a low cunning, or a felfish indifference, in these af fairs. But indeed confcience, as well as reputation, is deeply concerned in the matter, as I doubt not, but you are all fenfible. Nor furely will any one elfe imagine, either that my exhortations to you, any more than yours to your hearers, imply you to be guilty of, or effectially in-clined to any of the faults, againft which they are levelled : or that, by fpeaking thus long of your worldly affairs, I feem to think them of weight equal, or comparable, to your fpiritual functions. But the best of us have need to be admonifhed of all our duties, be they duties of higher rank or lower, each in their turns. Temporal things are not to be neglected : and those least of all, which are set apart for the service of things eternal. But then we must be watchful over them, in order to employ them, as they were meant to be employed : and if we preferve and transmit them ever to faithfully, but use them unfaithfully; ftudying only or chiefly to enrich or advance ourfelves, or gratify our fenfual appetites, or love of diversions, or of elegant appearance, by means of those revenues, which were given us for ends widely different : (partly to make a comfortable and moderate, not a fuperfluous and invidious provision for ourfelves and ours, and partly to ferve the purposes of religion and charity) we offend God, fin against our brethren, and provoke men to take from us what they are too ready to fay we do no good with: as indeed little would be done, were fuch a conduct general. It is true, and the laity ought to confider it a great deal more than they do, that we have very few of us much, if any thing, to fpare. But they who have, fhould let their light shine before men, and be seen to lay it out in pious uses prudently chosen: and the poorest should occasionally give what alms they can; and make amends for their inability on this head, by a double diligence in ufeful inftruction, pious example, and obliging behaviour, to the meanest of their people. Without a remarkable degree of fuch care, we fhall have few or no friends : and notwithftanding it, we fhall have many enemies. This is hard treatment : but angry complaints will only make it worfe; and the most reasonable expostulations not much better, unlefs we first confider, wherein we are faulty or defective, and amend it; wherein we are unjuftly blamed or fufpected, and clear ourfelves : then patiently perfevere in well-doing, in all things approving ourfelves as the ministers of God, by purenels, by knowledge, by long-fuffering, by kinduels, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, through honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report (o). Other means, if they could

(o) 2 Cor. vi. 4, 6, 7, 8,

## The Bishop of Oxford's fourth Charge, Sc.

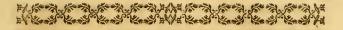
could fupport us, cannot enable us to anfwer the end of our infitution. But by thefe we may fill hope, not only to confute, but, which muft ever be our chief aim, if poffible, to convert, at leaft to mollify our adverfaries; and fo recommend ourfelves to more impartial perfons, that they may receive with meeknefs the engrafted word, which is able to fave their fouls (p). Or fhould we, after all, in respect of ever fo many, labour in vain, and fpend our firength for nought, yet our judgment is with the Lord, and our work with our God (q).

(p) 'James i. 21.

(q) Ifa. xlix. 4.

A CHARGE

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## C H A R G E

Α

DELIVERED TO THE

CLERGY of the DIOCESE,

# O X F O R D,

O F

In the YEAR 1753.

## 

#### Reverend Brethren,

HAVE never attempted in my former vifitations, nor fhall I in this, to entertain you with any thing new and curious : thinking it much fitter for me, and better for you, to fpeak to you of fuch points, immediately relating to common practice, as, though eafily underftood, are too frequently difregarded. With this view I have gone through the principal parts of your duty, as parochial minifters, in refpect both of fpirituals and temporals. But befides what is wholly incumbent on yourfelves, in fome things you are jointly concerned with your church-wardens : and in others, though not expressly commifficined by law to interpofe, you may do it neverthelefs, with peculiar propriety, weight, and influence.

Of the former fort are those offences against religion and morals, which the church-wardens are bound by oath to prefent ; and the incumbent, or his curate, impowered and charged by the 113th and following Canons to join with them in prefenting, if need be; or to prefent alone, if they refuse. This naturally implies, what the 26th Canon expresses, that the minifler is to urge the church-wardens to perform that part of their office. Indeed your first endeavour should be, by due instructions and exhortations, to hinder fuch offences : your next, by due reproofs, public or private, to amend them. But if both prove ineffectual, what remains is, to get them corrected by authority. I am perfectly fenfible, that both immorality and irreligion are grown almost beyond the reach of ecclefiaftical power: which having in former times been very unwarrantably extended, hath fince been very unjuftly and imprudently cramped and weakened many ways. I am fenfible alfo, that fometimes church-wardens, nay even minifters, are fo dependent on perfons, who deferve to be prefented, that they cannot prefent them without imminent hazard of ruining themfelves : and farther ftill, that fome offenders, if they were thus exposed, would only become worse, and fet themfelves to make others worfe: while fome again, as the Apoftle exprefies it in this very cafe, would be fwallowed up with overmuch forrow (a). Now furely it cannot have been defigned by our graci-. ous Redeemer, or the rulers of his church, that the power of spiritual cenfures, which the fame Apostle hath twice declared the Lord to have given for edification, not for destruction (b), should be exercised in circumstances like thefe. Therefore when circumstances are evidently and undeniably of this kind, I think you fhould not infift on your churchwardens prefenting. But there is much more danger of their being guilty of too great remiffness, than running into overmuch rigour. And therefore you must advise and entreat them to make presentments of finners, where probably it will be ufeful; and to contemn the difpleafure of bad people, when it can have no extremely ill confequences, (of which there is commonly much more fear than is neceffary) for the hope of their amendment and the good of others round them. The very office of church-wardens obliges them to this : their oath yet more firmly. And if they are backward still, after being told it doth, you must acquaint them, that you are directed by the 26th Canon, (in the execution of which however, as in all points of discipline, discretion should be ufed,) to refufe them the holy communion; not indeed for every neglect of prefenting offences, but if they wilfully neglect it in defperate dehance of their oath, when they are urged to it by their neighbours, their minister or ordinary : for so the same Canon describes the case : in which cafe likewife you will inform them, the court is authorized, by Canon 117, to proceed against them for perjury. But, along with these terrors, you will be fure to join fitting encouragements. You will promile to defend them to the parifhioners, and even to the perfon prefented, as doing only their duty. You will affure them, as you may, first, that the court will take notice of their prefentments, no farther, than is proper; fo that they fhall not incur the difpleafure of the offenders and their friends for nothing; then, that it will proceed, not with a view to gain,

(a)2 Cor. ii. 7.

(b) 2 Cor. x. 8. and xiii. 10.

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gain, but to reformation and example; not with exceflive, nor, if it can be avoided, with the utmost rigour, but with equity and moderation.

If all this be unfuccefsful, you muft, in cafes that require it, offer to join with them, or even refolve to prefent without them. But you muft never take any ftep in thefe matters, much lefs the more extraordinary fteps, from motives of refentment, intereft, or party. If fuch inducements can be with any colour of reafon imputed to you, they will fo grievoafly difcredit what you do, that probably you had better do nothing. But only take care to fhew, that you act merely from good intention, accompanied with temper and prudence, after trying gentler methods in vain : and fome will vindicate, and even applaud you : more will inwardly and filently refpect you ; and the number of the reft will not be formidable.

But then whoever brings a complaint, must enable the court to take due cognizance of it: elfe prefentments will be defined; and the confequences be worfe, than if they had not been made. Evidence must of neceffity be furnifhed: otherwite there can be no proceeding. Expences, I hope I may promife, will be as low as possible; and they should be cheerfully born for the good of the parish and the public. It is not reasonable that the court should bear them. Temporal courts never do. And befides, there is room for plausible, though unjust, sufficiences of partiality, where the judge appears to be in effect projecutor too, and is intereffed in condemning the party accufed.

When perfons are prefented, you muft ufe your beft endeavours to make them forry, not merely that they are in danger of being punished, but principally that they have finned : and in proportion as you fucceed in that, recommend them to fuch favour, as can be fhewn them. When perfons are excommunicated, (which I heartily with no one ever was but for crimes, though indeed a wilful contempt of authority is a great crime) you must prefs them to confider feriously, how they would be affected, if a phyfician or a lawyer of eminence pronounced their cafe defperate ; and of how much greater importance the concerns of eternity are, than those of time. You must also admonish them, that flighting a cenfure, paffed on them for their amendment, will make their condition still more deplorable. And when they have been denounced excommunicate, by the 85th Canon, the church-wardens are to fee, that in every meeting of the congregation they be kept out of the church. Nor must you suffer them to be sureties for children in baptism, to receive the holy eucharift, or to have Christian burial. Farther, if they continue without abfolution for three months, the 65th Canon directs you to declare them excommunicate in the parifh church every half year; that others, meaning fuch as have no neceffary connections with them, may thereby be admonifhed to refrain their company, and excited the rather to procure out a writ de excommunicato capiendo : that is, if the circumstances of the cafe make it requifite. Again, when perfons do penance, you must be diligent to make them feriously fensible of the usefulnefs of fuch difcipline; and the unfpeakable obligations they have to the Gospel of Christ, which alone aslures men of forgiveness on any And laftly, both on all fuch, and all other fit occafions, you terms, must remind your people, that however the censures of the church may

be

be relaxed or evaded, the final judgment of God on obstinate finners is both unavoidable and infupportable.

Befides the prefentment of perfons who give offence, you are concerned likewife in that of things belonging to the church, which are not kept in good repair and order.

I have already fpoken to you concerning the repair of your houfes and chancels : and enlarged on the reasons, why both, but especially the latter, should be always preferved not only in a firm and fafe, but decent and respectable state. Now the same reasons hold in regard to the rest of the church : and after you have fet the example in your own part, you may with reputation and weight call on your parifhioners to do what is proper in theirs. And indeed you are bound to it. For, as John of Athon hath justly observed (c), Licet per consuetudinem exoneretur rector a sumptibus præstandis, non tamen eximitur a curâ & solicitudine impendendå. Thus far even the body of the church is ftill under your infpection : and if any thing be remarkably amifs there, and you take no notice; good and confiderate perfons will lament it, as a bad fign and of bad confequence : others will make your indifference a plea to excufe their own ; and yet while they are glad of it, will be likely enough to condemn you for it; and perhaps be led by it to think meanly of religion, as well as of you. Befides, church-wardens have often but little fense of propriety in thefe matters : therefore you fhould labour to give them a fenfe of it : convince them, by reafon and Scripture, of the honour due to the house of God : shew them, that their own honour too is interested ; that a church in handfome condition is a credit to the whole parifh; and in particular to the officers, who have put it in that condition, and whofe names will be long remembered on that account. They are often afraid of the expence. Argue with them, that things may be done gradually, and fo the expence be rendered almost imperceptible : perfuade them to leffen their expences in needlefs matters; in eating and drinking at vifitations, and on other occasions, fometimes to excess, never to any good purpose ; and observe to them, how much righter and more commendable it would be, to lay out or lay up that money for proper uses : how fhameful indeed, to fquander it in riot and folly, and be never the better, but the worfe the next day; when they might dispose of it fo, as to fee the good effects for years, and have them feen for ages. If ftill you cannot influence the prefent church-wardens, try their fucceflors. You have a concurrent right with the parifhioners in chufing them; and if your opinions differ, you are to chufe one, they another : unlefs there be a cuftom to the contrary. Surely then, within fome reafonable time, you may get fuch as will hearken to you. If you fail of fuccefs that way, defire your people to reflect how their money goes : not in fees of visitations, which are no higher now, than when the value of money was thrice, perhaps five times, higher, but in extravagance and intemperance : that therefore they ought not to complain of the court, but of their own officers; indeed ought to difallow the wrong and idle articles of their accounts; and may be affured, the court will support them in doing fo.

Sometimes the church-wardens are willing to lay out money as they ought,

(c) Conft. Othob. 17. verb. ad hoc tenentur. p. 113.

#### fifth Charge to his Clergy.

ought, but the parishioners unwilling. In that cafe you must acquaint the former, that no man's confent is wanted for their repairing and keeping in good order, both the church, and every thing belonging to it, which is either neceffary, or which they found there : nor is the confent of every man requifite, but of the majority only of a parish-meeting duly called, for adding any thing new, provided the ordinary approve it. However, they should do their utmost, and you should assist them, to procure the concurrence of all the parishioners; or at least, of as many as poffible : to whom you will reprefent for this end, that a moderate expence now will prevent a much greater hereafter : that almost all the churches in the nation were built many ages ago, and a very great part of them about the fame time : that without conftant and fubstantial repairs, in another generation or another century, they will be falling at the fame time ; and how will they be rebuilt ? The inhabitants, if we may guess from what we fee at prefent, will be both less able and less inclined. As for help from briefs: those for other things produce but little; but those for churches extremely little; to the great shame indeed of perfons, who call themfelves Chriftians : and you fhould labour to rectify their prejudices on this head, and excite them to be more charitable. But God knows whether they will; and if hereafter they should, what can be hoped from it, when almost every parish in the land will want a brief? In many, it is to be feared there will be no churches ; in others, wretchedly mean ones; to the contempt of all religion amongft Infidels, and of the Protestant religion amongst Papists. Repeat and inculcate it therefore on your people, that they must take care of the churches they have : if not, their posterity will run the rifque of having none. Too many will fcarcely be moved even by that confideration : but there is the more need of moving fuch as you can; and, getting into a condition of moving more, by all proper methods of recommending the Gofpel and yourfelves.

But to perfons of rank and figure in your parishes, one should hope you might apply with very fair profpect of fuccefs. To thefe you may furely reprefent at favourable feafons, that labouring people part very hardly with the money, which they get very hardly : that therefore their fuperiors fhould not only use their influence and example to make them willing, but indeed fhould do for them what perhaps they are almost as unable to do, as they are unwilling; especially what goes any length beyond repairs abfolutely neceffary : for that people of low degree, though they may have fome notion of neatnefs and elegance, yet will murmur grievoufly to pay much for it in their churches, and part of their ill humour will fall on the doctrine taught there: that especially if they are tenants, their concern in the place being temporary, and poffibly alfo fhort or uncertain, they will of course endeavour to fhift off the burthen from themfelves : but that landlords have a more fafting interest, and will find their account better in doing things early at their own coft, than in letting them run on, till the coft is much greater : for then, in fome fhape or other, it must come out of their pockets. With these confiderations you will not fail to join others of a higher nature : that facred fabrics are appropriated to the nobleft of uses, the worship of the great God; and to preferve or put them in a condition fuitable to it

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is one very proper method of expressing and cherishing a sense of piety in their own minds, and fpreading it through their families, neighbours and dependants ; whereas, by fuffering his house to be an object of contempt and fcorn, while perhaps they fpare nothing to beautify their own, they will be underftood, and will tempt all around them, to defpife the fervice performed there, and him to whom it is paid : that repairing and embellifhing their churches will employ the poor full as beneficially, as adorning their feats and gardens, and procure them a much better grounded, and more general, efteem. Indeed it is furprifing, that noblemen and gentlemen will squander vast sums in the gratification of private luxury and vanity, for which more condemn than applaud them; and not confider, that much fmaller fums beftowed on public works, efpecially in honour of religion, would gain them the admiration of a whole country; and the peculiar bleffing of many, whom they would thus eafe from burthens : befides that they might fhew their good tafte, if that be the favourite point with them, no lefs in one way than the other. But even Heathen writers have observed long ago, that expenfive perfonal indulgence, and mean fpirited parfimony in what regards the community, are often companions, and always ill fymptoms (d).

But you may prefs the obligation of repairing and ornamenting yet more ftrongly, both on fuch of the nobility and gentry, and on fuch colleges and ecclefiaftical perfons or bodies, as are impropriators : and likewife on the leffees of these latter; because they have a more beneficial interest in the estate, than the lessors. Being possessed of the greater fhare of what was originally given for the fupport of the fervice and the fabric, they are bound at least in confcience, to take care of both, if it be needful: but of one part of the fabric, the chancel, they are indifputably bound by law to take care. And yet too commonly even those amongft them, who fhould be the most attentive to this point, ftrangely neglect it; or throw it on their tenants, who they know will of course neglect it; and concern themfelves no farther. So their chancels are only in fuch fort of repair, as their barns and out-houfes. Now handfome benefactions to put them in a better condition, given from time to time, and especially when good fines are received, would shew piety and generofity at once; would abate the unjust envy and hatred, to which academical and ecclefiaftical owners of effates are liable; and fet an example, which others might probably imitate.

I have already faid, in fpeaking of chancels, that the ornaments of facred places ought not to be light and gaudy, but modeft and grave. Amongft thefe, a very proper one, of the cheaper kind, is, writing on the walls chosen fentences of Scripture. This was done as early as the 4th century (e): but in process of time ceased to be done, at leaft in the vulgar tongue: and being reflored at the reformation, was forbidden, as promoting that cause, by Bishop *Bonner* in Queen Mary's reign (f). It not only diversifies the walls very agreeably and decently, but affords useful matter for meditation to the people, before the fervice begins; and may afford them useful admonition, when their eyes and thoughts

(d) Cic. pro Flacco. Hor. Od. 1, 2, 15. Sat. 1. 2. 2, 103, 104, 105. (c) Bingb. viii. 8, 3. (f) Wilkins, vol. iv. p. 108. are wandring in the course of it. For these reasons, I prefume, the 82d Canon directs, that such fentences be written in convenient places; and likewife, that the ten commandments be fet upon the east end of every church and chapel: to which undoubtedly the creed and Lord's prayer, though not mentioned in the Canon, are very fit companions.

You must also endeavour, that such care may be taken of the furniture of the church, and whatever is used in it, as the Canons and Rubrics and the nature of the thing require: that the furplice be originally of proper linen, and kept clean, and renewed before it becomes contemptible by age: that the Bible and Prayer Books be whole and unfullied, and well bound : that the veffels for the celebration of both the facraments, and the cover of the holy table, but more efpecially the bread and wine placed upon it, be fuitable in all respects to the folemnity : not fuch as may give difguft to the more delicate, and tempt them to abhor, as the Scripture expression is, the offering of the Lord (g). These are, in their kind, points of importance: and fuch as you may for the most part eafily carry. Another thing, worthy of notice, is the condition of your church-yards. I take it for granted, though I am afraid I forgot to name it, that you keep thofe, which belong to yourfelves, neat and decent: not turning in cattle to defile them and trample down the graveftones ; and make confecrated ground fuch, as you would not fuffer courts before your own doors to be; but taking the profits of the herbage in fuch manner, as may rather add beauty to the place. And I hope, where a church-yard belongs to an impropriator, you will do your beft to get the fame refpect paid it; and to whomfoever it belongs, the fences well kept up.

If, in any or all of the particulars, which I have fpecified, your reprefentations will be lefs offenfively introduced, or your attempts be of more weight, for your being able to fay, that I directed you to make them, I do hereby direct you accordingly; and defire you to fay I did. Nor should you be contented with a transient mention of the subject once or twice; but where there is any hope, return it on proper occafions, and try the force of modeft importunity. If, after competent trial, you find no effect, you must urge the church-wardens, to prefent what is amifs, if they will do no more. Indeed fuch things as belong to their own care, they fhould not prefent, but amend : and the Canons require, not the former, but the latter. Only when they have not time for the latter, the former is all they can do: and when they have, it is better than doing nothing. For it gives notice, and furnishes room for admo nitions and injunctions. If there be need, here again you must encourage them to prefent, by engaging to plead their caufe with the parifhioners. You may also fafely promife them, that they shall fuffer no oppreffive or hard treatment, shall not be required to lay out upon any thing more than is fitting, and fhall have reafonable time allowed, even for that. I need not fay, that both to qualify yourfelves for preffing them to prefent, and on many other accounts, you must take effectual care, that nothing belonging to you be prefentable. Else they will have a ready answer for you: and it will be a fad thing to stand in awe and be at the mercy of those, who ought to reverence you. If you cannot prevail

(g) 1 Samaii. 17.

prevail on them otherwife, I apprehend you may join with them; and if you cannot prevail on them at all, I apprehend you may prefent without them, in the cafe of repairs, as well as offences, by virtue of the interpretation, which practice hath put on the abovementioned Canon: though it fpeaks, I own, expressly of nothing befides offences. But in doing either of these things, you must be sure to observe the cautions given under the former head.

Yet after all, I am well aware, that you may often have great difficultics to encounter, poffibly fometimes too great to furmount. And to diminifh them from you, I have endeavoured to procure a parochial vifitation from the Archdeacon, which he hath promifed. But then, for the credit of your parifhioners and your own, let this be an inducement to put things in good order, that he may find them fo: not to leave them in bad order, that he may rectify them.

Another very uleful inftitution, for these and many valuable purposes, was that of rural Deans: which took place here before the conquest. was kept up till the great rebellion, was reftored afterwards in feveral Diocefes, and particularly in this by the admirable Bifhop Fell (b), was found not quite extinct and was completely revived by the late excellent Bishop of Glocester (i), in that county, and is preferved to this day in fome parts of the nation befides. These Deans, being chosen out of the refident parochial Clergy, could infpect, with fmall trouble, the churches and parishes within their feveral narrow diffricts; and being bound to report what they found amifs, could do it with little or no offence. In the latter end of Queen Anne's, and the beginning of the late King's reign, the convocation made fome progrefs towards the re-eftablifhment and better regulation of this office. When that, or any other branch of difcipline, may be the fubject of public confideration again, is very uncertain. I fhould be very glad, with your approbation, to fet it up once more amongft us, in fuch form as might be most beneficial and fatisfactory: but contented at prefent with hinting the matter, I leave and recommend it to your ferious thoughts.

A third particular, of confiderable importance, in which you are jointly concerned with the church-wardens, is the keeping of the regifter book. The 70th Canon directs, that it be of parchment : and though an act of Parliament, lately paffed, allows marriages to be regiftred in a paper book; yet parchment is far more durable: nor is the difference of expence worth regarding, as it returns fo feldom. This book should be strongly bound, and not over large; lest it should be worn and damaged, before it is filled. For the fafe prefervation of it, and doubtlefs of all preceding books of the fame kind, the Canon orders; that a cheft be provided with three locks and keys; one for you, one for each of the church-wardens, who are ordinarily two; and that on Sundays, if there hath been any chriftening, marriage or burial, in the week before, it shall be entred there. I am afraid it is feldom thus kept: and yet there would be no great trouble in it, after a little ufe. Of where that is otherwife, either the minister or a church-warden should keep it : and each of them should see from time to time, how it is kept. The

(b) Kennet. Paroch. Ant. p. 653.

(i) Bishop Benson.

### fifth Charge to his Clergy.

The entries, if they cannot well be made every Sunday, fhould be made very frequently, and in the mean time the minister, if he hath not the book, fhould take memorandums. He is the perfon directed to write in it, and ufually much the fitteft. But if, through any accident, that happens not to be fo, he fhould appoint a proper perfon, and fuperintend him. The names and furnames of the parents ought to be added, in registring not only baptisms, where it is enjoined, but marriages and burials too, as far as may be : for it may prevent doubts and difputes. It will also be very useful, to put down the day of the birth and death of each perfon, as well as of the baptifin and burial. The late act abovementioned hath directed farther, that every page of the register of marriages be numbered, to discover if any leaf be afterwards cut out; and ruled with lines at equal diffances, to difcover if any article be afterwards put in. And you will do very well to observe the fame precautions in registring baptisms and burials. When a page is filled, the Canon requires the minister and church-wardens to subscribe their names ; which they fhould do just below the last line. And if this be not done immediately, it may without any inconvenience be done foon after : and was done by me and the church-wardens, for many years, in one of the most populous parifhes of the kingdom. Laftly the Canon requires, that an attefted copy of this book be annually transmitted to the Bishop's regiftry, received without fee, and faithfully preferved there : and it authorizes me to proceed against those, who are negligent about any of its directions. I must therefore both intreat and infist, that you inquire in what condition your old and your prefent register books are, and get them kept for the future as they ought. I have more than once been put under great difficulties in ordinations, for want of exactnefs in the register of baptisms. That of marriages is of fo great concern, that altering it defignedly to establish or void a marriage, is by the act abovementioned made felony. In all cafes the book, faithfully kept, is good evidence: and falfifying it is punishable at common law. I would only observe farther on this head, that in the preamble of a bill, which paffed the Houfe of Commons this laft feffion, and had a fecond reading in the House of Lords, it was afferted as notorious, that " great inconvenien-" ces have arisen from the prefent defective manner, in which parochial " registers are formed ; and the loofe and uncertain method, in which " they are kept and preferved ; whereby the evidence of defcents is fre-" quently loft and rendered precarious." So far as this may be fact, it will be most for our honour to amend it, without the interposition of the legiflature.

A fourth point, of which I hope you will think yourfelves bound, if not by law, yet in conficience, to take a joint care with the church-wardens, is that of parochial charities. The minifter is the reprefentative of the church, intrufted with its interefts; and you ought to endeavour, that fuch benefactions be first preferved, and then applied in a proper manner.

If it be doubtful, whether fuch or fuch a donation hath been given to your church or poor, or the fupport of a fchool in your parifh, you will make proper inquiry concerning the matter. If it be given by any writing, you will procure that writing, or an attefted copy of it, to be laid

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up fafely, either in the parifh cheft, or the Bifhop's registry; indeed a copy in each place would be beft ; and an account of the gift fhould be inferted in your parish book. For if deeds are left in private hands. and efpecially without authentic notice where they are left, they are fometimes defignedly suppressed; and often undefignedly deftroyed or loft. through the ignorance or careleffnels of the perfons poffelled of them. It will also be very proper, to have a table, mentioning the charity, hung up in your church ; that a grateful remembrance of the benefactors may be continued to pofterity, and others incited to follow their good example : as a paper of directions drawn up by the lower houfe of convocation in 1710, hath well expressed it (k). If the benefaction be an eftate vefted in truftees, it will be very material to get the truft renewed in due time; elfe in all likelihood there will be expence, if not danger; and to truffees of as good credit and ability, as poffible. They muft likewife be warned, never to let out fuch lands on long leafes, or at very low rents, in favour of any body : but to raife the rents when they can; at leaft to vary them, which will make it eafy to raife them, when there is opportunity : otherwife it will foon be pretended, that they have no right to raife them; of which there are fome unhappy inftances in this Diocefe. If the gift be in money, you must press to have it placed in the public funds, in cafe it be confiderable enough; or elfe in the beft private hands, and on the beft fecurity that can be obtained; paying no regard in fuch cafes to perfonal friendfhips; and being particularly careful, that parish officers do not keep it in their own custody. If they do, the interest will usually be paid out of the public money, and most probably the principal will be loft in a few years.

But charities are preferved in vain, unlefs they are well applied : and they are often fadly mifapplied. Gifts to the church, where it is not otherwife expressed, must be supposed intended for beautifying the church : else it will be never the better for fuch gifts : for it will be equally repaired without them : the parifhioners are bound to that : and the chief of the burthen ufually falls upon the richeft, for whole relief charities were certainly not intended. And yet fuch benefactions are too commonly employed, not only in mere repairs, but in what hath no connection with the fabric ; in providing bread and wine for the communion, in paying church-wardens bills for all forts of things, it may be for extravagant and riotous entertainments amongft the reft, in eafing the poors rates, in I know not what; and the church all the time, inflead of being any way improved, fuffered to grow dirty and even ruinous. A lamentable abuse of this kind, (where a steeple fell down, and was in part rebuilt by contribution, while an effate, more than fufficient to have kept the whole building in good order and beauty, was perverted to other uses) I have taken much pains to rectify, but fear it is not throughly rectified yet. Again, gifts to the poor were certainly intended for the benefit of the poor; to make provision for such of them, as are not on the parifh lift, or a better provision for fuch as are. And yet they are fometimes embezzled and fquandered, in a great measure, if not wholly; fometimes beftowed to ferve private or party purpofes: and very frequently funk into the legal rate; fo the wealthy are benefited; and the

(k) See Wilkins, vol. iv. p. 638.

the needy have not a farthing more, than if nothing had been given for them.

I know it is not always eafy, perhaps not always poffible for you, to remedy these ill practices. But a great part of the blame will be laid on you, right or wrong, unless you try to remedy them. And it may prove lefs difficult than you imagine. Church-wardens and overfeers perhaps are ignorant, or going on thoughtlefsly, and would be thankful to you for good advice : or however would be ruled by it, on your reprefenting to them the heinoufnefs of robbing God or the poor; and the honour it will do them, and the confolation it will afford them, to have put things into a right channel. Or supposing them backward to comply, you may be able to get confiderable perfons in the parifh or neighbourhood to fecond you. At least you will get the reputation of a most laudable zeal, and if you conduct that zeal aright, of difcretion alfo: and these together may produce unexpected fuccefs; efpecially where the abufe is not yet become inveterate. But if nothing elfe will do, and the cafe be plain, and the object of fufficient importance : recourfe fhould be had to the authority of the law; and you fhould be willing to bear a pro. portion of the charges, if it be requilite and you are able; only taking the ftricteft care to proceed with mildnefs and fairnefs.

I have now finished the course of directions to you, which I began 15 years ago. And as I can truly fay, that in this and every part of my behaviour as your Bishop, I have, through the Divine affistance, diligently laboured, to do my duty with uprightness, and promote your good and that of your parishioners, prefent and future; so I hope you will accept my endeavours with candour, and ftudy to profit by them; excusing my failings, which I know have been many, and will now be too likely to increase. I am advancing apace into the decline of age. Three of my brethren (l), my oldeft and best friends, have gone before me in lefs than twelve months. I must expect to follow them foon. Whether I may live, or, if I live, whether I may be able, to meet you thus again, God only can forese. May he grant us to meet in a better world.

But before I conclude, permit me to fubjoin, to these general admonitions, a few words concerning two particular occurrences.

In the first place I return you my hearty thanks for the pains, which you have taken in behalf of the Society for propagating the Gospel. The collection hath upon the whole been made very fuccessfully throughout the kingdom; and amounts to almost 19000l. if not more : whereas ten years ago it fell short of 15000l. But I believe the contribution of this county hath been in proportion the largeft of any. The last time it was barely 300l.; nor was that to be accounted small; and now it is very near 500l. : I mean in both cases exclusive of the University : which diffinguished itself very honourably then, and I doubt not, will at prefent. May God increase, and bles, and reward the zeal of all his fervants every where for supporting, and enlarging the kingdom of his Son, and making the confession of his Name effectual to the falvation of mankind.

The other fubject, on which I would fpeak to you, is the contest about reprefentatives

(1) Bishops Butler, Benson, and Berkeley.

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representatives for this county in the next Parliament. Let no one be alarmed. I need not, and I do not mean, to give you at a meeting of this nature, my opinion which of the candidates you ought to prefer : of that I fay no more here than that you ought to regard, in the first place, the infeparable interest of the excellent church we are members of, and, its only human fupport, the just and gracious government we live under; then other fubordinate confiderations. My purpofe is merely to exhort you, (and I befeech you, brethren, fuffer the word of exbortation) (m) that on this occasion, your conversation be such, as becometh the Gofpel of Chrift : in doing which, I have neither one party, nor one perfon amongst you, more in my view than another : but, if I may use the Apostle's words, an jealous with a godly jealoufy over you all (n). I I cannot indeed fuppole, that any of you would be guilty of the groffer faults too common at fuch times, or any wilful wrong behaviour. But in the midft of fo many clashings, provocations, and disappointments, as will happen, fo many miftakes and mifreprefentations as arife one knows not how; the incitements to uncharitable and contemptuous thoughts, to unadvised and injurious words, in anger or in mirth, nay to unkind and hard and even unjust actions, are very great, and the best of us all fhould be continually fuggefting to our minds proper cautions for avoiding these dangers. Else we shall fall into fin against God and our neighbour : we fhall lofe the efteem of part of those whose improvement by us depends on their effecting us; and fet a bad inftead of a good example to the reft. Let every one of us therefore be very watchful over our conduct: or if we have not been fo, let us amend it: and if we find preferving our innocence difficult, let us meddle the lefs with these matters : for indeed being over bufy about them is not very fuitable to our function. But while we are ftrict with ourfelves, let us be very mild in regard to others, whom we think to have done amifs : we may blame them without cause; or if we do not, it is easy to err; and we, amongft others, are fadly liable to faults. But let us be efpecially mild towards our own brethren. For why fhould we diminish our little remaining ftrength by inteffine diffentions, and teach yet more perfons to think ill or meanly of us, than do already ? Surely the common caufe of religion and virtue, which we are jointly intrufted to fupport, fhould have infinitely greater force to unite us, than any thing elfe to divide

Next to yourfelves, you will ftudy to preferve as many of your parithioners as pollible, from the fins that fo eafily befet them at the featons of epidemical unreatonablenefs and licentioufnets. Those, who are of your own fide, you may counfel and reprove more freely. With the reft you mult be extremely calm and patient: take the molt favourable opportunities, and use the most perfuasive methods of fpeaking: but in tome way or other, private or public, all, who need it, fhould be told, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear, that the great Chriftian laws of dutifulnefs to fuperiors, mutual good-will, forbearance, forgivenefs, equity, veracity, moderation, fobriety, lose not the least of their obligation during the continuance of these difputes: that all virtues are to be chiefly exercised, when they are chiefly tried: and that therefore now

(m) Heb. xiii. 22.

(n) 2 Cor. xi. 2.

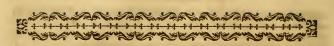
### fifth Charge to his Clergy.

now more particularly, you, as the Apoftle directs, mult put them in mind, and they muft keep in mind, to be fubject to principalities and powers, to obey magifrates, to be ready to every good work, to fpeak evil of no man, to be no brawlers but gentle, fbewing all mecknefs unto all men (o). I end this long difcourfe in the words of the fame Apoftle : Finally, brethren, whatfoever things are true, whatfoever things are venerable, (for fo the word is rightly translated in the margin) whatfoever things are juft, whatfoever things are pure, whatfoever things are lovely, whatfoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praife, think of and do thefe things : and the God of peace fhall be with you (p).

(0) Tit. iii. 1, 2.

(p) Phil. iv. 8, 9.

A CHARGE



# C H A R G E

A

#### DELIVERED TO THE

### CLERGY of the DIOCESE

OF

# CANTERBURY,

### In the YEAR 1758.

### \$\createrestances

### Reverend Brethren,

H E Difpofer of all things having permitted his Majefty, by the T advice of his faithful fervants, to nominate me for your Bifhop: though I faw many reafons to dread this promotion, arifing from the difficulties of the office and of the times, from the great qualities of my predeceffors, and my own increafing weakneffes; yet I thought myfelf bound to obey his commands, and with the fame gratitude for his favourable opinion, as if I had wifhed to receive them: determining, through God's grace, to perform the duties of my flation as well as I could; and hoping for the candor, the affiftance and the prayers of good people. To make fome amends by diligence for my deficiences in other refpects,

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respects, I refolved immediately to visit my Diocese : for which purpose we are here affembled.

These meetings were defigned, partly to give the Clergy opportunities of conferring with each other, and confulting their fuperiors, on matters relating to their profession; and I am very defirous, that you fhould render them as beneficial in this way, as poffible: but principally, to give Bishops opportunities of exhorting and cautioning their Clergy, either on fuch general fubjects as are always ufeful, or on fuch particular occasions as the circumstances of things, or the inquiries, made at or against these times, point out; and of interposing their authority, if there be need; which, amongst you, I am persuaded, there will not. To provide more fully for your instruction, I have ordered a Charge to be fent you, which I delivered to the Clergy of Oxford/hire, and printed at their requeft, about twenty years ago. Would God it were become unfeafonable now. But, as unhappily it is not, I earneftly recommend the contents of it to your most ferious thoughts : and would have you look on what I shall at prefent fay further, as supplemental to it.

Counfels and admonitions to parochial ministers pre-fuppose their refidence. The founders of parifhes provided them with glebes, and built houses for them, purposely that they might refide. The laws of the church have from the beginning, and do still require, as indeed common equity doth, that this valuable confideration, for which thefe endowments were given, fhould be faithfully paid. And going over and performing the fervice from time to time, or engaging fome other clergyman to take care of it, or of the occafional part of it, feldom anfwers the original intention. Your people will not fo readily, and cannot fo conveniently apply to the minister of another parish : and when they do, his affiftance, for the most part, will be less early, or less constant, than it fhould : though doubtlefs they, who have undertaken to fupply their neighbours absence, ought to do it very conscientiously. But besides, even the Sunday-duty, when the incumbent unneceffarily comes from a diftant place to do it, will be confidered as accompanied with fomething like a breach of the Sunday, will not always be kept to the flated hours, will often be hurried over indecently : the catechifm will either not be taught or not expounded, if the diftance be at all confiderable; nor probably will the fermon be well adapted to the audience. For it is only living amongft your people, and knowing them throughly, that can fhew you, what is level to their capacities, and fuited to their circumstances; what will reform their faults, and improve their hearts in true goodnefs. Yet this is your business with them: and unless you perform it, every thing elfe is nothing. Further, fuch as want your help moft may not come to your fermons, or may not apply them to their own cafe, or may need to have them enforced by confiderations peculiar to themfelves, and unfit to be fpecified in public. Speaking to them feparately, and agreeably to their feveral states of mind and life, may have unforeseen influence. And being always at hand, to awe the diforderly and countenance the well-behaved, to advise and comfort the diseased and afflicted, to relieve or procure relief for the neceffitous, to compose little differences and discourage wrong customs in the beginning, to promote friendly offices. offices, and keep up an edifying and entertaining conversation in a neighbourhood, must add incredible weight to public infruction.

Indeed your congregations expect these things from you, and have a right to expect them. The nature of your office requires them : you have all at your ordination expressly promifed to use both public and private monitions and exhortations, both to the fick and whole within your cures, as need shall require and occasion be given, the Lord being your helper. Now we cannot use them duly, without being refident. But further still, fince their ordination, all vicars have fworn particularly to be refident unlefs they are difpenfed with, which means by lawful authority: nor doth any difpensation of a Bishop last beyond his own time; or beyond the term, for which he gave it; or, if that were indefinite, beyond his pleafure : points, which vicars ought to confider much more ferioufly, than they often do. And every rector hath fworn in general, to obey his Bishop in all things lawful and honest. Now furely refidence is lawful and honeft: and what is punishable by a Bishop may, if done without his leave, be well interpreted difobedience to him : and the non-refidence of rectors is punishable just in the fame manner with that of vicars.

It must not therefore be pleaded, that however necessary the refidence of fome minister may be, that of a curate may fuffice. For your engagement is, not merely that the feveral duties of your parish shall be done, but that you perfonally will do them : and if it were enough to fubftitute another to do them, a layman would be, in point of reafon and confcience, as capable of holding a benefice, as a man in holy orders. Befides, a curate will ufually have lefs knowledge and lefs experience, than the incumbent : and he and the parifhioners will conceive, that they are lefs related to each other. He will confider himfelf, as being with them only for an uncertain, and he may hope, a fhort time; which will tempt him to neglect them. And they will confider him, as not the perfon, who hath authority over them; which will tempt them to difregard him : efpecially as the largeft falary, that can be legally appointed, or generally afforded to a curate, will not enable him to recommend himfelf to them by doing good amongst them in any expensive way: whilft yet the people will think, and juftly too, that the whole income of the benefice was intended to procure them a minister, to do them as much good in every way, as could reafonably be expected from it.

There are indeed cafes, in which the law difpenfes with holding two livings, and by confequence allows abfence from one. But perfons ought to confider well; fuppofing they can with innocence take the beneft of that law; whether they can do it on other terms, than their difpenfation and their bond exprefles, of preaching yearly 13 fermons, and keeping two months hofpitality, in the parifh, where they refide leaft. For the leave given them on thefe conditions, is not intended to be given them, however legally valid, if the conditions are neglected: always excepting where juft impediments happen. There are likewife cafes, in which the non-refidence of perfons, who have only one living, is permitted by law. But fome of thefe alfo are put under limitations, beyond which the permificient dot not reach.

Further ftill, I am fenfible, that confiderations of health and ftrength, and particular circumftances of incumbents or their families, require leave

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leave of absence to be sometimes allowed, where the law makes no allowance. But then it should never be taken for any confiderable time, without being afked : nor fhould it be afked without good caufe. And mere fancy, or defire of living more at eafe, or in a cheerfuller, and, it may be, less clerical manner, is by no means a sufficient cause. Nor indeed is the allegation of health to be urged too far, or to be too much regarded. For places, called unwholefome, prove upon trial very wholefome to many perfons : and those, which are least fo, must have fome ministers in or near them; and whom rather, generally speaking, than fuch as enjoy the whole profits ? Much lefs is indulgence to be granted for every prefent convenience, or profpect of temporal advantage : which if clergymen appear to have greatly at heart, and the care of their parifhes but little, indeed it looks very ill.

Another plea may be offered by fome, that though they live not on their own cures, they ferve others. And it is not always an infufficient one. But, with very few exceptions, the most natural and most useful method by far is, that each take the overfight of the parifh, which properly belongs to him : and abfenting himfelf from that, for a little more income, a little more agrecableness, or any flight reason, is unbecoming and unwarrantable behaviour.

At the fame time I acknowledge, that the poornels of fome benefices makes the refidence of a diffinct minister upon each of them impracticable : and therefore they must be ferved from an adjoining parish, or a greater diftance; and no more duty expected, than there is a competent provision for. But then I fear, indeed I have found, than in some benefices, not fo poor, one minister supplies two churches on a Sunday ; contrary to a repeated injunction of fucceffive Archbishops to their fuffragans, which they certainly defigned to obferve themfelves; and the words of which are thele; that you do not allow any minister to serve more than one church or chapel in one day, except that chapel be a member of the parifb church ; or united thereunto ; and unlefs the faid church or chapel be not able to maintain a curate. The confequence of difregarding this injunction is, not only the very bad one, that the fervice is performed in irreverent hafte, but that catechifing is neglected in both places, if not altogether, yet in a great degree. Nay, perhaps for great part of the year, if not the whole, each of them hath prayers but once. Where indeed it can be truly alledged in this last cafe, that the inhabitants of each parifh not only with convenience may, but actually do, attend at both churches, the plea must be allowed its weight. But, as to other excufes: if the number of the people be finall, the fervice is not lefs enjoined, and is more eafily performed : if they had rather have a fermon at another church, than merely prayers at their own ; they ought to have more than prayers; an exposition of the catechifm, which they will account equivalent to a fermon : or you may reduce it with cafe into the form of a fermon; and then many of them will come to their own church, who now go to no other, but profane the reit of the day : if they are content with part of the Sunday fervice, which however may be faid or believed without fufficient ground, yet probably they would be glad of the whole. But fuppoling them to be indifferent about it, or even averle from it, their minister is bound to thew them, that they ought

ought not. And how long foever this hath been the practice; if it ought not to have been fo at all, the longer the worfe. My pious and learned predeceffor, Archbifhop *Potter*, lamented heavily to me the irregularities of this kind, which he found in this Diocefe: and if any remain, I muft, after his example, endeavour to have them rectified.

I hope they will be rectified by the beft method, beyond comparison ; your own ferious reflections on what you owe to your flocks, and what you owe to the great Shepherd of fouls. Though you are ever fo expressly permitted by human laws to be absent from your cures, or by your ordinary to ferve them, or let them be ferved, by halves; you are answerable to an infinitely higher tribunal for what God, and not man alone, hath made your duty. Therefore, if you regard the peace of your own fouls and your final comfort, you will never do any of thefe things, unlefs very ftrong reafons oblige you to it : and you will never be glad of fuch reafons, but heartily forry. You will give your parifhes both morning and evening prayer, wherever it is poffible : and you will fupply them in perfon, unlefs particular circumftances render it impracticable, or unlefs, by living at a diftance for the prefent, you are more ufeful to religion fome other way, and peculiarly qualified for that ufefulnefs. Far from catching at weak pretences, you will be rather diffident about ftrong inducements; and much readier to follow the directions, than folicit the indulgence of your fuperiors. But if any do chufe the worfe part, they must remember, that we Bishops are bound to oppole, instead of confulting their inclinations, from concern for them, as well as their parishioners. And therefore you will not furely think it real good-nature to connive at liberties of this kind prefumptuoufly taken without leave, or to grant requests made for them, as matters of course: nor impute it to a fondnefs of exercifing power, when compliance with the rules of the church is required : nor yet haftily condemn it, as partial behaviour, if an indulgence, denied to one, is granted to another : for there may be, in the cafes of different perfons, confiderable disparities, unknown to you, or unobserved by you.

· But when it is ever fo clear, that the non-refidence of ministers ought to be allowed, it is at least equally clear, that they should use their best endeavours to make their people amends for it. One thing, proper to be done for this end, is relieving their poor : which as they could not with decency avoid doing, according to their ability, if they lived amongst them, they ought to do more largely, if they live elfewhere. For no reproach will lie heavier on our order, than that of reaping all, and fowing nothing : whereas, they who give alms in their abfence, will be in effect always prefent to one valuable purpofe : will be readily prefumed to be well-wifhers to their parifhes in every way; whilft they are benefactors to them in this way: and by fuch a fpecimen of the influence of religion upon themfelves, will remind their congregations, very acceptably, of the influence, which it ought to have upon them ; efpecially if they make their charity more directly fubfervient to religion, by affording diffinguished encouragement to pious and virtuous persons, and those who appear likely to be made fuch ; by procuring children to be inftructed in their Christian duty, and other proper knowledge; by distributing useful books amongst the needy and ignorant. What is thus beflowed, flowed, is of all the fervice it can be : whereas injudicious bounty may even produce harm.

Another thing, incumbent on fuch as cannot refide conftantly, is to infpect however the flate of their parifhes as frequently as they can: fpending days, or weeks, or longer feafons there occafionally; and in proportion as their time is florter, ufing more diligence in public and private inftructions and warnings. For they are peculiarly bound to do what they are able, who are not able to do what elfe they ought. But if even this be out of their power, they may at leaft be affiduous in getting informations from perfons of underflanding and ferioufnefs, in or near their cures, with what regularity, with what fpirit and zeal, each part of the parochial duty is performed; whether true inward piety makes any progrefs; whether any and what abufes and neglects are crept in. And he, who reckons it enough, that, for ought he knows to the contrary, his parifhioners go on like their neighbours, hath by no means the requifite concern for their fouls, or his own.

But whenever absence is necessary, or the largeness of a parish, or the infirmity of a minister, hinders him from taking the whole care of it perfonally, the principal point is, the choice of a fit fubflitute, to be employed in his flead, or fhare his burthen : for no fuperintendency will make an unfit one answer the end. And therefore I charge it upon your confciences, not to fuffer cheapnels, recommendation of friends, affection to this or that perfon or place of education, in fhort any inducement whatever, to weigh near fo much with you, as the benefit of your people, in chufing perfons to ferve your churches. For on you the choice of them lies in the first place : but not on you alone. The laws of the church require, particularly Can. 48, that no curate or minister be permitted to ferve in any place, without examination and admiffion of the ordinary: in confequence of which, one of the before-mentioned archiepifcopal directions to the fuffragans of the province, is this: That you make diligent inquiry concerning curates in your Diocefe : and proceed to ecclefiaftical cenfures against those, who shall prefume to ferve cures, without being first duly licenfed thereunto; as also against all incumbents, who shall receive and employ them without obtaining fuch licence. Yet I would avoid rigour in all cafes. The expence of a licence, by means of the ftamps, may to fome be rather inconvenient, and greater than the government perhaps intended: at least, if they are likely to remove, and fo repeat that expence, in a fhort time. And fuch curates I would excufe : only defiring them to confider, what fecurity of continuing in their flation, and receiving their falary, a licence brings them. But then you cannot think it right, that I fhould be left in ignorance, who ferves a church under my care, till I learn it by accident, or private inquiry, perhaps many months after; through which omiffion, men of bad characters, men not in orders, may intrude ; as there hath lately been a flagrant inftance in this Diocefe. Ł am far from looking on the past failures of giving notice, as defigned negligence of your flocks, or difrespect to your superiors. But I shall have cause both to think of them and treat them as such, if continued after the warning, which I now give, that no one is to officiate flatedly, or employ another to officiate fo, within my jurifdiction, unlefs he first obtain my confent; or what in effect will be mine, that of your very worthy worthy and vigilant Archdeacon. Think not, I beg you, that this is taking more on myfelf, than my predeceffors did. Their own directions prove, that they would have done the fame thing, if they had feen the fame neceffity. Far be it from me to lord it over God's heritage (a): but I am bound to keep that which is committed to my truft (b).

When you want curates, I recommend it to you, first to inquire after perfons of merit, already ordained, and if possible ordained priefts, taking care to fee their orders, as well as to examine into their characters, before you think of granting nominations to others. The number of clergymen inded is rather deficient, than fuperfluous. But fill one would not add to it by overlooking undefervedly those who are of it already. And particularly where help is wanted only for a fhort time, I shall infift on this point: nor will, without abfolute necessfity, ordain any one upon fuch a title. And if fraudulent titles are brought merely to procure orders, as I hope I shall discover them foon enough to difallow them, fo I shall be fure to remark and remember, who hath attempted to impose upon me by them.

The next thing to be confidered in relation to curates is, their teftimonials. And here the Canon and directions already quoted enjoin, that no Bilhop admit fuch as remove out of another Diocele to ferve in bis, without the teitimony in writing of the Bilhop of that Diocele, or ordinary of the peculiar jurifdiction, from whence they come, of their good life, ability, and conformity to the ecclefiaftical laws of the church of England. For the clergymen of one Diocele, or jurifdiction, at leaft their hand-writing, being ufually unknown to the Bilhop of another, he can feldom, of himfelf, be fure, either that he hath their genuine teftimony, or how far he may truft it. Therefore it is fit, that he fhould defire the atteftation of their proper fuperior. And even to this it will be prudent to add fuch further information, as can be got: confidering how very carelefsly teftimonials are fometimes granted, even by reputable perfons.

But let me intreat you never to be guilty of fuch carelefsnefs yourfelves, for whatever purpose one is asked of you. Both the nature of the thing. and the directions repeatedly mentioned, require, that no Bifhop accept any letters testimonial, unless it be declared by those who shall sign them, that they have perfonally known, not only the man, but his life and conversation, for the time by them certified; and do believe in their confcience, that he is qualified for that order, office or employment, which he defires. Now teftimonials, concerning fuch things as thefe, cannot be matter of mere form, unless our whole profession be a very empty form. We, the Bishops to whom they are given, do not, and must not, understand them to be fo: it would be abfurd to demand them if we did. Some cuftoms indeed may grow to be things of courfe : the reafons for them ceafing, or not being thought of moment; and yet the law for them continuing. But the reasons for testimonials can never cease, or be thought of small moment. They are the only ordinary information that we have, in a cafe of the utmost importance, in which we have a right to be informed. For no one can imagine, that we are to ordain and employ whoever comes, or depend on clandeftine intelligence. We must therefore and do depend on regular testimonials. And if they be untrue, we are most injurioufly

(a) 1 Pet. v. 3.

(b) 1 Tim. vi. 20.

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injurioufly deceived by them: and all the mifchiefs, that follow from thence, will fit heavy one day on the deceivers. But, even exclusively of this great confideration, would you be chargeable with declaring a deliberate falfehood under your hand? Would you have unworthy men fill ecclefiaftical flations, and exclude their betters ? Would you have your Bishop reproached, and your order vilified, through your fault? If not, remember, how utterly inconfistent with all concern for religion, with all veracity, probity and prudence it is, to fign testimonials at random; how lamentable a fort of clergy it will produce; how dreadful an encouragement to wickedness and profaneness it will prove. Remember alfo, that you express in these instruments, not what you charitably hope a perfon will be; but what you actually know he hath been: not what others tell you at the end of the time, for which you vouch; but what you have feen and heard through the courfe of it: fo that, if for a confiderable part of the three years, commonly specified, you have seen and heard nothing of him, for that part you can certify nothing about him. And remember laftly, that though the affirmation of a perfon's having lived pioufly, foberly and honeftly, comprehends a great deal, yet the concluding article, your belief of his fitnels for what he defires, implies a great deal more. For let him be ever fo good and even learned a man. he cannot be fit for a clergyman, and the care of a parish, without competent gravity and difcretion, and a voice and a manner fuitable to a public affembly : of all which things they, that have had fome familiarity with him, are ufually the beft, if not the only judges. This part of the teftimonial therefore is highly neceffary : and every part of it muft be well confidered, before it is given; and no regard paid to neighbourhood, acquaintance, friendship, compassion, importunity, when they ftand in competition with truth.

It may fometimes be hard for you to refuse your hand to improper per-But it is only one of the many hardfhips, which confcience bids fons. men undergo refolutely, when they are called to them. It would be much harder, that your Bishop should be misled, the church of God injured, and the poor wretch himfelf affifted to invade facrilegioufly an office, at the thought of which he hath caufe to tremble. And if you fear he will be revenged on you for not yielding to him, this furnishes an additional reason for denying him : for will you, or can you, fay of fuch a one, that he is qualified to be a minister of the Gospel any where? But if the perfons, to whom candidates apply, would only make it a rule to meet, and act jointly on the occasion, and keep fecret the particulars of what paffed, it might be unknown, from whom the denial proceeded. Or fuppole it known, the refentment of fuch, as deferve to be refufed. will feldom do a worthy man much hurt : and a number of fuch refufals will do the public unfpeakable good. Indeed the expectation of a refufal's following upon wrong behaviour will in a great degree prevent fuch behaviour, and turn this whole difficulty into a pleafure. But what is unavoidable with innocence, must be virtuously born: and instead of fubmitting to recommend unfit perfons, you ought, if others recommend them, which God forbid, to interpole immediate cautions against the danger, in all flagrant cafes. Still not every paft fault, nor every prefent infirmity, fhould be alledged, or allowed, as an impediment. But into into an office, the most important of all others, none should be admitted, who are void of the proper spirit, or a competent share of the needful qualifications for it: and the lefs, because, though we can refuse to ordain them, we often cannot keep them back from very unfuitable stations, when once they are ordained.

After prefenting the title and teftimonials, whether for orders, a curacy, or a living, follows the examination. For though the testimonial expresses an opinion, that the person is qualified; which may be very ufeful, to reftrain fuch from applying, as are notorioufly unqualified ; yet we Bishops must not, especially in the case of orders, rest on a mere opinion; but affure ourfelves by a closer trial, whether he hath fufficient knowledge of religion and the holy Scriptures to teach them in public, and apply them in private, and defend them against opposers: the two first of which are absolutely necessary; the third, highly requisite. As therefore, on the one hand, I hope I never have been or shall be over ftrict in this respect, and rejecting candidates will give me almost, if not quite, as much concern, as it can give them : fo on the other, I must adhere to my duty; against all folicitations of friends, and all intreaties. of the parties concerned, who little think what they do, when they prefs into fuch an employment prematurely. I fhew my regard to you, when I exclude unqualified perfons out of your number: and I fhall never doubt your candid interpretation of my conduct; nor indeed your zeal to vindicate it, when you are acquainted with my reafons, which any of you fhall, who hath caufe to alk them. But that no injuffice may be done to those whom I postpone, any more than to myself : I befeech you to confider, and, if needful, to fay in their behalf, that though deficient in knowledge, they may have a goodnefs of heart, more valuable than the higheft knowledge : though not qualified yet, they may be, foon ; may already have made a good progrefs, though not a fufficient one; may indeed have more learning on the whole, than many who are admitted, only not have applied themfelves enough to theological learning.

Examination muft occafionally be repeated after perfons have been ordained. The 30th Canon requires it before inflitution to benefices: therefore furely it is advifable alfo before admiffion to curacies. A man, who was fit to be ordained, may yet have become fince, through negligence, or bodily indifpofition affecting his mind, unfit to be employed: or he may be capable ftill of what he was ordained for, but not of what he applies for: or his ordainer, though ever fo duly careful, may fometimes have miftaken, or been mifinformed: and if he hath chanced to be too indulgent, the bad effects of his indulgence ought to be prevented. Accordingly re-examination is common. My brethren the Bifhops, I am fure, will not blame me for ufing it : and I truft, you my brethren

When a curate nominated hath been examined and approved, the next ftep is, to appoint him a falary. And here I am very fenfible, that what is far from a comfortable maintenance for life, may however be a tolerable competency at firft : and likewife, that fome benefices are fo mean, and fome incumbents in fuch low circumftances, or burthened with fo numerous families, that they muft be excufed, if they endeavour to get help

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help on as eafy terms, as they well can. But if any minifter, who hath either a a large preferment, or two moderate ones, or a plentiful temporal income, tries to make a hard bargain with his brother, whom he employs; and is more folicitous to give the fmalleft falary pofible, than to find the worthieft perfon; it is matter of fevere and juft reproach : the friends of the Clergy will be fcandalized at it; their enemies will take dreadful advantages of it; indeed the people in general, if we think a triffe enough for him that doth the work, will be apt to conceive it very needlefs, that he, who doth little or nothing, fhould have a great deal more. For this reafon therefore, amongft incomparably weightier ones, it concerns you much, both to labour diligently, and to allow liberally. Accordingly I hope I thall never have the difagreeable office thrown upon me of augmenting what is propofed, but the fatisfaction given me of confirming and applauding it."

But befides making a reafonable allowance, the minifter of a parifh ought to provide, with the kindeft attention in all refpects, for the convenience and accommodation, the credit and influence, of his curate : who is bound in return to confult faithfully the minifter's honour and intereft in every thing ; but above all, to be unwearied in that beft proof of his gratitude, a conficientious care of the fouls committed to him ; not proportioning his diligence to the poor recompence paid him here, but to the unfpeakable happinefs referved for good fhepherds hereafter.

Indeed whether the principal or his reprefentative, or both refide, their industry and fervency and prudence will be the measure of their people's benefit, and their own final acceptance. If you content yourfelves with a languid formal recital of flated offices, and by indolence, or amufements, or bufinefs, or even fludies, are loft to your parifhioners, while you are in the midft of them, or by indifcretions in conversation, drefs or demeanour, become difliked or despifed by them, you may, in respect of any fpiritual usefulness to them or yourfelves, be, almost as well, perhaps better, ever fo far off. But this is no excuse for being absent, but only a reafon for being prefent to good purpose. And as the non-refidence of fome, the unactive refidence of others, and the offenfive conduct of a third fort, (which caufe great forrow, but moderate complaints amongst wife and good people,) are favourite topics of invective against us, not only in the mouths of irreligious perfons, but of a new fect pretending to the strictest piety; though we are bound always, we are peculiarly bound at prefent, to behave in fo exemplary a manner, as will cut off occasion from them which defire occasion to glory (c) of themselves, and speak evil of us. It is not rendring to them railing for railing (d); it is not ridiculing them, especially in terms bordering on profanenes, or affecting more gravely to hold them in contempt ; it is not doing them the honour of mifcalling other perfons of more than ordinary ferioufnefs by their name, that will prevent the continuance or the increase of the harm, which they are doing. The only way is, for the Clergy to imitate and emulate what is good in them, avoiding what is bad : to attend their cures, edify their parishioners with awakening, but rational and scriptural, discourses, converse much with them, as watchmen for their

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(c) 2 Cor. xi. 12.

(d) 1 Pet. 111. 9.

### The Archbishop of Canterbury's

fools (c), be fober; grave, temperate, and focus themfelves in all things patterns of good works (f). If the people fee, or but imagine, their minifter unwilling to take more pains about them, or preferve more guard upon himfelf than for fhame he muft, no wonder if it alienates them poweifully both from him and his doctrine: whereas when they perceive him careful to inftruct them, and go before them, in whatever is their duty to do, they will hearken to him with great regard, when he cautions them againft overdoing; and be unlikely to feek for imaginary improvements abroad from irregularities and extravagances, whilft they experience themfelves really improved at home in an orderly eftablished method.

But then, to improve them effectually to their future happines, as well as to filence falfe accufers, you must be affiduous in teaching the principles, not only of virtue and natural religion, but of the Gofpel: and of the Gofpel, not as almost explained away by modern refiners, but as the truth is in Jefus (g); as it is taught by the church, of which you are members; as you have engaged, by your fubferiptions and declarations, that you will teach it yourfelves. You mult preach to them faith in the ever-bleffed Trinity: and vindicate, when it is requilite, those parts of our Creeds and offices which relate to that article, from the very unjust imputations of abfurdity and uncharitablenefs which have been caft upon them. You must fet forth the original corruption of our nature; our redemption, according to God's eternal purpole in Chrift (b), by the facrifice of the crofs; our fanctification by the influences of the Divine Spirit ; the infufficiency of our own good works, and the efficacy of faith to falvation : yet handling these points in a doctrinal, not controversial manner, unless particularly called to it; and even then treating adverfaries with mildnefs and pity, not with bitterness or immoderate vehemence.

The truth, I fear, is, that many, if not most of us, have dwelt too little on these doctrines in our fermons: and by no means, in general, from difbelieving or flighting them; but partly from knowing, that formerly they had been inculcated beyond their proportion, and even to the disparagement of Christian obedience; partly from fancying them to generally received and remembered, that little needs to be faid, but on focial obligations; partly again from not having fludied theology deeply enough, to treat of them ably and beneficially : God grant it may never have been for want of inwardly experiencing their importance. But whatever be the cause, the effect hath been lamentable. Our people have grown lefs and lefs mindful, first of the diffinguishing articles of their Creed, then, as will always be the cafe, of that one, which they hold in common with the Heathens ; have forgot in effect their Creator, as well as their Redeemer and Sanctifier; feldom or never ferioufly worfhipping him, or thinking of the ftate of their fouls in relation to him ; but flattering themfelves, that what they are pleafed to call a moral and harmlefs life, though far from being either, is the one thing needful. Reflections have been made upon us, of different natures, and with different views, on account of these things, by Deists, by Papists, by Brethren of our own, which it is eafy to fhew have been much too fevere. But

> (e) Heb. xiii. 17. (g) Eph. iv. 21.

(f) Tit. ii. 2. 7. (b) Eph. iii. 11.

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### first Charge to his Clergy.

But the only complete vindication of ourfelves will be to preach fully and frequently the doctrines, which we are unjuftly accufed of caffing off or undervaluing: yet fo, as to referve always a due thare of our difcourfes, which it is generally reported fome of our cenfurers do not, for the common duties of common life, as did our Saviour and his Apoftles. But then we muft enforce them chiefly by motives peculiarly Chriftian: I will not fay, only by fuch; for the Scripture adds others. And while we urge on our hearers the neceffity of univerfal holinefs, we muft urge equally that of their being found in Chrift; not having their own righteoutnefs, which is of the law, but the righteoufnefs, which is of God by faith (i).

Copious and interesting as the subject is, I must now conclude. And I befeech you, Brethren, fuffer the word of exhortation (k) : for I have fpoken to you from the fimplicity of a plain heart, and the fincerity of a deep concern for the interests of the church of Christ, and the everlasting welfare of every one of you; not as condemning, not as difefteeming you, very far from it, but as being jealous over you with godly jealoufy, and deeply affected with the prefent ftate of religion amongft us. Wickednefs, profanenefs, avowed infidelity, have made a dreadful progrefs in this nation. The civil power, in most cafes, doth little to check that progrefs : and it is an unhappinefs in our most happy constitution, that it cannot eafily, if at all, do what one might with. Ecclefiaftical authority is not only too much limited, but too much defpifed, as matters now ftand amongft us, to do almost any thing to purpose. In the small degree, that it can be exerted ufefully, I hope it will, and promife my utmost endeavours, in all cases notified to me, that it shall. But the main fupport of piety and morals confifts in the parochial labours of the Clergy. If our country is to be preferved from utter profligatenefs and ruin, it must be by our means : and, take notice, we cannot lose our influence, but in a great measure by our own fault. If we look on what we are apt to call our livings only as our livelihoods, and think of little more than living on the income of them according to our own inclinations : if for want of a good conscience, or faith unfeigned (1), we forfeit the protection of God; and by worldlinefs, or indolence, or levity in behaviour, talk or appearance, (for grofs vices I put out of the queftion) lofe, as we affuredly shall, the reverence of mankind : there will be no foundation left for us to ftand upon. Our legal eftablishment will shake and fink under us, if once it can be faid we do the public little fervice, and much fooner if we are fuspected of difquieting it. Wicked people will attack us without referve: the good will be forced to condemn and give us up: and well would it be for us, if this were the worft. It is a fmall thing to be judged of man's judgment : He, that judgeth us, is the Lord (m). But while we teach the genuine truths of the Gofpel, and evidently feel the truths we teach; and are more anxious about the fouls of men, than our own profit, or pleafure, or power; while we fubmit ourfelves dutifully and affectionately, (as we never had greater caufe) to the King and those who are put in authority under him : lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godlinefs and honesty (n); and join with our piety and loyalty and virtue, but

> (i) Phil. iii. 9. (l) 1 Tim. i. 5. (n) 1 Tim. ii. 2.

(k) Heb. xiii. 22.

(m) 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's first Charge, Ec.

but a common fhare of prudence: we fhall, in fpite of enemies, through his mercy, who hath promifed to be with us alway (o), not fail of being upheld. The religious will efteem us very highly in love for our work's fake (p): the wife in their generation (q), though not religious, will perceive our importance: the vicious and deftitute of principle will be awed by us: and the feed of the word, however trampled under foot by fome, will fpring up and bear fruit in the hearts of many. Let us think then ferioufly, what depends on us, what it requires of us, and give ourfelves wholly to it (r). God hath placed us in a flation of difficulty and labour, at prefent also of reproach and contempt from great numbers of men. But still, if we only learn to value our function justly, and love it fincerely, we fhall be unspeakably happier in discharging the duties of it, than we poffibly can be in any thing elfe. The things, in which the world places happiness, are very trifles. We may plainly fee them to be fuch now, if we will : and we shall see in a little time, whether we will or not, that the only real point of moment is, to have approved ourfelves good and faithful fervants (s) to our great Master. Let us all therefore bear in mind continually, how matters will appear to us then: and heartily pray and earnestly endeavour, fo to pass through things temporal, that we finally lofe not the things eternal. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for 'Fefus Christ's fake, our Lord (t).

- (0) Matth. xxviii. 20.
- (p) 1 Theff. v. 13.
- (r) 1 Tim. iv. 15.

(q) Luke xvi. 8. (s) Matth. xxv. 21.

A CHARGE

(1) Coll. 4th Sunday after Trinity.

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# CHARGE

A

### DISTRIBUTED TO THE

CLERGY of the DIOCESE

# CANTERBURY,

OF

### In the YEAR 1762,

# The ARCHBISHOP being hindered by Illness from visiting them in Person.

**3404040404040404040404(}}040(104040404040404040** 

### Reverend Brethren.

T having pleafed God that I fhould live to come amongft you a fecond time, I think it my duty to proceed with the fame kind of exhortations, which I gave you at firft. For though many fubjects of infruction might be proper, there is a peculiar propriety in thole, which relate more immediately to your conduct: and though I might very juftly give you, in general, praife inftead of advice, yet they who deferve the most of the former, will be most defirous of the latter, knowing how much need of it the beft of us have. And I hope the freedoms which I fhall take with you in this refpect, will the rather be pardoned, as I both permit and intreat you to use the fame with me, when Vot, VI, F

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occafion requires it; being fincerely difpoled, if I know myfelf, to fet you an example of docility.

I began with your obligation to refidence; and the appointment of curates, either to fupply your abfence when you could not refide, or to affift you when the work was too heavy for you. And then I entered a little into the common duties of incumbents and curates, in which I fhall now make fome further progrefs: more folicitous about the importance of directions, than the accuracy of method; and ufing no other apology, if I fhould happen to repeat what I have given you in charge already, than that of the Apottle: To fay the fame things, to me is not grievous, and for you it is fafe (a).

The fame Apostle's admonition to Timothy is, Take heed unto thyself, and to thy doctrine (b). The main point is what he begins with, the care of our temper and behaviour. For without that, our preaching will feldom be fuch as it ought, and fcarce ever bring forth its proper fruits. Now a Chriftian temper confifts of various parts: but the first impression, which a genuine faith in the Gofpel makes on the foul, and the ruling principle, which it fixes there is a deep fenfe of love to God and our fellow-creatures, producing an earnest defire, that we and they may be for ever happy in his prefence. Whoever therefore is defitute of this feeling, ought not, though free from grofs vices, to become a Clergyman : and without obtaining it from the Giver of all good things by fervent prayer, no man is qualified to fill the place of one. For notwithflanding that he may preferve fome form of godlinefs, without which he would be mifchievous and fhocking in the higheft degree : yet not having the reality and power thereof (c), he must profess, and seemingly attempt, to make others what he is far from being himfelf. Confequently his endeavours out of the pulpit will be infrequent, reluctant, faint : and in it they will at beft be unnatural and ungraceful, whatever pains he may take in his compositions, or whatever vehemence he may affect in his delivery. Hence he will be diffatisfied within, detected and difefteemed by the judicious part of his hearers, and of little use to the rest, if he is not even hurtful by misleading them. Or whatever his cafe may be amongft men, his inward want of the piety, which he outwardly pretends to, must render him uncommonly guilty in the fight of God. Heaven forbid, that I should have need to enlarge on fuch a character in this audience.

But have we not moft of us caufe to apprehend, that our religious principles, though fincere, are not fufficiently exerted; and therefore produce not the fruit, which they might? Do we not rather take it for granted, that we approve ourfelves to be duly in earneft, than find on impartial examination, that we do? No man fhould rafhly fay or furmife this of another: but every one fhould fearch home into it for himfelf. And we fhould attentively read the Scriptures, and the treatifes written by wife and good men concerning the duties of God's minifters: to fee if we are fuch as they defcribe, and ftir up ourfelves to become fuch as we ought.

Good inclinations, thus excited, will not fail, through the affiftance

of

(b) : Tim, iv. 16.

(c) 2 Tim. iii. 5.

### fecond Charge to his Clergy:

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of Divine grace, of directing us into a fuitable conduct. And were a man, who confeffedly means well, to overdo a little fometimes, the rightnefs of his intention would plead his excufe very ftrongly. However we should carefully avoid extremes, even on the better fide : not give uncommanded demonstrations of our Christian zeal, when they will probably ferve no good purpofe, and be deemed oftentation, or turned into ridicule, or provoke ill humour; but reftrain, according as times and places and company may require, the fentiments which elfe we could be glad to utter. Only we must do this in such a manner, as not to tempt the most rigid professor of religion to imagine, or the most profligate enemy of it to fuggeft, that we have little or none: but fhew our concern for it on every fit occasion, with full as much diligence, as we decline unfit ones. And here, I conceive, it is, that we of the Clergy are chiefly apt to fail. We do not always appear in the common intercourfes of life, fufficiently penetrated with the importance of our function, or fufficiently affiduous to promote the ends of our miffion.

Too poffibly a great part of our people may like the lukewarm amongft us the better for refembling themfelves, and giving them no uneafinefs on comparison, but seeming to authorize their indifference. But then, fuch of us can do them no good. Our example can teach them nothing beyond a little decent regularity, in which they will fancy they need not quite come up to us neither. Our fermons, and reading of prayers, they will confider only as matters of form : and finding in us hardly any thing at other times of what we express at these, they will presume, that our inward regard to it is not very great, and that they are not bound to Therefore if they are pleafed with us, if they efteem us, have more. while we continue to be of this turn, it must be for fomething foreign from our office, fomething of a middle, or it may be a blameable nature, not as teachers of the Gofpel: a character which they take us to lay afide as much as we well can. And fo the better they think of us, the more lightly they will think of our ministry; till at length they join with those avowed Infidels. who boldly affirm, though often against their own confciences, that we believe not what we preach, elfe it would have more influence upon us.

Then, at the fame time, the right dispositions of well inclined perfons will languish and decay, for want of that countenance and affistance in ferious piety, which they fhould receive from their pastors. For if the tokens of our piety be confined to the church, they will be of little fervice either out of it, or in it. Or if fome good people fuffer no harm. themfelves from our defects, they will fee with great forrow, that others do: all of them will be much readier to think the clerical order in general carelefs and light, if those are fo, of whom they fee most : their ears will be open to the invectives, which artful or heated men are daily pouring forth against us : they will easily be led to undervalue and mifconftrue the best instructions of those, with whom they are difgusted; and run after any teachers, who have the powerful recommendation, for it will always, and no wonder, be a very powerful one, of feeming more in earneft. The irregularities and divisions which have prevailed fo lamentably in our church of late, are greatly owing to an opinion, that we are utually indifferent about vital inward religion. It is true, the **fpreaders** 

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fpreaders of this imputation, which hath been monftroufly exaggerated, will have much to anfwer for : but fo fhall we alfo, unlefs we take the only way to filence it, by cutting off hereafter all occafion for it.

Now the first necessary step to feem good is to be fo; for mere pretence will be feen through : and the next is, to let your light thine before men (d), in the faithful and laborious exercise of your function. Living amongst your parishioners, or as near them as may be: inquiring frequently and perfonally concerning the welfare and behaviour of thofe, with whom you cannot be flatedly prefent; reverent and judicious reading of the prayers and leffons in your churches, inftructive and affecting fermons delivered with difcreet warmth, readiness to take extraordinary pains for the occafional affiftance of your brethren, diligence in forming the youth to a fense of their Christian duty, in bringing your people to the holy communion, and where it can be, to week-day prayers : all these things will tend very much both to your usefulness and your credit. Relieving or obtaining relief for fuch as are diffreffed in their circumftances: hearing your reople willingly and patiently, though perhaps low in rank or weak in understanding, when they would confult you upon any difficulty, and answering them with confideration and tendernefs: difpofing them to be vifited when fick, praying by them with fervency, exhorting and comforting them with fidelity, compation and prudence; and reminding them ftrongly, yet mildly, after their recovery, of their good thoughts and pnrpofes during their illnefs ; will be further proofs, very beneficial and very engaging ones, of your ferioufnefs : which however you must complete by going through every other office of religion with dignity. I will fpecify two.

One is that of baptifm : which, especially when administered in private houfes without necessity, is too often treated, even during the administration, rather as an idle ceremony than a Christian facrament : or however that be, is commonly close followed by very unfuitable, if not otherwife also indecent levity and jollity. Now in these circumstances it is highly requifite, that the minister should by a due mixture of gravity and judgment fupport the folemnity of the ordinance; and either prevent improprieties in the fequel, or if it be doubtful whether he can, excufe himfelf, with a civil intimation of the unfitnefs of them, from being prefent. The other inftance is, that of faying grace over our daily food : which many, if not most, of the laity have, with a profaneness more than Heathenish, laid aside: and I am forry to add, that some of the clergy hurry it over fo irreverently, in a mutter or a whilper, fcarce, if at all, intelligible, that one might queftion, whether they had not better lay it afide too, which yet God forbid, than make it thus infignificant; and expose to contempt an act of devotion, and themselves along with it, as doing what they are ashamed of.

Indeed far from authorizing any flights of this fort by our example, and as it were our confent, we muft through our whole converfation fleadily and refolutely, though with mildnefs and modelty, always keep up the honour of religion and our order, which is infeparable from our own: never fpeak a word, or ufe a gefture, which can with the leaft colour be interpreted, as if we had fmall regard to our profeffion, or exectified

(d) Matt. v. 16.

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ercifed it chiefly for a maintenance : never repeat, never hear, difcourfes of an irreligious or immoral turn, without expressing a plain difapprobation, briefly or at large, as the cafe may require : yet be on all occafions courteous, and on proper occafions cheerful; but let it be evidently the cheerfulness of ferious men. Fooligh talking and jesting are not convenient (e), not becoming any perfon : but those least of all, who should know best, that every idle word which men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof, according to its tendency, in the day of judgment (f). Unfeafonable or exceffive mirth fits peculiarly ill upon him whofe office must or ought to bring before his mind fo frequently, the afflictions of this mortal state, the holiness of God's law, his own grievous imperfections, the deplorable fins of many others, and the final fentence, that awaits us all. Doubtless we should endeavour to make religion agreeable; but not to make ourfelves agreeable, by leading our company to forget religion. We should every one of us please his neighbour for his good (g): but not fo pleafe men, as to fail in the character of fervants of Chrift (b). We should be made, in a fitting fense and measure, all things to all men, that we may by all means fave fome (i): but we fhall lofe ourfelves, not fave others, if we are quite different perfons in the pulpit and out of it: nor can we act a more incongruous part, than to chuse raising and promoting the laugh for our province in converfation, inftead of duly reftraining our own livelinefs and that of others. For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth (peaketh (k) : and our hearts ought to abound with better things. I own, both affected and exceffive reftraint, will do harm. But if we are fincerely pious, and endeavour to be prudent, we fhall combine ufeful informations and reflections with harmlefs entertainment : our speech will be with grace, seasoned with falt, that we may know how we ought to answer every man (1) : we shall prove that we have the end of our ministry constantly in view, by drawing profitable lessons, frequently, but naturally, out of topics of indifference; and bringing back the discourse, if it goes aftray, from exceptionable or unsafe subjects, to innocent ones; yet if poffible without offenfive reproof, and perhaps imperceptibly. For the fervant of the Lord must not strive, that is, roughly and harfhly, but be gentle unto all men (m), even the worft. Yet on the other hand fervile obsequiousness, or flattering words (n), even to the beft, are far remote from having our conversation in simplicity and godly fincerity (o).

Talking with great earneftnefs about worldly affairs, or with great delight about diverfions and trifles, betrays a mind overmuch fet upon them: and numbers will reprefent the cafe, as worfe than it is. Nay, our being only in a very peculiar degree good judges of fuch matters, or of any that are unconnected with our office, will, unlefs we have fome efpecial call to them, be commonly thought to imply, that we have fudied and love them beyond what we ought, to the neglect of our proper bufinefs.

(e) Eph. v. 4.
(g) Rom. xv. 2.
(i) 1 Cor. ix. 22.
(l) Col. iv. 6.
(n) 1 Theff. ii. 5.

(f) Matt. xii. 36. (b) Gal. i. 10. (k) Matt. xii. 34. (m) 2 Tim. ii. 24. (o) 2 Cor. i. 12.

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bufinefs. For we are not to expect very favourable conftructions from mankind: yet it greatly imports us to have their good opinion; which we fhall not fecure, unlefs in whatever other lights they may fee us occafionally, the worthy clergyman be the predominant part of our character. If practical Chriftian piety and benevolence and felf government, with conftant zeal to promote them all upon earth, are not the first and chief qualities, which your parifhioners and acquaintance will afcribe to you: if they will fpeak of you, as noted on other accounts, but pafs over thefe articles; and when afked about them, be at a lofs what to fay, excepting pofibly that they know no harm of you, all is not right: nor can fuch a clergy answer the defign of its infitution any where; or even maintain its ground in a country of freedom and learning, though a yet worfe may in the midft of flavery and ignorance.

Actually fharing in the gaieties and amusements of the world will provoke cenfure still more, than making them favourite subjects of discourse. I do not fay, that recreations, lawful in themfelves, are unlawful to us: or that those which have been formerly prohibited by ecclesiaftical rules, merely as difreputable, may not ceafe to be fo by change of cuftom. But ftill not all things lawful are expedient (p), and certainly these things, further than they are in truth requifite for health of body, refreshment of mind, or fome really valuable purpofe, are all a mifemployment of our leifure hours, which we ought to fet our people a pattern of filling up A minister of God's word, attentive to his duty, will neither have well. leifure for fuch diffipations, public or domeftic, nor liking to them. He will fee, that pleafure, or rather a wretched affectation of it, is become the idol of mankind; to which they are facrificing their fortunes, their families, their healths, their reputations, their regard to God, to their focial duties, to the flate of their fouls, to their future being. Now what are the clergy to do in this cafe ? If we but feem to go along with them, who fhall call them back? For as to the pretence of keeping them within bounds by our prefence, it is vifibly a mere pretence. Or were it not, the older and graver of us would furely think fuch a fuperintendency no very honourable one : and few of the younger and livelier could be fafely trufted with it. Indeed we none of us know, into what improprieties of behaviour, at least what wrongness of disposition we may be drawn by the evil communications of these affemblies: whether, if happily they should not otherwife corrupt our good manners (q), we may not however grow inwardly fond of them; come to think our profession a dull one, and the calls of it troublefome ; throw off as much of the burthen as we can, and perform with reluctance and cold formality the remainder, which we muft.

At leaft it will be fulpected, that we cannot greatly difapprove the cuffoms in which we voluntarily join, the perfons with whom we familiarly affociate, or indeed any thing faid or done where we delight to be: that if we do not go the utmost lengths, yet we should, if for thame we durft: for these things are our choice, not the duties of our ministry; which therefore declaimers will fay we are not fincere in, or however unfit for. And even they, who plead our example as a precedent for themselves, will usually honour us much the less for fetting it.

(p) 1 Cor. vi. 12.

(q) 1 Cor. xv. 33.

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Still I do not mean, that we fhould be four and morofe: condemn innocent relaxations, and provoke men to fay, that we rail out of envy at what we have abfurdly tied up ourfelves from partaking of: but expréss our diflike of them as mildly as the cafe will bear; flight with good humour the indulgences, in which others falfely place their happinefs; and convince them by our experience as well as reafoning, how very comfortably they may live without them. It is true, paying court to the gay and inconfiderate by imitation of them, may often be the fhorter, and fometimes the furer way to their favour. But the favour of the fafhionable world is not our aim: if it be, we have chofen our profeffion very unwifely. And though we fhould fucceed thus with fuch perfons in point of intereft, we muft not hope even for their effeem. For they will both think and fpeak with the loweft contempt of the complying wretch, whom yet for their own convenience or humour they will carefs, and now and then prefer.

Our predeceffors, that their abstaining from indifcreet levities might be notorious, wore conftantly the peculiar habit of their order. And certainly we fhould be more respected, if we followed their example in this more univerfally. They complained of no inconveniencies from it : nor did I ever, in a course of many years, find any worth naming. In the primitive and perfecuting times indeed Clergymen wore no peculiar drefs: and long after were diftinguished only by retaining a greater fimplicity of garb than others. But gradually fuperiors difcerned reafons for enjoining a different fort: and furely others may well pay them to far the obedience promifed to them, as always to fhew by fome evident and proper marks, (for nothing more is expected) of what class of men they are. If you do not, it will be faid, either that you are alhamed of your caufe, or confcious of your unfkilfulnefs to defend it, or that you conceal yourfelves to take occafionally unfit liberties. Indeed fome external reftraints of this kind, merely as an admonition against unfeemly difcourse and conduct and company, would, though not prefcribed, be very advifeable for young Clergymen : amongft whom they, who diflike them the moft, might fometimes perceive, that they have the moft need of them. And we that are older, fhould keep up the cuftom for their fakes, though unneceffary for our own. Befides, we may all prevent, by fuch notification of ourfelves, a great deal of unbecoming talk and deportment in others: and fo efcape both the difagreeablenefs of reproving it, and the impropriety of not reproving it. Or if after all it cannot be prevented, they who are offended with it, will immediately fee in us a refuge from it. But then a habit, vifibly a Clergyman's, must be such in every part as

But then a habit, withbly a Clergyman's, mult be fuch in every part as befits a Clergyman: have no look of effeminacy or love of finery in it (r). For we had better put on the lay drefs intirely, than difgrace the clerical one. And it is doubly contemptible, first to thew what a fondnefs we have for things utterly beneath us, and then how poorly we are able to indulge it. Therefore let us be uniform : and as our character is a truly venerable one, let us think we do ourfelves honour by wearing the ancient badges of it. I need not add, that our whole demeanor thould be anfwerable to our cloathing : that fortnefs and delicacy of manner, fkill in the fcience of eating (s), and the perfection of liquors, in

(r) Hieron. ad Nepotian. §. 9. (s) Ibid. §. 6.

fhort every approach to luxurious gratification, is ftrangely out of place in one, who hath devoted himfelf to endure hardness as a good foldier of  $\mathcal{J}_{e-fus}$  Chrift (t).

Still we ought to judge very charitably of those, who take greater liberties, than we dare: never blame them more, feldom fo much as they deferve; and confine our feverity to our own practice. Only we must watch with moderate ftrictness over our families also: not only keeping up the joint and feparate worfhip of God in them, which I hope no Clergyman omits, but forming them to every part of piety and virtue and prudence. St. Paul requires, that not only deacons, but their wives be grave (u): and that the higher Clergy be fuch, as rule well their own boules, having their children in subjection with all gravity: for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall be take care of the church of God (w)? Whence we have all promifed at our ordination, to frame and fashion our families, together with ourfelves, according to the doctrine of Chrift, and to make them, as much as in us lieth, wholefome examples and patterns to his flock. They are naturally the first objects of our care : we have peculiar opportunities of inftructing and reftraining them. If we neglect them, we fhall never be thought to have much concern for others: if we are unfuccessful with them, we shall be deemed very unskilful; and bid to look at home before we reprove the reft of our flock. But exhibiting inftances of goodness and happiness, produced under our own roofs by the methods, to which we direct those around us, must needs add fingular weight to our exhortations.

For the importance of the rules hitherto laid down, we have the judgment of a moft able and fubtle and determined enemy, the emperor *Julian*: who defigning to re-eftablifh paganifm, and accounting, as he declares, the firithes and fanctity, profelled by Chriftians, to be a principal caufe of the prevalence of their faith, in two of his epiftles gives directions, undoubtedly copied from the injunctions obferved by the Clergy of those days, that the heathen priefts be men of ferious tempers and deportment; that they neither utter, nor hear, nor read, nor think of any thing licentious or indecent; that they banifh far from them all offensive jefts and libertine conversation: be neither expensive nor fhewish in their apparel; go to no entertainments but fuch as are made by the worthich perfons; frequent no taverns; appear but feldom in places of concourfe; never be feen at the public games and spectacles; and take care, that their wives and children and fervants be pious, as well as themscives(x). Let not, I intreat you, this apostate put us to fhame.

But Clergymen, who are ferious in their whole behaviour, and the care of their families alfo, are often too unactive amongft their people : apt to think, that if they perform regularly the ordinary offices of the church, exhort from the pulpit fuch as will come to hear them, and anfwer the common occafional calls of parochial duty, they have done as much as they need or well can, and fo turn themfelves to other matters : perhaps never vifit fome of their parifhioners; and with the reft enter only into the fame fort of talk, that any one elfe would do. Now St. *Paul* faith, he taught the Ephefians both publickly and from houfe to boufe, teflifying

(1) 2 Tim. ii. 3. (u) 1 Tim. iii. 8, 11. (w) 1 Tim. v. 4, 5. (x) Ep. 49, ad Arfac. p. 430, 431. Fragm. Ep. p. 301-305.

### fecond Charge to his Clergy.

teflifying repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jefus Chrift ( y); and ceased not to warn every one day and night (z). He also commands Timothy to preach the word, and be instant, in season and out of season (a); at flated times and others: not forcing advice upon perfons, when it was likelier to do harm than good : but prudently improving lefs favourable opportunities, if no others offered. Thus unquestionably should we do. And a chief reafon, why we have fo little hold upon our people is, that we converfe with them fo little, as watchmen over their fouls. The pastors of the foreign protestants outdo us greatly in this respect, and are honoured in proportion. The Romish priests have their laity under their hands, on one account or another, almost continually, and acquire by it an absolute dominion over them. Both the old diffenters from our church, and those who are now forming new separations, gain and preferve a furprifing influence amongst their followers by perfonal religious intercourfe. Why fhould not we learn from them? At first fuch applications may by difuse appear strange; and both have their difficulties and their dangers. But the most apprehensive of them will be the fafest from them : and all will improve their talents by practice. On young perfons you will be able to make good impreffions by difcourfe with them before confirmation : these may be renewed in private exhortations afterwards to receive the facrament: and the fpiritual acquaintance thus begun, may be continued ever after. Other means may be found with grown perfons : on the first fettling of a family in your parish; on occasion of any great ficknefs, or affliction, or mercy; on many others, if you feek for them, and engage worthy friends to affift you. Even common converfation may be led very naturally to points of piety and morals; and numbers be thus induced to reading proper books, to public, to private, to family devotion, to fobriety, juffice, alms-giving and Chriftian love. When once you are well got into the method, you will proceed with eafe and applaufe; provided your whole character and conduct be confiftent, elfe you will fall into total difgrace; and particularly provided you convince your parishioners, that you feek, not their's, but them (b).

- A due measure of difinterestedness is one-main requisite for the success of a Clergyman's labours. You will therefore avoid all mean attentions to imall matters: never be rigorous in your demands of them; never engage in any disputes about them, unless a part of your income, too large to be given up, depends upon them. In all difputes you will prefer difcreet references to proceedings at law: and when the latter become neceflary, carry them on in the faireft, the leaft expensive, the friendlieft manner. You will be very tender in your demands upon the poor, and very equitable towards the rich; though you will confcientiously preferve all the material rights, with which you are intrusted, for your fucceffors. If you find room and reason to improve your income, you will do it within bounds : and prove, that no wrong motive induces you to it, by living with decent frugality, providing for your families with moderation, and going as far as ever you are able in acts of good-natured, and especially of pious, liberality; which are the most valuable in themselves, the most incumbent on you, and the most overlooked by others. For nothing

(y) Acts xx. 20, 21. (z) ver. 31. (a) 2 Tim. iv. 2. (b) 2 Cor. xii. 14. nothing gives greater or jufter offence, than to fee a Clergyman intent upon hoarding, or luxurious, or fplendid, inftead of being charitable.

Few indeed of our order have much to fpare: and many have caule to with for a more plentiful fubfiftence. Yet even thefe, and much more the better preferred, if they are earneft feekers and importunate follicitous for promotion, lower their characters grievoufly: and fuch as use indirect means to obtain it, are often providentially difappointed; or though they fucceed, always diffonour themfelves, and never do much good to others: whereas the loweft of their brethren will be juftly refpected, and may be highly useful, if he fubmits contentedly to God's good providence, and labours to live within the compafs of his income: exceeding which, without vifible neceffity, will bring fome imputation even upon him, and defervedly a much heavier on fuch as enjoy an ampler provifion.

However inoffenfive we are, we must expect to receive, from time to time, injurious and provoking treatment, as the Scripture hath forewarned us. We fliall hurt both our own caufe and that of religion dreadfully, if we return it : and do honour to both, if we behave under it calmly, with fuch meeknefs of wifdom (c), as may tend to bring our adverfaries over, if not to our fentiments concerning the matter in question, whatever it be, yet to a good opinion of our meaning and temper; or may at least, if we fail of fuccess with them, engage more impartial perfons to countenance and protect us. Indeed we ought, if poffible, to keep not only ourfelves, but others, out of all angry contefts. We folemnly promifed at our ordination, to maintain and fet forwards, as much as lieth in us, quietness, peace and love among all Christian peoples and especially among them that are or fball be committed to our charge : and by fo doing we are bound never to raife or foment perfonal, family, parochial, political or ecclefiaftical animolities, but do all in our power to compole and extinguish them: nor will any thing conduce more to our credit or to our usefulness. The political party-spirit is, God be thanked, of late years much abated. Let us guard against the return of it ; shew, in word and deed, becoming respect, as we have great cause, to our excellent King, and all who are put in authority under him : not exercife ourfelves in matters too high for us (d), but be quiet and do our own business (e); let our moderation, even where are concerned to meddle, be known unto all men (f), exercifing it even to those who have least of it; and always remember, that neither patriot love to our earthly country, nor loyal attachment to our earthly fovereign, will be accepted by our heavenly Father, without uniform obedience to the whole of his Gospel.

Another point of great importance to Clergymen is, that they be fludious. This will keep your money from being fpent unwifely; and likewife your time from being thrown away hurtfully or unprofitably, or hanging heavy on your hands. It will procure you reverence too, as perfons of knowledge: whereas the idle will, even by the ignorant, be thought deficient. And, which is the main thing, this alone will enable you to underftand the buline's of your flation, and perform it well. But then you muft apply to fuch things chiefly, as will fit you moft to anfwer the

(c) James iii. 13. (d) Pfal. cxxxi. 2. (e) 1 Theff. iv. 11. (f) Phil, iv. 4. the great end of your employment; and determine with St. Paul to know nothing, comparatively speaking, among t your people, fave Christ Jefus and him crucified (g). The concern of a parish minister is, to make the lowest of his congregation apprehend the doctrine of falvation by repentance, faith and obedience; and to labour, that when they know the way of life, they may walk in it. If he doth not these things for them, he doth nothing: and it requires much confideration to find out the proper methods of doing them, and much pains and patience to try one after another. Smooth difcourfes, composed partly in fine words which they do not understand, partly in flowing fentences which they cannot follow to the end; containing little that awakens their drowfy attention, little that inforces on them plainly and home what they must do to be faved; leave them as ignorant and unreformed as ever, and only lull them into a fatal fecurity. Therefore bring yourfelves down to their level; for what fuits the meanest Christian will fuit the highest: examine if they take in what you fay, and change the form of it till they do. This I recommend for your first study: and be affured, you will improve yourfelves by it no lefs than your hearers. But fo far as you have opportunity confiftently with this, apply to any part of Science, to every part you can, that is connected with your profession: only learn, by weighing carefully the judgments and reafonings of others, to think modeftly of yourfelves ; avoid, in the outfet of your inquiries more especially, drawing hafty conclusions : be at least as much on your guard against fondnefs of new opinions, as prepoffeffion for eftablished doctrines : and beware of being milled, either by the politiveness of vehement writers, or the falfe colours of artful ones.

You will doubtless cultivate peculiarly those branches of knowledge, which the circumstances of the times, or of your parishes, peculiarly point out to you. God hath permitted us, for our fins, to be attacked in a remarkable degree, by infidels on one hand, and by maintainers of innumerable ftrange notions on the other. And we have need, that every one, who is able to qualify himfelf well, fhould affift in defending his part of the common caufe. For there are too many unanfwered books abroad in the world, and more appearing daily, written against christianity and morals and the doctrines of our church. Nor have we of the Clergy, for fome time past, born to large a share, comparatively with perfons of other communions, in vindicating what we teach, as might be expected from us. I hope you are not often obliged, in this Diocefe, to encounter unbelievers from the pulpit : and you will certainly not chufe to alarm your people, by refuting, in form, objections to which they are ftrangers; though it may be useful to obviate them briefly, and if possible without naming them. But as, probably enough, fome of you will at one time or another in company meet with fuch perfons, or hear of their talk, I would give you a few directions in relation to them.

If any of them are virtuous in their conduct, and backward to offend in difcourfe, they fhould not be unfeafonably provoked, but treated with refpect. If any of them build their unbelief on ferious argument, which plainly very few do, they fhould be directed to the books or the learned men, that are beft fitted to answer them : and the lefs able fhould

(g) 1 Cor. ii. 2.

prepare

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prepare for combat with them, but not engage too far in it prematurely. If they cannot at prefent be convinced of the falsehood of their tenets, they fhould be fhewn however, in a gentle manner, the pernicious effects of promulging them. But if they will obstinately perfist to facrifice every thing valuable amongst men to their own vices, or their own vanity, we must openly withstand them, and warn others against them. Yet even this ought to be done without passion or bitterness, otherwise all the blame will be laid on us: especially without personal incivilities, even to the worft of them, elfe they will become ftill worfe than they were. But then we must never affist the very best of them in gaining influence and growing dangerous; nor bring our own fincerity into queftion by intimacies with them, which they will ufually reprefent, and fometimes believe, to proceed from our inwardly thinking as they do. Much lefs fhould we ever condescend to the shocking meannels of paying court for private ends, either to them, or to wicked wretches of any kind, though not infidels; but connect ourfelves with worthy perfons; engage their support, and excite their endeavours to repress profaneness and immorality.

It is peculiarly unhappy, that while we are employed on one fide in defending the Gospel, we are accused on another of corrupting it. I have not now in my view either the Church of Rome, or the Protestants who broke off from us a century ago. The methods of dealing with both have been long fince prefcribed, and I repeat them not : but intreat your attention to the movements of each, especially the former, if you have any of them in your parishes. But I mean to speak of persons risen up in our own times, and profeffing the ftricteft piety: who vehemently charge us with departing from the doctrines and flighting the precepts of our Religion: but have indeed themselves advanced unjustifiable notions, as neceflary truths; giving good people groundless fears, and bad ones groundlefs hopes; diffurbed the underftandings of fome, impaired the circumftances of others; prejudiced multitudes against their proper ministers, and prevented their edification by them; produced first diforders in our churches, then partial or total feparations from them; and fet up unauthorized teachers in their affemblies. Where thefe irregularities will end, God only knows: but it behoves us to be very careful, that they make no progrefs through our fault.

Now it would not only be injurious, but profane, to brand, with an opprobrious name, Chriftians remarkably ferious, merely for being fuch: and equally imprudent to difclaim them as not belonging to us, to let a feft gain the credit of them, and labour to drive them into it. Surely we fhould take, even were they wavering, or actually gone from us, the moft refpectful and perfuasive means of recalling fuch, and fixing them with us. Nay, fuppofing any perfons irrecoverably gone, we fhould not be hafty to condemn, even in our thoughts, either them or their party, as enthuliafts or hypocrites: whatfoever, they are, it maketh no matter to  $w_{3}(h)$ . And much lefs ought we to fay of either worfe than we are fure they deferve. When we are undoubtedly well informed of any extravagant things, which they have afferted or done, it may be ufful to fpeak flrongly of them: but not with anger and exaggeration; which will

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(b) Gal. ii. 6.

### fecond Charge to his Clergy.

will only give them a handle to cenfure our uncharitablenefs, and confute us: but with deep concern, that when fo few perfons express any zeal for the Gospel, so many of those, who do, run into extremes, that hurt its interefts. Nor will ridicule become our character, or ferve our caufe better than invective. It may pleafe those very highly, who are in no danger of being profelyted by them. But what fhall we get by that? Perfons negligent of religion will at the fame time be confirmed in their negligence : and think, that all they need to avoid is being righteous overmuch (i). Tender minds will be grieved and wounded by fuch ill-placed levity: and crafty declaimers will rail at us with fuccefs, as scoffers (k), denying the power of godliness (1). But if we let fall any light expressions, that can be wrested into a seeming disrespect to any fcripture doctrine or phrafe, we shall give our adversaries unspeakable advantages: and they have fhewn, that they will use them without mercy or equity. Therefore we must guard every word, that we utter, against misrepresentations: be fure to express, in public and private, our firm belief of whatever evangelical truths border upon their miftakes: and certainly be as vigilant over our behaviour, as our teaching: encourage no violence, no rudeness towards them; but recommend ourselves to them by our mildnefs, our ferioufnefs, our diligence : honour thofe, who are truly devout and virtuous amongst them, much more on that account, than we blame them for being injudicious, and hard to pleafe; and be full as ready to acknowledge the good they have done, as to complain of the harm: yet beware, and counfel others to beware, of being drawn, by effeem of their piety, into relifning their fingularities, and patronizing their fchism.

Acting thus, we fhall not only cut off occafion from thole who defire occafion (m) to fpeak evil of us, and be able to remonfrate with authority and effect againft their exceffes and wildneffes; but, which is the chief point, we fhall become better minifters of Chrift for their harfh treatment of us. And we fhould always labour, that every thing may have this influence upon us: think with ourfelves, if others go too far, whether we do not fall fhort; afk our confeiences, whether we really do all that is in our power to reform and improve our people; whether the fmall funces of our endeavours be, in truth, as it ought, a heavy grief to us; whether we have carefully fearched out, and try inceffantly to overcome the difficulties that lie in our way to making them better. These things, if we are in earneft, we fhall chiefly have at heart: and if we are not in earneft, we are of all men the most guilty, and the most miserable (n).

In giving you my advice thus largely and freely on these feveral heads, I no more suppose you culpable in relation to any of them, than you do your parishioners, when you exhort them to any particular duties, or warn them against particular fins. On the contrary, to use the aposses words, I am perfuaded of you, brethren, that ye are full of goodnes's, replenished with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. Nevertheles's, if I may presume to adopt, with due abatements, the subsequent words also, I have spoken somewhat boldly unto you in part, as putting you in mind,

(i) Eccl. vii. 16. (k) 2 Pet. iii. 3. (l) 2 Tim. ii. 15. (m) 2 Cor. xi. 12. (n) 1 Cor. xv. 19.

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mind, because of the grace which is given me of God, that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to you (o), as you are to your respective congregations. And let us all pray for ourfelves and each other daily, that we may fo feed the flock of God which is among us, and be ensamples to it, that when the chief shepperd shall appear, we may receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away (p).

(o) Rom. xv. 14, 15, 16. (p) 1 Pct. v. 2, 3, 4.

A CHARGE



A

# C H A R G E

#### DELIVERED TO THE

CLERGY of the DIOCESE,

OF

# CANTERBURY,

In the YEAR 1766.

### Reverend Brethren,

A V I N G diffributed amongft you, above three years ago, when the fick of the prevented me from vifting you in perfon, a printed difcourse, in which I exhorted you, as St. Paul did Timothy, to take beed unto yourfelves; I proceed now to add, as he did, and to your doctrine (a).

To inftruct perfons in religion is the leading part of a Clergyman's duty. And though he will do it in a very ufeful degree by the example of a Chriftian behaviour on all occafions; yet he will do'it more efpecially in the peculiar difcharge of his office. When he is only to ufe the forms preferibed him, he may, by ufing them with due reverence and propriety, greatly promote both knowledge and pious difpofitions in his hearers.

(a) 1 Tim. iv. 16.

hearers. Therefore we ought to watch diligently over ourfelves in this refpect: and then it will be eafier to convince our people, that they may and fhould learn a great deal from the exhortations, the prayers, the praifes, the portions of feripture, of which our liturgy confilts; that therefore, even when there is no other fervice, they fhould come to church for the fake of thefe far more conftantly, and attend to them far more carefully, than the generality of them do; indeed fhould have them in much higher effecm, than the mere products of our private thoughts.

But I shall confine myself to the instructions, which you give of your own; speaking of them chiefly with a view of suggesting such advice to the younger part of you, as I hope the elder will approve, and enforce.

And here I muft begin with repeating, what I need not enlarge upon, for I have done it already, that the foundation of every thing in our profeffion is true piety within our breafts, prompting us to excite it in others. Even heathens made it a rule, that an orator, if he would perfuade, muft be a good man: much more muft a preacher. When a bad one utters divine truths, we flut our ears, we feel indignation. Form yourfelves therefore throughly, by devout meditations and fervent prayer, to ferioufnefs of heart, and zeal for the eternal welfare of fouls: for then every thing elfe, that you are to do, will follow of courfe.

You will earneftly labour to complete yourfelves in all proper knowledge: not merely the introductory kinds, which unhappily are often almost the only ones, taught the candidates for holy orders; but those chiefly, which have a closer connection with your work. And though, amongst these, the science of morals and natural religion is highly to be valued, yet the doctrines and precepts of the gospel require your principal regard beyond all comparison. It is of the gospel, that you are minifters: all other learning will leave you effentially unqualified; and this alone comprehends every thing, that is neceffary. Without it, you will never approve yourfelves to God, as workmen that need not to be ashamed (b), nor make your hearers wife unto falvation (c). Therefore you must diligently perufe the holy fcriptures, and as much as you can of them in the original; that, as the office of ordination expresses it, by daily reading and weighing of them ye may wax riper and stronger in your ministry. And you must not grudge the expence, which may furely be well spared in some other things, of procuring, according to your abilities, the affiftance, both of fuch commentators, as will beft fhew you the true fenfe of holy writ; and of fuch alfo, as will best direct you, how to draw from it needful instructions. General fystems of theology, and particular treatifes on points of moment, will enlarge your flock of matter : and the most noted fermons will be patterns to you of composition.

For I fuppofe the difcourfes, even of thofe who have the loweft qualifications, to be, in a great meafure at leaft, of their own composition. Elfe they will feldom either fufficiently fuit the congregation to which they are delivered, or be delivered in the manner which they ought. Befides, if perfons decline taking this trouble, they will probably alfo decline that of fitting themfelves in other ways for parochial ufefulnefs, and throw away their time unwifely, if not worfe. That will foon be obferved to their difadvantage; and if once it be fufpected, that through inca-

(b) 2 Tim. ii. 15.

(c) 2 Tim. iii. 15.

#### third Charge to his Clergy.

incapacity or idleness they feal what they preach, they will have small influence, if any. I do not mean, that no use ought to be made of the labours of others: for indeed I have made no little use of them in what I am faying, and about to fay. I would have young Clergymen, especially, make very great use of the works of able divines: not inconfiderately and fervilely transcribe them; but fludy, digeft, contract, amplify, vary, adapt to their purpofe, improve if possible, what they find in them. For thus it will fairly become their own; mix naturally with what proceeds altogether from themfelves; and preferve their youthful productions from the imputation of being empty and jejune. In the choice of fuch authors you will confider religious and judicious friends, always joining your own experience. Those writers, whom you find the most effectual to enlighten your understandings, convince you of your faults, animate you to good refolutions, and guide and fupport you in the execution of, them, will best help you to produce the fame effect on others. These therefore imitate: but with judgment. If, amidft their excellencies, you observe mistakes, defects, redundancies, flights indifcreetly high, despicably familiar condefcenfions, fallies over-vehement; beware of adopting any of them. And remember too that a very close imitation, of fingularities above all, will both betray you, and be difguffful.

When you go about to prepare an inftruction for your people, firft confider carefully of a proper fubject and text: begging God to direct your choice, and difpole you to treat them in a proper way. Chufing a text, without need, that will furprife, or a feeming barren one, to fhew what your art can extract from it, will appear ingenious perhaps to fome, but vanity to moft with good reafon. Chufing one, that requires much accommodating to your purpole, is but mifpending pains and time: and fo is labouring to clear up a very obfcure one, unlefs it be of great importance. And giving a new translation or fense of a text, unlefs the prefent hath confiderable inconveniences, will only puzzle your audience, and tempt them to doubt, whether they underftand the reft of their bible. Such a text is moft convenient, as will branch out of itfelf into the main parts of your difcourfe: but at leaft you fhould make it appear to be the ground-work of your difcourfe, and not an after-thought.

Plan your method in the beginning of your composition; but change it afterwards, if you fee caufe. Never run the matter of one head into another, nor digrefs to any thing foreign: for every fubject, well confidered, will afford you enough. It is usually best to propose your general heads together, before you proceed upon them feparately, and to give notice when you come to each. Subdivisions also affift the memory of the hearer, if they are not too many: and paffing from a former head to the next by an eafy transition, is graceful. But a disposition may be very orderly, without mentioning in form the feveral members, of which it confifts: and fometimes that formality prevents a difcourfe from flowing with freedom and fpirit. After the explanatory part, proofs from reafon and fcripture take the next place : then inferences, if any uleful ones follow peculiarly from what hath preceded; and laftly exhortations to fuitable practice, which can hardly ever be omitted, and ought to be fuch as may leave a durable impression. The length of fermions, though it should always be moderate, may be very different at different times. VOL. VI. Only

Only give no room to think, that in a fhort one you have faid but little; or in a long one have either faid any thing which was not pertinent, or dwelt upon any thing beyond what was needful.

An indifpensable point throughout is to preferve attention: for if that be not paid, all your labour is loft. And perfons are fingularly apt to be inattentive to preachers. Our fubjects are, and ought to be, the most common and trite of any. And hence, unless we use a little honeft art to prevent it, our people will think, will many of them find indeed, that they know beforehand most of what we shall deliver to them, and so will foon grow weary of minding us. Coming to church, the bulk of mankind, even still, confider as a duty: but hearing as they ought, they partly neglect, and partly experience to be difficult. Therefore we must not only admonifh, but affift them. For this end we must shew them from first to last, that we are not merely faying good things in their prefence, but directing what we fay to them perfonally, as a matter which concerns them beyond expression. More general discourses they often want skill to take home to themfelves; and oftener yet inclination: fo they fit all the while flupidly regardless of what is delivered. Therefore we must interest them in it, by calling upon them to observe, by asking them questions to answer filently in their own minds, by every prudent incitcment to follow us closely. But then we must make them understand, that in preaching against fin we never preach against fuch or fuch a finner; but mean to amend and improve all, who want it: wifhing every one to apply as much as poffible of what he hears to his own benefit, but nothing to the reproach of his neighbour.

Still you will prefs them in vain to pay attention, unlefs you win them to it by what you have to fay. And one principal contrivance for that purpole is to make your fermons extremely clear. Terms and phrafes may be familiar to you, which are quite unintelligible to them: and I fear this happens much oftener, than we fuspect. Therefore guard against it. Your expressions may be very common, without being low: yet employ the loweft, provided they are not ridiculous, rather than not be understood. Let your sentences, and the parts of them, be short, where you can. And place your words fo, efpecially in the longer, that your meaning may be evident all the way. For if they take it not immediately, they have no time to confider of it, as they might in reading a book : and if they are perplexed in the beginning of a period, they will never attempt going on with you to the end: but give up the whole, as out of their reach. Avoid rufficity and grofinefs in your flile: yet be not too fond of fmooth and foft and flowing language; but fludy to be nervous and expreffive ; and bear the cenfure of being unpolifhed, rather than uninfluencing. Never multiply arguments beyond neceffity; for they will only tire: abitain from weak ones; for they will difcredit the ftrong. Employ no arguments to prove things, which need not be proved: for you will only make them doubtful. Employ no long or fubtle arguments to prove any thing : but reft your affertions on the dictates of plain good fense. Never express yourfelves on any point, as having dominion over the faith (d) of your hearers; but lay before them the best evidence, of which they are capable. In matters too high for them, let them

(d) 2 Cor. i. 24.

them know, in a modeft manner, that you fpeak the fentiments of the more learned, in which providence hath by their flation directed them to acquiefce : in others, reafon more at large, in the fpirit of St. *Paul*, when he told the Corinthians, *I fpeak as to wife men: judge ye what I fay (e)*.

You might perhaps give more entertainment, and procure more applaufe, by difregarding fome of thefe directions. But your bufinefs is, not to pleafe or be admired, but to do good : to make men think not of your abilities, attainments, or eloquence, but of the ftate of their own fouls; and to fix them in the belief and practice of what will render them happy now and to eternity. For this purpofe (obferve further) it will by no means fuffice to teach them outward regularity and decency; and let them fancy they have religion enough, when they come to church pretty conftantly, and live as well as their neighbours: though, in fome refpects, ill, and, fcarce in any, well from a principle of confcience. Or be they from a fenfe of duty ever fo honeft, and fober, and chafte, and beneficent; another indifpenfable part of morals is the difcipline of the inward man. And affectionate piety is full as neceffary, as morals can be : and gofpel piety no lefs than natural.

Here then lay your foundation: and fet before your people the lamentable condition of fallen man, the numerous actual fins, by which they have made it worfe, the redemption wrought out for them by Jefus Chrift, the nature and importance of true faith in him, their absolute need of the grace of the divine Spirit in order to obey his precepts. This will be addreffing yourfelves to them as Chriftian minifters ought to The holy Scriptures will furnish you with matter Chriftian hearers. for it abundantly. Short and plain reasonings, founded on their authority, will dart conviction into every mind : whereas if your doctrine and your speech be not that of their bibles; if you contradict, or explain away, or pass over in filence, any thing taught there, they who are beft contented with you, will learn little from you; and others will be offended, and quit you when they can. We have in fact loft many of our people to fectaries by not preaching in a manner fufficiently evangelical; and shall neither recover them from the extravagancies, into which they have run, nor keep more from going over to them, but by returning to the right way: declaring all the counfel of God (f); and that principally, not in the words, which man's wildom teacheth, but which the Holy Gholt teacheth (g).

Yet the obfcurer of fcriptural paffages we fhall do well to omit: or, if there be need, illuftrate them, as far as we can, briefly: not to aim at minute explanations of myfteries; but urge the belief of them from decifive paffages of God's word, quoted according to its real import, and leave them as that hath left them. For by attempting to throw in more light, than our prefent flate admits, you will only dazzle and blind thofe, who faw before as through a glafs darkly (b).

You are debtors indeed both to the wife and to the unwife (i). But remember, the ignorant are by far the greateft number : and unneceffary knowledge, if you could communicate it to them, is of fmall ufe. But you will never be able to enlarge on abstrufe and difficult points to the edi-

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(e) 1 Cor. x. 15. (f) Acts xx. 27. (g) 1 Cor. ii. 13. (b) 1 Cor. xiii. 12. (i) Rom. i. 14, fication of the generality: whereas you may dwell on the plaineft to the fatisfaction and improvement of the moft learned. It is true, declining to fhew reading or acutenefs may be to fome a painful felf-denial; but able judges will eafily perceive, both that you could fhew them, and why you do not. Therefore enter but little, if at all, into matters about which your hearers are not likely to err, at leaft dangeroufly. Yet fuffer not either the evidence or the fundamentals of Chriftianity, or the honour of the Proteftant religion, or of the eftablifhed church, to want a due fupport, when you are any way called to the defence of them. At fuch times demonstrate your zeal; but be fure to do it with Chriftian temper; in meeknefs influcting thefe that eppele themfelves (k): at others, avoid a controverfial manner, and confine yourfelves to brief influctions on thefe heads.

It may poffibly fometimes be neceffary in our fermons to vindicate our rights, and magnify our office (1). But this muft be done very fparingly and cautioufly; fo as to cut off all pretence, that we take the overfight of God's flock, either for filtby lucre, or from a defire of being lords over his heritage (m). We muft never fet up an undue, never a fulfpicious claim: but confefs, that the treafure of the Gofpel is committed to us entirely for the fake of others, not our own; and that we have it in earthen veffels (n); are liable to continual imperfections and frailties. Such humility is no lefs our wifdom, than our duty. For that Clergyman will always acquire the greateft refpect, who fhews the moft care to deferve it, and the leaft eagernefs to demand it.

Every part of your difcourfes must preferve the gravity and the earneftnefs, which is infeparable from fubjects of a religious nature. If you can fpeak of these lightly and negligently, your auditors will suspect you have little concern about them : they of courfe will have lefs in hearing you: their thoughts will wander to the ends of the earth, or their attention to every thing be buried in fleep. But though languid in no part, you will however be comparatively cool in expositions of Scripture, in doctrinal, in cafuiftical points, referving your chief warmth for the great articles of Christian practice. There your very utmost endeavours will be needful to produce in your people a due fenfe of guilt and unworthinefs, fervent defires of pardon, love to him who hath loved them, refignation to God's pleafure, firm purpofes of obeying his laws; to caution them effectually against profanenefs, lukewarmnefs, formality, refentment, hard-heartednese, unjust love of gain, fondness of unlawful indulgences; to infpire them with good-will towards all men, with proportionably kind regards to those who stand in nearer relations to them, diligence to be ufeful in their feveral flations, reafonable indifference towards the things of this life, pious longings for a better. Their degree of knowledge, rank and circumftances of life, their prevailing notions and cuftoms, will afford you much further employment, to make your fermons local, if I may fo express it; calculated to promote the virtues which they are chiefly called to exercife, and guard against the fins, of which they are chiefly in danger. For what perfectly fuits one congregation may be extremely foreign from the exigences of another. And fur-

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(n) 2 Cor. iv. 7.

<sup>. (</sup>k) 2 Tim, ii. 25. (l) Rom. xi. 13. (m) 1 Pet. v. 2, 3.

#### third Charge to his Clergy.

further fill you muft not only urge them to do their duty, but to use the means of doing it; which muft be pointed out to them: avoiding temptations, keeping clear of bad company, contracting friendfhips with ferious and prudent perfons, employing themfelves in proper bulinefs, reading good books, forming pious, yet prudent, refolutions, and begging, in private prayer, grace to help in time of need (o): not firicfly contining their devotions to any forms, though forms are very useful, but varying them according to their fpiritual condition. These are the things, on which you muft infift with your whole force: not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts (p).

Yet, while you take without referve all requifite freedom, you muft alfo take care not to provoke, inftead of reforming them; but fhew, that you fincerely with well to them; and think as well of them as you can: you muft praife them when you have opportunity; give them cautions oftener than reproofs, and never reprove harfhly; but express a fatherly concern, rather than anger, at their faults. Reprefent no fault as worfe than it is : and carry no injunction to an extravagant height. If you do, they will either think you unreafonable, or themfelves incapable of becoming good; or will run into fome abfurdity by attempting it. And for their encouragement, along with the duties, lay before them, in a frong light, the comforts alfo, prefent and future, of religion.

It is but too poffible, that fometimes you muft excite your people to virtues, in which you are, more or lefs, deficient yourfelves. For it would be heinous unfaithfulnefs to omit or explain away neceffary precepts becaufe you are imperfect in the practice of them. And lamentable is our cafe, if there be any Chriftian obligation, on which we dare not for fhame fpeak freely: yet fill worfe, if we harden our confciences, till we venture boldly to enjoin what we habitually tranfgrefs. For in that cafe, not only our credit will be utterly loft, but our amendment almoft abfolutely hopelefs. Therefore correct your own hearts and lives in the firft place by the difcourfes which you compole : become in all points good men; and then you may fearlefsly fpeak on all points like fuch.

Yet even good men muft obferve a difference. Thole of lefs knowledge muft express themfelves with lefs pofitivenefs, thole of lefs gravity and difference in the lefs authority and frictnefs, than their betters. And every one fhould confider, what his age and flanding, reputation for learning, prudence and piety, will fupport him in faying; that he may not take more upon him, than will be allowed him. Yet all muft affiduoufly take pains to acquire, and preferve, fuch effeem, that they may fay with propriety whatever their function requires. For how unhappy would it be to difqualify yourfelves from ufefunefs by levity or indicretion!

But even the beft qualified to exhort muft keep within due bounds; convince the judgment before they attempt to warm the paffions; rife gradually into what deferves the name of vehemence; and be fuge neither to rife any higher, nor continue in that ftrain any longer, than they are likely to carry their auditors along with them." For if they are cold, while the preacher is pathetic, the imprefion made upon them will be very

(0) Heb. iv. 16.

(p) 1 Theff. ii. 4.

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very different from what he wifhes. And our nation is more difpofed, than most others, to approve a temperate manner of speaking. Every thing, which can be called oratory, is apt to be deemed affectation : and if it goes a great length, raifes contempt and ridicule. But were the most ferious emotions to be raifed by mere mechanical vehemence, they would be unfairly raifed: and what is beyond nature will ufually foon fubfide; perhaps with fcorn, upon reflection, of what was admired when heard. Or supposing such admiration to continue, bad effects may as poffibly follow as good: whereas warmth of affection, excited to a proper degree by the rational enforcement of folid arguments, promifes to be durable, and will never do harm. The faculty of moving hearers thus, is a most valuable bleffing. And fuch, as have but little of it, may confiderably improve it, by labouring to affect themfelves deeply with what they would fay: and thinking, what methods of faying it will be most perfuafive. But they must not attempt to force an unwilling genius too far. If they do, what it produces will be fo ungraceful and unfuccefsful, that they had much better content themfelves to do as well as they can in their own way.

Your delivery must in the first place be such, that you can be heard; elfe you preach in vain: befides that fpeaking too low argues indolence and indifference; whereas an audible exertion is a mark of earnestnes: and the common people are peculiarly pleafed, when their minifter appears to take pains about them. But then you must neither be precipitately quick, (for if your words be underftood, your meaning will not) nor tedioufly flow; nor fink any one part of your fentence under its proper level, especially the concluding part. Diffinctness will do much to fupply want of ftrength in fpeaking : which however it is very material that you fhould try to remedy gradually, as many have done, by a pru-dent exercise of your voice. Yet straining beyond your due pitch will give your hearers pain, make you in some degree inarticulate, and produce a finging fort of cadence and tone. This last indeed hath been fometimes known to pleafe weak perfons: but it cannot pollibly make them either wifer or better : and it offends the judicious extremely. Many learn in their childhood a provincial dialect; which they cannot lay afide eafily; and yet thould endeavour it, especially if they settle in a different part of the nation. Some acquire uncouth accents one knows not how: fome bring them from the fchool or the college: and now and then one feems to hear a theatrical pronunciation; which hath been condemned even by heathen writers upon oratory; and is the very worft, that a Chriftian orator can adopt. It reminds his hearers, greatly to his difcredit, where he must probably have learnt it : he will also appear by means of it to be only acting a part, and be regarded accordingly. Indeed all remarkable imitation, in delivery as well as composition, though of a perfon in your own profession, and one justly admired, will be difliked. You will never attain to an advantageous refemblance of his manner: but, by a miftaken or overdone mimicry, turn what perhaps may be graceful in the original, into oddnefs. Or could you avoid that, you would leffen your weight and influence : which must arile from ipeaking in your own character, not perfonating another. Every's man's voice and utterance, as well as his face, belongs to himfelf alone; and it

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is vain to think either of looking or talking like fuch or fuch a one. Therefore preferve what is native to you: free it from adventitious faults: improve it, if you can: but remember, that you may deprave it by the endeavour; and certainly will, if you change it effentially. Speak to your people, as you would in converfation, when you undertake to inform or perfuade a friend, in a concern of great moment; only with more deliberatenefs, more ftrength and energy, in proportion to the numbers: and vary both your file and your elocution, as in converfation you always do, fuitably to your matter. For monotony both abfolutely prevents emotion, and foon deadens attention. It is worft indeed, when uniformly unnatural, by degenerating into a kind of chant. But merely to be uniformly inexprefive, be it through heavinefs, or effeminacy, or infignificant lightnefs, is either very blamable, or, if it cannot be helped, very unhappy. And perhaps a little even of injudicious variety is better than a wearifome famenefs.

In public fpeaking, perfons commonly fall into errors, and fometimes great ones, without perceiving it, though they can obferve fmall ones in others. Therefore you will act prudently in defiring fome well-wifher, on whofe judgment and franknefs you can depend, to advertife you of any thing wrong in the conduct of your voice, or in your action; and you will fhew your gratitude and good fenfe by fludying to amend it.

We of this nation are not given to ufe or to admire much action, either in ordinary difcourfe, or even in popular harangues. And, were it for this reafon only, a preacher fhould be moderate in it. But befides, in the nature of the thing, you had far better have none, than what is unbecoming, or unmeaning, or unfuitable to what you are faying, or repeated at certain diffances, whatever you are faying. Yet fomewhat of gefture, appearing to be artlefs, and regulated by propriety, may be very ufeful, efpecially in the warmer parts, of exhortation, reproof, or even argument. For to be altogether motionlefs, when the fubject is animating, and our language perhaps vehement, feems an inconfiftency; and may raife a doubt, whether we are in earneft. But fill defect in action is better than excefs. And a great deal cannot well be ufed by thofe who read their fermons.

This is one objection against reading them : and there are feveral befides. Perfons, who are fhort-fighted, have peculiar reafons to avoid it. Indeed almost all perfons are accustomed from their early years to read in a different tone, from that in which they fpeak at other times : and we feldom correct it throughly. Or if we did, what we fay in fuch manner as to make it feem the prefent dictate of our own hearts, will much better make its way into the hearts of others, than if our eyes are fixed all the while on a paper, from which we visibly recite the whole. It will ordinarily be uttered too with more difengaged freedom and livelier fpirit. The preacher also will be abler to enforce his words by fignificant looks: to perceive from the countenances of his hearers, what they comprehend, and by what they are moved; and may accordingly enlarge on that head, or proceed to another, as he finds cause. He may likewife oppofe with fuccefs irregular itinerant declaimers, who affect and gain popularity by this method: and as their credulous followers are apt to think it a supernatural gift, he may undeceive them by imitating G4 in

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in this cafe the practice of St. Paul in another, which he defcribes thus: what I do, that I will do; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we(q). But then there must be a long and diligent preparation to do this well: fome will fcarce ever attain fufficient prefence of mind, and readinefs of expreffion: others will acquit themfelves handfomely in a good flow of fpirits, but meanly when these fail them: and though little inaccuracies will be obferved by few, yet hefitations will by all, and every other confiderable fault by fenfible hearers, to the preacher's great difgrace. Or if fuch do get the faculty of being always able to fay fomething plaufible, it will tempt them to neglect the improvement of their understandings and their difcourses; and to be content with digreffing, whenever they are at a lofs, from their text and their fubject, to any point, on which they can be copious : to utter off hand fuch crudities, as they could not bear to write down; and think the meaneft of extempore effusions good enough for the populace. Now on the contrary, previously fludying and writing fermons tends to fill them with well digested and well adapted matter,' difpofed in right order: especially, if you will carefully revife them every time you preach them; fupply deficiences, blot out repetitions, correct improprieties, guard against mifapprehenfions, enlighten what is obscure, familiarize what is too high, transpose what is wrongly placed, ftrengthen the weak parts, animate the languid ones. Your composition needs not be at all' the ftiffer, but may be the freer, for the pains thus employed upon it. You may frame it purpofely to be spoken as if you were not reading it: and by looking it over a few times when you are about to use it, you may deliver it almost without being observed to read it. The more you acquire of this art, the more you will be liked, and the ftronger impreffion you will make. But after all, every man, as the apoltle faith on a different occasion, bath his proper gift of God; one after this manner, another after that (r): let each cultivate his own; and no one cenfure or defpife his brother. There is a middle way, uled by our predeceffors, of letting down, in fhort notes, the method and principal heads, and enlarging on them in fuch words as prefent themfelves at the time. Perhaps, duly managed, this would be the beft. That which is, or lately was, common amongft foreign divines, of writing fermons first, then getting and repeating them by heart, not only is unreasonably laborious, but subjects perfons to the hazard of stopping difagreeably, and even breaking off abruptly, for want of memory. Or if they escape that danger, there still remains another, of faying their leffon with ungraceful marks of fear and caution.

Inflead of taking a text, which comprehends within itfelf the whole fubjeck, of which you would treat, it may often be ufeful to chufe one, which nath a reference to things preceding and following it, and to expound all the context. This will afford you a variety of matter, and give you opportunities for fhort unexpected remarks; with which perfors are frequently more flruck, than with an entire difcourfe; for of the latter they forefee the drift all the way, and therefore fet themfelves to fence againft it. Thus alfo you may illuftrate the beauties, at the fame time that you flew the practical ufes, of large portions of feripture at once : for inflance, of a parable, a converfation, a miracle, of our bleffed Lord;

(q) 2 Cor. xi. 12.

. (r) 1 Cor. vii. 7.

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or a narration concerning this or that other memorable perfon, whether deferving of praife or blame. For fcripture hiftories and examples are cafily remembered, and have great weight. In proportion as we overlook them, we shall appear less to be ministers of God's word: and our people will have lefs veneration for us, or for it, or for both. You may alfo in this method, as you go along, obviate objections to paffages of God's word without flating them in form, at which otherwife many may ftumble, if they read with attention : and if they do not attend, they will read with no profit. Several things in holy writ feem to be ftrange; hardly confiftent one with another, or with our natural notions. Of thefe difficulties, which must always perplex perfons, and may often deliver them over a prey to infidels, you may occafionally remove one and an-other; meddling with none, but fuch as you can overcome: and from your fuccefs in thefe, you may obferve to your auditors the probability, that others are capable of folutions alfo. Perhaps they will forget your folution : but they will remember that they heard one, and may have it repeated to them, if they pleafe. By these means you will teach your people, what is grievoufly wanting in the prefent age, to value their bibles more, and underftand them better; and to read them both with pleafure and profit, drawing from them ufeful inferences and obfervations, as they have heard you do. Formerly courfes of lectures on whole books of fcripture were cuftomary in churches; and they were doubtlefs extremely beneficial. It would not be easy, if possible, to revive these now: but the practice, which I have been proposing to you, is some approach towards them.

I would also advice you to instruct your parishioners, amongst other things, from fome proper text or texts, in the daily and occafional fervices of the church : not with a view to extol either immoderately, much lefs to provoke wrath against those who diffent from us; but mildly to answer unjust imputations upon our liturgy, and chiefly to shew the meaning, the reasons, the uses of each part; that your congregations may, as the apostle expresses it, pray with the understanding (s). In all compositions, there will be fome things, which to fome perfons want explaining: and, were the whole ever to clear, men are ftrangely apt both to hear and to fpeak words, that are become familiar to them, with fcarce any attention to their fenfe. And fo by degrees a bodily attendance and worfhip becomes all that they pay: and they return home almost as little edified, as they would by devotions in a tongue unknown. Convincing them of this fault, and affifting them to mend it, must greatly contribute to the promotion of true piety amongst them. Nor will it be a small benefit, if, in the courfe of your liturgical inftructions, you can perfuade the bulk of your congregations to join in the decent use of plalmody, as their forefathers did; inftead of the prefent fhameful neglect of it by almost all, and the conceited abuse of it by a few.

But a fervent defire of being uleful will teach you more than any particular directions can, upon every head. Without this defire, you will either be negligent; or if you would feem zealous, you will be detected for want of uniformity and perfeverance. Therefore make fure first that all be right within, and out of the good treafure of the heart you will bring forth

(s) 1 Cor. xiv. 19.

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forth good things (t), naturally and prudently, and, through the grace of the holy Spirit, effectually. It is not easy indeed even to instruct the willing; much lefs to convince the unwilling, and reform the wicked. But still these are the purposes, for which we are God's embassiadors; and we must try with indefatigable perfeverance every way to execute our commission. We must study human nature in our own breasts, and those of others: we muft acquaint ourfelves, by all innocent means, with the opinions and practices of the world, especially of our hearers, that we may lay their hearts and lives open to their view, and make them feel what we fay. We must confider all the while we compose, and reconfider as we preach and afterwards: " Is this adapted fufficiently to the capacities, " the flate of mind, the circumflances of the poor people who are to hear "it: will this part be clear, that home enough, a third well guarded " againft miftakes: will they go back as much better difposed than they " came, as it is in our power to make them?" Perhaps one or more ways of reprefenting a neceffary doctrine or duty have failed. We muft think, whether a more likely may not be found, or a lefs likely in appearance prove more fuccefsful.

If you have preached a confiderable time in a place, and done little or no good ; there muft, in all probability, be fome fault, not only in your hearers, but in you or your fermons. For the word of God, when duly dispensed, is to this day, as it was originally, powerful, and sharper than a two-edged fword (u). Inquire then, where the fault may be. Never despair, nor be immoderately grieved, if your fuccess be small: but be not indifferent about it: do not content yourfelves with the indolent plea, that you have done your duty, and are not answerable for the event. You may have done it as far as the law requires : yet by no means have discharged your confciences. You may have done it confcientiously, yet not with the diligence or the address that you ought. And as we are feldom eafy in other cafes, when we fail of our end; if we are fo in this, it doth not look well. At leaft confult your hearts upon the point. And if you have been deficient, beg of God pardon, grace and direction: endeavour to do more for your people: confult your brethren about the means. Conversation of this nature will much better become Clergymen when they meet, than any which is not relative to their profession, or only relative to the profits of it. But especially ask the advice of the most able and serious.

I am very fenfible, that in all the particulars before-mentioned I have been far from obferving fufficiently myfelf the rules which I have now recommended to you: but hope I fhall make fome amends, though late, to the church of Chrift, by exhorting and directing others. It was my purpofe, after fpeaking of flated infructions, to have proceeded to occafional ones: a very important and fadly neglected part of the paftoral care. But my ftrength will not fuffice: and I have detained you already too long. If God fpare me to another like occafion, that thall be my fubject. If not, as is moft probable, I fhall endeavour to leave behind me fome admonitions to you concerning it (w). At prefent I can only intreat you to confider very ferioully, what numbers there are in moft parifhes,

(1) Matth. xii. 35. (1) Heb. iv. 12. (w) Nothing of this kind hath been found among his Grace's papers.

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parifhes, and therefore perhaps in yours, whom you cannot think to be in a flate of falvation; and how greatly it imports you to use with them, as you folemnly promifed at your ordination, not only public but private monitons, as need shall require, and occasion shall be given. The eternal welfare of many poor creatures may depend on this: and your own is deeply concerned it it, as God himfelf hath declared: who will certainly expect, that what he requires you to do, be done to the very utmost of your ability. Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. If thou dost not show the wicked from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine band. But if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, he shall die in bis iniquity, but thou host delivered thy foul (x).

(x) Ezek. iii. 17, 18, 19. xxxiii. 7, 8, 9.



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#### FOR

# ORDERS,

## After their fubscribing the ARTICLES.

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#### Gentlemen,

O U have now made the fubscription by law required. And Y as, in fo doing, you have acknowledged the liturgy and articles of the church of England to be agreeable to the word of God; Thope you will think yourfelves bound, as you are, to be careful, that the inftructions which you give, and the doctrines which you maintain, in public and in private, be agreeable to that liturgy and those articles: that you neither contradict, nor omit to inculcate and defend, on proper occations, the truths, which they contain.

In the next place I exhort you to fpend a due fhare of the remainder of this day in what, I truft, hath employed not a little of your time already; weighing diligently the nature and importance of the undertaking, in which you are about to engage; forming fuitable refolutions; and earnefly

### Instructions given to Candidates for Orders.

neftly begging that grace of God, which alone can make you able minifters of the New Testament (a).

Nothing is better fitted to affift you in this good work, than the office of ordination, of deacons or priefts, as you are refpectively concerned. You muft certainly have read it over; before you offered yourfelves. Since that, you have been directed to read it again. But I defire you to perufe it once more this afternoon with your beft attention, that you may join in it to morrow with a greater degree of rational ferioufnefs; and particularly, that you may anfwer, on more deliberate confideration, the queftions, which will then be put to you. For there can hardly be a cafe, in which either infincerity, or even thoughtleffinefs, would carry in it heavier guilt.

And that you may be in no perplexity concerning the meaning or fitnefs of any part of the office, it may be ufeful to go through fome parts of it along with you beforehand, proceeding as they lie in the book.

The first thing, which Candidates, both for deacons and priests orders, after they are prefented, are required to do, as diffinct from the reft of the congregation, is to take the oaths of allegiance and fupremacy. For, as you are to be minifters of the church eftablished by law in this nation, it is evidently reafonable, that the civil government, eftablifhed by law, fhould be affured of the fidelity and affection of perfons to whom it gives and fecures privileges and profits; and who are intrufted with the care, amongst other matters, of making men good subjects. Now these oaths bind every person, who takes them, to bonour the king (b), and by confequence all that are put in authority under him, both in word and deed; and to lead, in fubjection to them, quiet and peaceable lives (c). That these things may with a good confcience be promised and performed there is no just cause of doubt. But if any one thinks there is, he ought to apply for fatisfaction: and till he receives it, he ought to abftain from taking the oaths. For whatever is not of faith, is fin (d) : and in this cafe it would be no lefs, than perjury. Nothing is a plea fufficient for committing any fin, much lefs one fo heinous : not even all the force, that can be used. But here is no shadow of force. You are come voluntarily to offer yourfelves, well knowing that the oaths muft be tendered to you: that is, you have made it your choice to take them.

But by your fubfcription you have entered into a further obligation: to use the liturgy in all your public ministrations  $(\epsilon)$ : and therefore, to pray for the king by name, for his long life and prosperity, for his obtaining victory over all his enemies. God forbid, that any one, who doth this, should be diaffected to the government, under which we live. And if we are friends, it is both our duty and our wildom to show that we are. For thus we shall ftrengthen an establishment, on which, under God, the fafe enjoyment of our religion intirely depends; we shall procure the support, which we cannot but be fensible, that we want; and we shall filence, or at least consute those, who love to shall defines used.

> (a) 2 Cor. iii. 6. (b) 1 Pet. ii. 17. (d) Rom. xiv. 23.

After

(c) 1 Tim. ii. 2. (e) Can. 36.

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After the oaths, Candidates for deacons orders are afked: Do you truff that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghoft to take upon you this office and minifiration? A folemn queftion: and which ought to be well confidered, before it is anfwered. Obferve then: it is not faid, Do you feel; have you an immediate perception of fuch an impulfe from the Holy Ghoft, as you can diffinguifh from all other inward movements by its manner of imprefing you: but, Do you truft; are you on good grounds perfuaded? What then are the proper grounds of fuch perfuasion?

In the first place, if he hath not moved you effectually to live foberly, righteoufly, and godly (f), you may be fure he hath not moved you to affume the office of a minister in God's church. Examine yourfelves therefore firicity on this point : a most important one to all men ; but to you, if poffible, above all : and before you prefume to officiate in his house, ask your hearts, Do you transgress, do you omit, no duty, wilfully or knowingly? Have you a genuine practical faith in Chrift? Are you, on the terms of the Gospel covenant, intitled to everlasting life? But fuppoling that you are, more is requilite in the prefent cafe : and what more, the latter part of the question points out. To ferve God, for the promoting of his glory, and the edifying of his church. This then being the defign of the office ; if, fo far as you know your own hearts, this is your motive to defire it; and if, fo far as you can judge of your own abilities and attainments, they are equal to it in fome competent degree : then you may fafely answer, that you trust you are moved by the Holy Ghoft to take it upon you. For we can have fuch truft to Godward only through Chrift, who hath fent us the Spirit : we are not fufficient to do or think any thing as of ourfelves : but our fufficiency is of God (g). Together with this principal motive, of ferving God by edifying his people, you may allowably have the fubordinate one, of providing a decent maintenance for your own fupport, and for those who may belong to you: but if you are indifferent or cool about the former, and attentive only or chiefly to the latter : fince you cannot think that fuch difpolitions are approved by the Holy Spirit, as proper for the ministry, you will be guilty of lying to him (b), if you affirm, that he hath moved you to enter on it with them. Therefore infpect your fouls throughly; and form them, by the help of Divine grace, to be duly influenced by the right principle, before you venture to answer this question: which is very wifely made the leading one; becaufe your inducement will be the rule of your behaviour, and probably also the measure of your fuccefs.

The next queftion, put to those who apply for deacons orders, and the first to fuch as have received them, and defire to be admitted priefts, is, Do you think, that you are truly called, according to the will of Christ, and the due order of this realm, to the ministry of the church? That is, are you confcious neither of any defect in body or mind, nor of any other impediment, which may, for the prefent, if not for ever, be, according to the laws of God or man, a just obstacle in your way? Such things may effcape our knowledge or memory. Therefore we call upon you to inform us. And you are bound to answer with funcerity.

> (f) Tit. ii. 12. (g) 2 Cor. iii. 4, 5-

(b) Acts v. 3.

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#### Candidates for Orders.

It is not requifite, that I fhould enlarge on every queftion ; though it is, that you fhould weigh every one ferioufly. That, which recites the duties of deacons, may feem to have fome difficulty in it : as it affigns to them occupations, which the Acts of the Apoftles do not, in the hiftory of their appointment (i); and as they are but little employed now in the fingle bufinefs, there allotted to them. But that paffage of Scripture plainly was intended to fet forth, only the immediate and urgent reafon of ordaining them, not the whole of what was, then or foon after, given them in charge. For we find in the fame book, that Philip the deacon both preached and baptized (k). And the qualifications, required in deacons by St. Paul (1), intimate very clearly, that more things muft, even then, have been incumbent upon them, than administring to the relief of the poor. Accordingly, from the primitive ages downwards, they are defcribed as performing occasionally most of the same offices. which they do now; and being, what their name denotes, affiftant and fubfervient to priefts in all proper employments (m). And the lefs they are engaged in their chief original one, the more opportunity and the more need they have, to fhew diligence in the other good works, belonging or fuited peculiarly to their flation.

The next queftion is common to Candidates for each order : Will you fashion your own lives, and those of your families, so far as in you lieth, to be wholefome examples to the flock of Chrift? This extends to avoiding in your own behaviour, and reftraining in theirs, follies, levities, mean and difreputable actions, as well as crimes and vices. The Apoftle enjoins deacons, and their wives, to be grave (n) : much more then ought priefts. He enjoins every Christian to abstain from all appearance of evil (o). And our bleffed Lord enjoins all his Disciples to be wife, as well as harmles (p). Therefore govern yourfelves and yours by thefe rules : and confider frequently, whether you observe them well. For without it you will neither gain efteem, nor do good.

The last question. put alike to the whole number of Candidates, is, Will you reverently obey your ordinary, and them to whom the government over you is committed? You would be bound to this, though you were not to promife it : for both reafon and Scripture demand it. Still more firmly you will be bound, when you have promifed it, though it were of fmall importance. But it is of very great, not only to the dignity and eafe of your fuperiors, but to your own intereft, and the benefit of the whole church. Our Saviour both commands, and prayed for unity amongft his followers in the moft expressive terms (q). Without union there cannot be a fufficient degree either of ftrength or beauty: and without fubordination there cannot long be union. Therefore obey, as the Apostle directs, them that have the rule over you (r); and promote their honour, their credit, their influence. This will make us abler to ferve the

- (i) Acts vi. (k) Acts viii. 5-13, 26-44.
- (1) 1 Tim. iii. 8-13.
  - (n) 1 Tim. iii. 8, 11.
  - (p) Matth. x. 16.
  - (q) John xiii. 34, 35. xvii. 11, 12, 21, 22, 23.
  - (r) Heb. xiii. 17.

- (m) See Bingham's Orig. Eccl. 1. 2. C. 2C. (0) 1 Theff. y. 22.

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the caufe of religion, and protect you. And God forbid that, fo far as we are able, we fhould ever fail to be willing and zealous.

In the office for the ordination of priefts, after a pious and awful charge, which I recommend to your most ferious attention, follow feveral queftions of the greatest moment, your answers to which. I hope, you will remember to the last day of your lives. In these answers, befides what hath been already mentioned, you promife, that the doctrine and discipline of Christ, as contained in Scripture, and received in this church and realm, fhall be the ftandard of your teaching and acting; and every thing contrary to them be faithfully opposed by you : that you will use both public and private monitions and exhortations, as well to the fick as to the whole, within your cures; and that, as frequently and fully as need shall require, and occasion be given. You promise also, that you will be diligent in prayers and reading the Holy Scriptures ; which by the preceding exhortation evidently appears to mean, private prayer and reading; and in fuch Audies, as help to the knowledge of Scripture; laying afide the Audy of the world and the flefh : that is, not making, either grofs pleafures, or more refined amusements, even literary ones unconnected with your profession, or power, or profit, or advancement, or applaufe, your great aim in life; but labouring chiefly to qualify yourfelves for doing good to the fouls of men, and applying carefully to that purpose whatever qualifications you attain. Further yet, you promife, that you will maintain and fet forwards, as much as lieth in you, quietness, peace and love among all Christian people; and especially among them, that are or shall be committed to your charge. By this you oblige yourfelves, never to raife or promote perfonal, family, parochial, ecclefiaftical, political, or any other, animofities; but to difcourage, and, if poffible, compose and extinguish them; than which you cannot perform a more Christian part, or one more conducive to your honour and your usefulnefs.

But, befides pondering well beforehand thefe anfwers, which you are to make, I earneftly beg you, to read and think them over often afterwards: a d particularly, at each return of the ember weeks to examine yourfelves, as in the prefence of God, whether you have made good the engagement, into which you entered at your ordination. So far as you have, this practice will afford you the greateft poffible comfort: fo far as you may have failed, it will fuggeft to you the moft ufeful admonition.

After these queffions, a fhort filence is appointed to be kept for the fecret prayers of the congregation, that God would enable and incline you to do what you have undertaken: which bleffing, I hope, you will ask at the fame time for yourselves very earness the follows a hymn of confiderable antiquity: and to be repeated with much reverence, on account of the important petitions and doctrines comprized in it, though it be altogether void of ornament in that old translation, which we full retain. Next to this, follows a very proper address to the Throne of Grace, pronounced by the Bishop alone, in the name of the whole affembly: which is instantly fucceeded by the act of ordination.

The first words of that, Receive the Holy Ghost, were used by our Saviour to his Apostles, immediately after he had faid, As my Father, bath fent me, even so fend I you (s). God gave not the Spirit by measure unto him (t): and

(s) John xx. 21, 22.

(1) John iiis 34.

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and he was able to beftow what measure he pleased, both of spiritual gifts and graces, upon others. He meant however by this benediction to confer only the ordinary ones: for the extraordinary; you know, were referved till after his afcenfion. Far be it from the Bifhops of his church to claim, even in respect of the former, the powers which he had. But ftill thefe words in our mouths, when fpoken over you, properly exprefs, in the first place, the communication of that authority, which proceeds from the Holy Ghoft. For we read, that the Holy Ghoft faid, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work, whereunto I have called them (u): and that the latter of these exhorted the elders of the church of Ephefus, Take heed to the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (w). They alfo express, in the second place, our earnest request to the Father of Mercies, that you may at all times enjoy fuch proportions, both of the graces and gifts of the Spirit, as will be needful for you : which requeft, if it be not your own fault, will prove effectual; because having, in the common courfe of his Providence, appointed us, though unworthy, to act in this behalf, he will affuredly be ready to own and blefs our miniftrations.

It follows very foon : whofe fins thou doft forgive, they are forgiven; and whole fins thou dolt retain, they are retained. These again are the words of Chrift to his Apoftles, immediately after the former. But he did not grant to them the power, either of retaining the fins of penitent perfons, or of forgiving the impenitent. Nor do we pretend to grant, by uttering them, all the powers, which the Apoftles had in this respect. They had the difcernment of spirits (x): and could fay with certainty, when perfons were penitent, and confequently forgiven, and when not (y). They were able also to inflict miraculous punishments on offenders; and to remove, on their repentance, the punifhments, which had been inflicted. These words will convey nothing of all this to you. But still, when we use them, they give you, first, an affurance, that according to the terms of that Gospel, which you are to preach, men shall be pardoned or condemned : fecondly, a right of inflicting ecclefiaftical centures for a fhorter or longer time, and of taking them off; which, in regard to external communion, is retaining or forgiving offences. This power, being bestowed for the edification of the church, must be restrained, not only by general rules of order, but according to the particular exigencies of circumstances. And our church wishes, with much reason, for circumftances more favourable to the exertion of it (z). But how little foever exerted, the power is inherent in the office of priesthood. And though we are no more infallible in our proceedings and fentences, than temporal judges are in theirs; yet our acts, as well as theirs, are to be refpected, as done by competent authority. And if they are done on good grounds also, whatever we shall bind or lose on earth, will be bound or loofed in heaven (a). Nor will other proofs of repentance be fufficient in the fight of God, if fubmiffion to the discipline of the church of Christ, when it hath been offended, and requires due fatisfaction, be obstinately refused, either from haughtinefs or negligence.

(u) Acts xiii. 2. (y) Acts viii. 21, 23. Vol., VI. (a) Acts xx. 28. (x) 1 Cor. xii. 10. (x) Office of Commination. (a) Matth.xviii.18. H

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To these words is subjoined the concluding charge : and be thou a faithful dispenser of the word of God, and of kis holy facraments. This then is the stewardship committed to you. And you cannot but see, in what a profane and corrupt age it is committed to you : how grievoufly religion, and its ministers, are hated or despised; how lamentably both they, and and its other professions, are degenerated and divided. Your business will be, each within the fphere of his influence, to prevent thefe things from growing worfe ; which, bad as they are, they still may ; and, if polfible, to make them better; or at leaft, to recover or preferve fuch, as you can, from the general depravity. But you will never fucceed in your attempts for this purpole, either by bitternels against Infidels, Heretics and fectaries, or by contempt and ridicule of enthufiaftic or fuperfitious perfons. The only right method is a very different one : diligent fludy, to fit yourfelves more completely for teaching and vindicating the truths of Christianity: Scriptural and rational instruction, assiduously given, with zeal and mildness duly tempered, and fuited to the capacities and condition of your hearers : a willing and devout and affecting performance of all facred rites, whether in the church or elfewhere : but above all, a behaviour, innocent, humble, peaceable, difinterested, beneficent, abstemious, discreet, religious.

Take heed therefore to your fteps: and walk in the prefent evil days with fuch piety and caution, that, as the office exhorts, you may neither offend, nor be occafion that others offend; but may cut off occafion from them which defire occafion (b) againft you; that they wob are of the contrary part, and falfely accufe your good converfation in Chrift, may be afhamed (c) of themfelves; or however, that your Mafter and Judge may not be afhamed of you (d) at the great day, but pronounce over each of you, Well done, good and faithful fervant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord (e).

(b) 2 Cor. xi. 12. (d) Mark viii. 38. Luke ix. 26.

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(c) Tit. ii. 8. 1 Pet. iii. 16. (e) Matth. xxv. 21.

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#### R E A T T S E

CONCERNING THE

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OF THE

PRESENT CORRUPTION

OF

#### R I S T I A N S. C H

## PREFACE.

E have reason to wonder at the great corruptions that at pre-W & fent are to be found among Chriftians. The religion they proxx fels, does chiefly tend to fanctify men, and to purge the world from corruption and vice; and one would think it fhould produce that effect, fince it affords fuch a clear light, fuch powerful motives, and fuch effectual helps to holinefs. Notwithstanding all this, whoever enquires into the notions and manners of Christians, must have no great share of fincerity or judgment; if he does not acknowledge, that religion has but little influence upon their minds, and that there is an amazing contradiction between their lives and the rules of Christianity, This corrup-H 2 tion

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tion is fo evident and fo generally confelled, that I need not fland to prove it.

Taking it then for granted, that Chriftians live in a great neglect of their duties; it is natural to enquire into the *Caufes* of this corruption, and to confider what remedies should be applied to it. This is what I intend to do in this Treatife, in hopes that fuch an enquiry will not be altogether unufeful.

For firft, it may contribute to maintain the honour, and the truth of the Chriftian religion, and to confute Infidels and libertines, who are apt to defpife it, becaufe it's precepts are little practifed. If religion, fay they, be true and divine, How comes it to pafs, that it has fo little efficacy, and that there appears fo much diforder, and licentioufnefs among the profeffors of it? To undeceive fuch men, and to infufe into them a greater refpect for religion, it is of very great importance to difcover the caufes of the decay of piety; and to fhew, that if men are corrupted, it is not becaufe Chrift's religion is infufficient to introduce vertue and order into the world; but that this evil flows from fome other caufe, and that if Chriftians did what they might and ought to do, true piety would not be fo uncommon as it is among them.

A fecond advantage which may be reaped from this enquiry; is this; it will appear by it, that how great foever the corruption may be; it is not however, as many imagine, paft remedy. Which imagination, is a moft dangerous prejudice; while men look on it as impoffible to ftem the tide of corruption, and to re-effablifh order and purity of manners in the world; they do not fo much as attempt it, they let things go on at the fame rate; and fo the diforder increafes and fpreads farther. It cannot be denied, but that the corruption is great, general and inveterate; but God forbid, we fhould look upon it as an incurable difeafe. The fountains of it may eafily be difcovered; and it is not impoffible to flop them. I hope this will be acknowledged by thofe, who fhall attentively, and without prepoffefion confider, what is propofed in this work.

Thirdly, There is no means more likely to remove this corruption, than to cut off the occafions of it: that is the fureft as well as the moft compendious method. One of the main reafons, why fo many excellent books defigned to infpire men with a love of religion and piety, have not all the effect that might be expected from them; is, that the authors do not fufficiently obferve the general caufes of the depravation of manners. It is to little purpofe to deplore the corruption of the age, to exhort men, and to give them fine leffons of morality: the work of reformation cannot be much advanced, as long as the evil is not taken in its caufe, and as long as fuch principles and abufes continue among Chriftians, as are, and will always be, obftacles to the progrefs of the Gofpel.

Laftly, I confidered that this matter had not yet been thoroughly handled by any author, at leaft that I know of. Of those who have touched upon it in their books; fome have confined themfelves to confiderations purely moral, and others to theological reflections, upon the errors which are in vogue, or upon the centroversies which divide Christians; but they have onitted many things which feem effential; no a

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doubt, because they did not intend to treat this subject purposely, or because they did not take a view of the whole extent of it.

As these confiderations have made me with for a long while that among fo many able men who write  $abo_{w}$  religion, fome might undertake fo important a fubject; fo they have deærmined me to publish these Effays upon the Caufes of Corruption; hoping that others will apply themselves to the full discuffion of those matters, which are here but imperfectly hinted at.

But that the fcope of this Treatife may be the better underftood; and that no body may expect that in it, which according to the fcheme I formed to myfelf, ought not to have a place here; I thall acquaint the Reader with one thing, which he may perhaps have forefcen, from what has been already faid.

I do not propole to myfelf to handle this matter in the way of the divinity fchools. No man therefore ought to wonder, if I fay nothing of the ftate in which all men are born; nor of that inclination to vice which is observed in them. For tho' this is the first original of corruption = yet certainly this corruption would be much lefs, if Chriftians did ufe the means which God affords them, to overcome it; and if there were not other fources which feed and ftrengthen that vitious propenfity. Befides, I do not confider corruption in general, as it is common to all mankind, but I enquire into the Caufes of the Corruption of Christians in particular. Neither do I defign to write a moral treatife; fo that it muft not be expected, that I fhould difcourfe of felf-love and pride, and of all the other paffions, which are the ordinary occafions of mens fins ; or that I fhould trace out all the particular caufes of every fin. This would carry me too far ; and fuch things have been often examined. I therefore apply myfelf only to the general Caufes; and I manage the matter thus.

I divide this Work into two parts, becaufe the Caufes of Corruption may be of two forts. I fhall call thofe of the firft fort, particular or internal, becaufe they are within us, and to be found in every particular man that lives ill. Thofe of the fecond fort, which are more general, I name external, becaufe they proceed rather from certain outward circumftances, and from the unhappinels of the times; than from the fault of particular perfons.

The Caufes I shall treat of in the First Part, are no other, but the ill dispositions in which most Christians are, and which hinder their applying themselves to piety : and of these I shall observe nine.

I. Ignorance.	V. A false Modesty.
II. Prejudices and falle Notions con-	VI. The Delaying Repentance.
cerning Religion.	VII. Mans Sloth and Negligence in
III. Some Opinions and Maxims which	Matters of Religion.
are used to authorize Corruption.	VIII. Worldly Business.
IV. The Abuse of Holy Scripture.	IX. Men's particular Callings.
The Caufes to be confidered in the Second Part are thefe feven.	
I. The State of the Church and of Re-	IV. The Defects of Christian Princes
ligion in general.	and Magistrates.
II. The Want of Discipline.	V. Education.
-III. The Defects of the Clergy.	VI. Example and Guftom.
<b>3</b> 67.	VII. Books.

I declare

I declare here that in difcourfing upon these fources, I do not mean to tax all Christians without exception: so when I speak of ignorance, and of prejudices commonly received; knowing and learned men are excepted: and when I observe certain defects in the state of the church and of religion, in discipline, in clergy-men, or in Christian magistrates; I suppose those faults obtain more in fome places than in others. In short, whoever should apply what is said in this Treatife, to all forts of persons and churches, would certainly missive my defign.

And now I muft defire those who may chance to see this Book, to examine ferioully what I propose in it. No lover of truth or religion, can refuse his attention to a subject of this nature. But I hope it will be more particularly welcome to church-men and divines; who are called by their function, to set themselves against corruption, and to endeavour all they can to promote piety and the glory of God.

To conclude; I heartily implore his Bleffing upon this Work, who put it into my hand to fet about it, and who is my witness with what defign and intention I publish it.

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## PART I.

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### CAUSE I.

#### Ignorance.

W over-runs the Chriftian world; the first which offers it felf to his mind, is Ignorance, and therefore I shall begin with that.

Our notions and knowledge, are the firft principles of our actions. We can never love a thing, or adhere to it, when it is not at all, or when it is but imperfectly known to us: iuppoing then that men are ignorant, cr very little infructed in religion, there is no wonder that they fhould be corrupt; for they muft of necefity be fo. On the other hand, when they appear to be extremely corrupt, we may conclude, that they want infruction. I do not deny, but that corruption proceeds fometimes from the wickednets of the heart, which refifts the light of the underftanding; and that men frequently act againft their knowledge. But it may fafely be faid, That if Chriftians were well infructed, they would not be fo corrupt, and that wherever an extraordinary corruption is vifible, there is likewife a great deal of ignorance.

This is confirm'd by the Scripture, and by God's conduct in the eftablifhing the Chriftian religion. When the Apoftles speak of those diforders, orders, wherein the Hcathens lived before their conversion, they afcribe them to the darkness of their minds. \* The Gentiles (fays St. Paul) have their understanding darkned, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. The fame Apostle calls the times which preceded the coming of Christ, the times of Ignorance. And the first thing which God did to change the face of the world, and to rescue it from Corruption; was to dispel the clouds of their ignorance, and to enlighten them with the knowledge of himfelf, by the preaching of the Gospel.

Although Chriftians cannot be charged with fo großs an Ignorance as that of the Heathens; yet they fall very flort of that knowledge they ought to have, and it muft be confeffed, that for the moft part, they live in fhameful and deplorable Ignorance. This is the reafon why piety is fo much wanting among them, and why they are fo depraved and vicious; which is the thing I will endeavour to make appear.

In order to this; as the Chriftian religion may be reduced to these two heads,

First, The Knowledge of the Truth.

Secondly, The Practice of Holinefs.

It is fit to enquire, Whether with refpect to thefe, Chriftians are furnifhed with neceffary information? I shall make it appear that they are very little inftructed.

I. In that which concerns the truths of religion. And

II. In what relates to manners, and to the duties of Chriftianity.

The reflections I fhall beftow upon both thefe heads; will I hope, clearly prove, That among thofe vaft multitudes of men, who profefs themfelves Chriftians, there are very few, who are well acquainted with their religion. From whence it will be natural to conclude, That they muft needs be very corrupt.

I. To begin with the Knowledge of the Truths of Chriftianity; we muft diffinguifh two forts of truths in religion: the general, and the particular truths. The General Truths, are thole, upon which the whole of religion is founded; fuch as thele, That there is a God, That the Bible is a divine book, and That the Chriftian religion is true. By Particular Truths, I mean the various doctrines which religion contains, and which are the parts of it; but which at the fame time, depend upon the General Truths, as upon their principle. The doctrine of the facraments, of juffification, and many others, are of this number. Now let us confider the Ignorance of Chriftians in reference to thefe two forts of truths:

I. Every man who makes use of his reason, may eafily apprehend, That the General Truths are the most important; that they are those of which one ought chiefly to be perfuaded; and that without these General Truths, the Particular ones would be useles, nay, would not be so much as Truths. To enquire, Whether there be any facraments, or how a man can be juffified; one must believe first, That there is a God, and a religion: for if I am not convinc'd of the existence of God, and of the truth of religion, it would fignifie little to me, whether or not there

> \* Eph. iv. 18. H 4

there were any facraments, and all the time I fhould employ in the profecution of this enquiry, would be loft.

This fuft reflection does already difcover to us an effential and capital defect. A great many Christians want instruction concerning the principles and foundations of Christianity; they do not fufficiently confider the certainty and importance of it. Their knowledge of religion, does feldom go further than the particular truths of it, and does not reach the general. This is fo common a fault, that it may be observed even in those whole profession it is to study religion and to teach it to others. Some have spent the best part of their lives in the study of divinity, or in expounding the Scripture, who never ferioufly examined the arguments for the truth of Christianity, or the divinity of the Scripture. Some are mafters of the principal controverfies which divide Chriftians, who would ftand mute if they were called back to the first elements of religion, and if they were to maintain against an Infidel, that there is a religion, or that the Chriftian religion is true. The people enter yet lefs than the divines into the examination of the general truths; and there are very few who either attend to them, or indeed believe them as they ought.

And yet the whole of religion depends upon a firm perfuafion concerning the principle: of faith; it is that which renders the particular truths effectual to falvation, and which begets piety and the love of virtue. When a man is perfuaded that religion proposes nothing but what is certain, he immediately receives with reverence whatfoever it teaches; he feels an inclination in himfelf to obferve its precepts, and he believes a judgment and another life, as if he faw them before his eyes. Such is the efficacy of a true faith, and of a fleady perfuation about fundamental truths. But without this perfuasion it is very hard, not to fay impoffible, to adhere fincerely to religion, and to perform the duties of it. And this is the conftant fource of the Corruption of Chriftians.

It may perhaps be objected, that all Chriftians receive the general truths of their Creeds, and that these are not questioned but by Pagans and Atheifts. Upon which I shall make two reflections.

1. It is but too true, that in the point of religion, there is at this day a great number of perfons who entertain very loofe opinions, and that do at leaft border upon Atheifm. These pernicious tenets are spread wider than fome people think. Not only the Libertines are infected with them, but even the common people. All the prophane men and Deifts are not to be found 'at courts, in armies, or among the learned; there are fome in towns, among the vulgar, and even among country clowns. If we examine a little the difcourfes and apprehenfions of men, efpecially of those whole life is irregular, if we do but begin to reafon with them and prefs them, we may foon perceive the principles of incredulity and Atheifm in many of them. It will be found that they are not thoroughly perfuaded that there is a God, and another life; or that if they do not proceed to that degree of implety which attacks directly the very foundations of religion, they harbour at least this fancy, that God doth not narrowly obferve mens deportment; that he will not be fo fevere as to damn them for fome fins they have committed, and that there is no fuch great harm in gratifying one's paffions, and living at the ufual rate of the world. Thefe

Thefe and the like fentiments are general enough, and yet they lead the ftraight way to Deifin, and tend plainly to the fubverfion of religion. It would be therefore highly neceflary, in order to root out fuch dangerous errours, carefully to effablish thefe great truths; That there is a God, that this God fpeaks to us in his word, and that whatever the Gofpel tells us of another life, is most certain. This I fay would be altogether needful, if it were but for the inftruction of thofe I have now mentioned, and their number is greater than is commonly imagined.

2ly. We may take notice, that tho' Christians profess to believe the truths of their religion, yet that belief is not lively and ftrong enough in them all. It is beyond all queftion, that most Christians are fo only because they were engaged by their birth in the profession of Christianity; but that after all, they know very little of the truth and divinity of it. They would in like manner have been Jews or Pagans, if they had been born in Judaism or Paganism; fo that properly speaking they cannot be faid to have faith; for faith is a perfuasion; to believe, is to be perfuaded; and 'tis impoffible to believe a thing right without reafon or examination. That which is called faith is commonly nothing elfe but a confused and general opinion, which makes but very flight impreffions upon the heart and mind; but true faith is a greater rarity among Chriftians, than we are aware of. Now as faith is the only principle of piety, fo a bad life does chiefly fpring from want of faith and from incredulity. And there are two forts of Infidels; fome deny and reject Divine truths; others do not quite deny them, but they doubt and believe but weakly. The Infidels who deny the fundamentals of religion. are not many, but the number of those who doubt, and are not well perfuaded, is very great.

This difcovers to us the reafon why men who are acquainted with the Divine truths and profefs to believe them, do yet act quite contrary to the diftates of faith and religion. There feems to be in their proceeding a manifeft contradiction: it is a thing wondered at; that people who believe a God, and a religion, fhould live as if there was neither God nor religion; upon this we are apt to fay, that finners are not confiftent with themfelves; and as if it were impossible to reconcile their practice with their belief, we cry out, that the depth of man's heart is unfearchable. But there is no fuch wonder in the cafe, and the proceeding of bad Chriftians, is not always fo contradictory, as it feems to be. I confefs that men fin fometimes against the convictions of their own conficiences, and that fome who want not knowledge, do yet live very ill.

This may proceed from inconfideration, from the violence of their paffions, from too great a regard to their temporal intereft, from the flattering hope of pardon, or fome fuch principle. But for the moft part, men aft confonantly and fuitably to their belief, and it is but feldom, that in the conduct of their lives, they behave themfelves contrary to the fentiments and principles that pollefs them. We fuppofe that bad Chriftians believe the truths of religion, and in that we are miftaken. Many of them want faith, and are not fully convinced of thofe truths. Is it to be imagined, that fo many perfons who live in fin, who make conficience of nothing, and who violate every minute the rules of their du-

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ty; fhould be thoroughly perfuaded, that there is a God who fees them, and to whom they are to give an account? From all this, I conclude, That the Ignorance of the General Truths of religion, is one of the principal fources of Corruption.

Some will fay, That thefe truths need not be proved, and that they are of the number of those first principles, which are taken for granted, because they are imprinted on the hearts of all men. But this objection is easily answered by what has been faid just now. I own that the ideas and principles of religion, carry in them a natural evidence, inafmuch as they are demonstrable from reason and conficience; and because there are principles in men by the help of which, they may arrive at the knowledge of the truths of religion. But these principles and ideas have been in some measure flifted in many, either thro' ill education, or worldly business, or vice, or fome other cause; fo that they feel the force and evidence of them but imperfectly; and fome have no fense at all of them.

Upon this account it is neceffary to excite and enlighten those ideas, to explain and establish those principles. I acknowledge further, That fome parts of those proofs upon which religion is built, lie open to all mens eyes ; but yet the ignorant, and those who are taken up with other objects, do not observe them : they should therefore be made to attend to them : just as we make flupid and heedless people take notice of the beauty of a palace, or the skill of an artist in some curious workmanship, which would otherwife pafs unobferved by them. However the opinion of those who pretend that the General Truths ought not to be proved, is contrary to the Holy Scripture ; which teaches us to reafon upon the principles of religion, and to fearch into the proofs of them; where in order to convince men that there is an Almighty and Infinitely good God, it proposes to them, the beauties and wonders which shine in his works, and exhorts them to the confideration of them. This may be feen in the book of Job. In the XIX. and CIV. Pfal. Rom. 1. 19, 20. and in many other places.

3/y, It may further be faid, That the proof of General Truths, is too difficult for the common people, and that the learned only are capable of fuch a difcuffion. I grant that all forts of perfons are not able to comprehend all that has been writ upon these matters. And therefore I do not pretend, that it is impossible to have a true faith without entring into the detail of all these proofs, and without following with the utmost ftrictnefs, all the deep and abstracted reasonings, which have been used to prove the existence of God, or the truth of the Christian religion. think rather those matters ought to be treated with great difcretion, effecially in fermons. It would be a great piece of imprudence, to mufter up in a publick difcourfe, all the objections of Atheifts, or the fubtilties of Libertines; these ought to be referred to private conferences. Those who speak to the people, must take heed, left by disputing and speculating too much, they render the fundamental truths problematical, and raise fcruples in mens minds. They ought to build upon this principle. That men are carried by a common and natural inclination to believe the existence of God, to acknowledge a difference betwixt good and evil, and to own Providence, and the other truths of religion; but for all

all that, it may be very uleful and neceffary to confirm those truths, to fet them in the clearest light, and to convince the people of them.

As to what is faid, That the proofs of the principles of religion are not fuitable to the peoples capacity: I answer, That most of those proofs are fuch, that there is no need of being either learned, or a divine, to be affected with them. We ought to fuppole here, that the more important any truth is, the clearer and the eafier the proofs of it are. I do not fpeak of all truths ; there are fome that are most certain, whose proofs are difficult, and above the reach of common understandings; fuch are many metaphyfical truths, and mathematical demonstrations; but at the fame time, the knowledge of those truths is not necessary, and a man without danger may beignorant of them. I fpeak now only of those truths which it concerns every perfon to know, and which are of general ufefulnefs and neceffity. These are always clear and easily proved. And this, by the by, ought on the one hand, to make us admire the wifdom and goodnefs of God, who has fo well provided for the neceffities of men; and on the other hand to fet bounds to our curiofity, and to fortify our faith against those doubts, which might start up in our minds, by reason of fo many things which we are ignorant of.

As therefore of all truths, none are of greater confequence, or of a more intire certainty than those, which religion depends upon; fo the proof of those truths ought to be fimple, evident and fuited to all mens capacity. Thus when in order to prove the being of a God; we alledge, for inftance, the ftate and order in which the world fubfifts; when we fhew that the world cannot be eternal, and that things had a beginning; when we establish the inspiration of Scripture by the prophecies it contains, which were undoubtedly written before their accomplishment: when we prove the truth of the Christian religion by the truth of matters of fact and hiftory, and demonstrate that if the facts upon which religion is founded, are not certain, there is no fuch thing as certainty in the world, in respect of things that are past; and that if the testimony of the Apoftles is rejected, there are no witneffes or hiftorians, who may not be rejected upon better grounds : when we confirm the Sacred Hiftory, by the concurring testimony of Pagan writers, and by the most ancient, and the most unquestionable monuments, which past ages can afford : when we reflect upon the manner in which the Chriftian religion was planted in the world, and upon the alteration it has made in it: when we infift upon the characters of truth, fincerity and divinity, which are observable in the Scripture: in short, when we take religion to pieces, and make men fee and feel, that its doctrines, its precepts, its promifes, and its threatnings, have nothing in them that is abfurd or bad, or contrary to our natural apprehenfions; nothing but what perfectly agrees with found reason, and the fentiments of our own confciences; and nothing but what is advantagious to particular perfons, and to focieties: When I fay, we urge these proofs and others like them, and have the art of propofing them in a clear and judicious method, it is certain that they contain nothing that is very difficult. These are the clearest and the ftrongest proofs that can be used, in a subject of this nature ; and the arguments which are made use of to establish these proofs, are for the most part fo natural, and fo conform to the ideas of our minds, and to the principles principles of common fenfe, that there are few even of the vulgar who may not apprehend them; if not perfectly and in their whole extent, which is releaved to men of a larger capacity; yet fo far at leaft as to be fufficiently fenfible of their force.

If then difficulties and obfcurities are to be met with in the difcuffion of the principles of religion; it is becaufe this matter is neglected, and the people are little informed. But if the fame care had been taken to infruct Chriftians in the fundamental truths of religion, which was beflowed upon explaining and clearing particular ones; they would have another kind of perfuation than they have of the truth of religion. Thefe great and fublime truths, have without comparifon more fuitablenefs and affinity with the nature of men and the fentiments of their hearts, than many obfcure, difficult and lefs neceffary things, which yet have been effectually taught them.

4b, But againft this, experience may poffibly be objected: it may be faid, That there are Chriftians, who moft certainly have piety, and yet did never meditate much upon the foundations of Chriftianity. I anfwer, That it is not conceivable, how a man fhould be a pious Chriftian, without being perfuaded of the truth of his religion. For at this rate piety would be but meer conceit and enthufiafm; and we muft fay notwithftanding all that Scripture and reafon tells us to the contrary, that men are Chriftians without knowledge or reafon. It cannot be otherwife, but that good men muft have been convinced of the truths of the Goípel, and have had a lively fenfe, that thefe are the moft certain and the moft important of all truths. If we enquire what principle it is which produces piety in the hearts of the moft fimple people, we fhall find it is an unmoveable perfuafion, That there is a God, a judgment, a heaven and a hell; which perfuafion is neceffarily founded upon fome of the proofs I have hinted at.

I grant, which no doubt will be objected to me, That in many this perfuafion is not clear enough, and that it is not the refult of a particular examination; but this does not leffen the force of my argument. For though the perfuafion of good men fhould not be fo clear and fo well grounded as it might be, yet it does not follow but that it is fincere ; a man may be convinced of a truth, tho' he does not difcover all the certainty and all the proofs of it, and tho' he is not able to anfwer all the objections against it. So that still it is true, that there is no religion, without the belief of the general truths of it. After all, we must acknowledge, That there are good men, who are not fo well inftructed upon this head as it were to be wifhed. And this defect of inftruction, this imperfection of their faith, is one of the main caufes of the defect and imperfection of their piety. Thus we may frequently observe, in their conduct fuch weakneffes and opinions as do not agree with the pure light of faith, and with the exactness of the rules of the Gospel. This is part of the unhappinels we lament, and of that Corruption of which we feek the Caufes. But no man will difpute, but that if the fame perfons had more inftruction, they would carry virtue much farther than they do. The degree of piety, does ordinarily follow the degree of faith : where there is no faith, there is no piety ; and where faith is weak and faint, piety is languid and defective. This is the general flate and character character of Christians at this time; either downright impiety, or a piety that is both feeble and imperfect.

5tbly. In the laft place, fome will perhaps, object here, That incredulity is the effect, rather than the caufe of corruption; and that Atheifin does not produce corruption, but corruption Atheifin. To this, I fay, that thefe two things do mutually uphold and (upport each other. Many fall into Infidelity, becaufe their hearts are vitiated, their licentious way of living takes them off from enquiring into religion, and hinders their believing of Divine truths. But it is not lefs certain that one of the great caufes, of the diforders of Chriftians, is that either they do not believe at all, or that they believe weakly and confufedly; and this cannot be reafonably conteffed.

II. Here is then the first and the principal defect, That men are not fufficiently instructed in the general truths and principles of Christianity. I faid that the particular truths and the parts of religion were better known; which does not imply but that in this respect too, Ignorance is very great and general.

1. I fhall not fcruple to fay, That there are prodigious numbers of people, who fcarce have any knowledge at all of the doctrines of religion. If all Chriftians were obliged to render an account of their faith, if they were examined upon the articles of their belief, or the main facts related in Sacred Hiftory; there would appear in moft of them, fuch an aftonifhing Ignorance, or fuch confufed and intricate ideas; that one would hardly think them more knowing than if they lived in the darknefs of Heathenifm. And what religion, what piety can we look for among fuch men?

But befides this grofe and palpable Ignorance, there are feveral defects of inftruction to be observed, even in those who have, or fancy that they have more knowledge than others. I shall particularly take notice of these two.

1/2. Those who exceed the ordinary degree of knowledge, have vet often but a falfe kind of light : either they do not know those truths which they fhould know, or elfe they know them not aright. They apply themfelves to things which are not effential to Chriftianity, or which are lefs confiderable than others which they do not fludy. Thus in all Chriftian focieties, inftruction is commonly placed in the knowledge of the doctrines and opinions, particular to every one's own fect and party. Whoever is able to debate those points, and is skilled in controversie, is faid to understand his religion. These matters may perhaps have their use; but there are other things which men are more concerned to know, because they are more conducing to piety ; and yet they are almost constantly neglected. The occasion of this error, is that the various importance of the truths of religion, is not duly weighed, and that religion is not fludied in an orderly method. Very few perfons diffinguish between the more and the lefs neceffary things, between the most useful fubjects and those which are of little edification. Most men study religion without rule, and to no purpofe, and fo run out upon many unprofitable fubjects. That which is called learning in divinity or knowledge of religion, is frequently nothing elfe, but a heap of notions, which have no influence upon piety, or respect to mens falvaiion. It is but a confused

PART I.

confused medley, wherein the leaft neceffary things, are blended without choice and diffinction, with the most important. I do not fpeak here of the perplext and unaccurate ideas which men often have about these matters; I pass by the false reasonings, which are fometimes used to eftablish the truths of Chriftianity, as well as those mists, which the fchooldivinity has cast upon the Gospel: I do only observe, That the knowledge which most men have of religion, is not very fit to make them fenfible of the beauties of it; fo that when all is done, it is no wonder that it fhould feem to many an obscure, crabbed, unpleasant and intricate fcience, and that it should have fo little effect upon mens minds.

adly, The other fault is, That men content themfelves with bare inftruction, or with the fimple knowledge of the Chriftian truths, while they are ignorant of their ufe. If they do but know in an hiftorical mannen, what is believed by Chriftians, and are able to reafon about it, and to difcern truth from error, they think themfelves fufficiently inftructed. But these inftructions do not reach the heart. Among that fmall number of perfons who have fome knowledge, there are but few who confider that this knowledge, is to be directed to a holy life, as to its proper end and intendment ; and they are fewer yet who actually direct it to that end, and make it fubservient to the reforming of their lives. And fo it comes to pafs, that a great many of those who are beff acquainted with the truths of religion, have yet but an imperfect and barren knowledge of it, and that with all their attainments, they live ftill in the darkness of corruption and vice.

II. Hitherto we have confidered Ignorance with relation to the truths and doctrines, which the Chriftian faith embraces: let us now view this Ignorance with respect to the duties which Christianity prefcribes. Upon this fecond head we fhall difcover yet a greater Ignorance than upon the first. For after all, fomething may be done, when we are only to infuse into men some knowledge of truths and doctrines. It is usual enough to fee very ill men, who in this regard are not deftitute of light. But it is much harder to inftruct them in the duties of holinefs. We may apply here these words of our Saviour's ; \* Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil; for every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, left his deeds should be reproved. The maxims of the Golpel and the rules of its morality condemn finners, and therefore they do not care to be informed about them. Those who love the world and their fins, are glad if they can enjoy the fweets of these without difturbance and interruption : and therefore they will not enquire much into the moral precepts of Jefus Chrift; they are loth to come at fuch a knowledge as would difclose to them the turpitude of vice, and breed difquiet and remorfe in them. Ignorance begets fecurity: the more ignorant a man is, the fewer ftings he feels in his confcience, the more pleafure he takes in his fin. The very fhadow of evil frights a well-inftructed Christian ; but crime it self does not daunt one who is ignorant : he does not hear within himfelf those alarms or reproaches, which are either the prefervatives against fin, or the remedies of it.

From this it may be judged already, that men are generally very little infructed

infructed in what concerns manners. But that we may the better underftand how great the ignorance is in this matter, it muft be obferved, That whoever will perform the duties of religion, muft be perfuaded of their neceffity, and acquainted with their nature. One cannot imagine how they can be practified by a man, who either does not know them, or does not think them neceffary: this is the plain reafon why men do fo little addict themfelves to piety; they know neither its neceffity nor its nature.

1. As the foundation of faith is the belief of the truth and certainty of those facts and doctrines which religion proposes; fo the ground-work of piety is, to be perfuaded of the neceffity of the duties which Chriftianity requires: without this perfuafion, it is impoffible for men to refign up themfelves to the practice of virtue. Now one would think that all Christians should be fully convinced of this necessity. For if there is any certain truth in Chriftianity, it is this, that the practice of good works is neceffary. Good works do fo immediately belong to the defign and the effence of religion, that it falls to the ground as foon as they are taken away: and in proportion as the neceffity of a good life is weakened, fo much is the power and beauty of that holy religion which Chrift brought into the world leffened. Religion contains doctrines, precepts, promifes and threatnings. It does altogether depend upon the exiftence of a God, and the certainty of another life, and a judgment to come. But if you banish out of religion the absolute necessity of good works, you attack it in all its parts, and you undermine its very foundations. For this makes the knowledge of its doctrines vain and needlefs; it turns its precepts into bare counfels; the promifes of it, which are conditional, and fuppofe obedience, ceafe to be promifes ; the threats which God denounces against finners, are but empty menaces, which God makes only to fright men, but does not intend to execute. This deftroys the chiefest and strongest proofs of the existence of a God, and of another life; it ruins that great argument for religion, which is drawn from the difference between virtue and vice, and from the deferts of both; and it contradicts the necessity, the nature and justice of the last judgment. All this may eafily be demonstrated. This necessity of good works might likewife be proved, from the plain declarations of the word of God; and it might be fhewn, that there is no truth more clearly and frequently inculcated than this in Holy Writ. But not to engage in these particulars, which do not properly belong to my purpole; I fhall take it for granted, that a holy life is abfolutely neceffary; for either that is true, or there is nothing true in religion.

Yet how clear foever this truth may be, it is but little known, and men are not much perfuaded of it. No man indeed, does flatly and without fome preamble deny the neceffity of holinefs; every teacher profeffes that to be his doctrine; all Chriftians, in fhew at leaft, are agreed about it. But when they come to explain their meaning clearly concerning this neceffity; when it comes to the application or to practice, or when they eftablish other doctrines, they contradict themfelves, they hefitate upon the matter, or they explain it with certain refrictions, which footh men in fecurity, and dipofe them to believe that falvation may be obtained without good works; which overthrows their neceffity.

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Nay, fome frame to themfelves fuch a notion of religion as even excludes good works; this will appear in the following chapters.

If it be faid, That though this intire and indifpenfable neceffity of a good life were not fuppofed, yet this would not prefently open a door to licentioufnefs, fince there remain other fufficient motives to holinefs, fuch as those which are derived from the justice and reasonableness of the divine laws, from the gratitude and love we owe to God, from the edification of our neighbour, and from our calling and duty. I answer, that thefe motives are very just and preffing, and that they neceffarily enter into that obedience, which all true Chriftians pay to the commandments of God. I acknowledge befides, that they would be fufficient to infpire all men with the love of virtue, if they did all govern themfelves by the principles of right reason and justice. But these are not the only motives which ought to be urged ; God propofes others befides; he promifes, he threatens, he declares, \* that without holinefs no man shall fee his face, which imports an abfolute neceffity. And furely as men generally are, there are many of them upon whom those motives taken from decency, juffice, gratitude, duty, or the edification of our neighbours, will have very little force. The most honourable motives are not always the most effectual. Man being to corrupt, is fo many ways, and by fo ftrong a bias carried towards evil, that it is hard for him, without an abfolute neceffity, to abstain from it. But how much less will he refrain from fin; if he is perfuaded that it is not neceffary to controul his inclinations, and to confine himfelf to a kind of life, which appears unpleafant and melancholy to him? Now as this is the difpofition in which most people are, we need no longer wonder, why there is fo little religion and piety among men.

2. If it is difficult to practife those duties, which we do not think neceffary, especially when they cross our inclinations; it is yet harder to practife them, when we do not know them. It is not possible to do good or to avoid evil, if we do not know the good that we should do, and the evil we ought to fhun. Now in this the generality of Christianswant inftruction. Every body speaks of piety and virtue, but few men know what they are. The common people are little acquainted with the duties of religion or the rules of christian morals. This must be confest, and the glory of God requires, that we should ingenuously own it. I cannot but enter here into some particulars, to prove this ignorance.

I. There are fome effential duties unknown to a great number of Chriftians, and which were never thought of by an infinity of men. I will alledge for an inftance one of the plaineft and of the moft neceffary duties of morality, and that is refitution. Tho' the fcripture fhould not exprefly enjoyn it, we need but confult reafon and natural juffice to be convinced, that he who has done an injury to another man by taking from him any part of his property; is bound to make up that damage, by reftoring to him whatever he has wronged him of. There is every day occafion enough to make refitution; nothing being more common, than for one man to appropriate to himfelf by unlawful means, what belongs to another; and yet in many places refitution is a thing without prefident.

precedent. But this we ought not to wonder at, confidering that there are thousands of Christians who never heard a word of this duty. This matter is fo little known, and the people are fo little inftructed about it : that a treatife concerning reftitution, written by Mr. la Placette, having been published fome years fince; it has been read as a very fingular book, the fubject whereof was new and curious. Nay, fome have gone So far as to cenfure this doctrine of reftitution, pretending that it was novel and too fevere; fuch a pitch of ignorance are men arrived at in matters of morality. And this is not the only duty which is not underflood; there are many others befides, either among those which are common to all men, or among those which are particular to every calling, and which it does not appear that men were ever taught or ever made the leaft reflection upon. Now a man must needs neglect the duties that he does not know.

2. There are divers fins, which are not commonly ranked among fins, or which men do not think to be damning fins. Of this number is lying and unfincerity, either in difcourse or in dealings. Among these we may alfo reckon luxury, floth, a foft and voluptuous life; many indirect practices to grow rich, which are eftablished and authorized by cuftom; drunkennefs, which in fome countries is not efteemed a vice, and all those fins which are only committed by our thoughts. Christians now a-days think themfelves innocent, fo they do not do things menia feftly criminal. They conceive that murther is a crime, but they do not think themfelves guilty for paffing a rafh judgment upon their neigh-bours, or taking up unjust fuspicions of them. They believe uncleannefs to be a fin, tho' even fome are very indulgent to themfelves upon this head; but impure thoughts or fenfuality go for nothing with them. Thus there are many fins which men are not inftructed about, and what wonder is it then, if they commit them without fcruple, and if there is fo much corruption in their manners.

3. There are fome general maxims in morality without the knowledge of which, it is impossible to have a folid piety; and yet these are almost universally unknown; especially these two, which describe to us the characters of true holinefs. The first is, That a habit of fin is an infallible token of a corrupt man; and that any one habitual fin which a man does not forfake, especially when he is warned of it, is enough to thut him out of heaven. This maxim is underftood but by very few people. Most men are ingaged in vitious habits; such as praying without attention, fwearing, falling into a paffion, or the like : Thefe habits grow stronger with age, men live and die in them, and yet they think, they die in a state of falvation. The other maxim which is neither less important nor better known; is, That there is a vast difference, between fin and fin, and between finners and finners; that the frailties of good men are one thing, and the great and wilful fins of bad men, another thing. If men do not apprehend this difference, they will confound virtue with vice, and good men with impious wretches; and yet this is little observed. It is commonly believed that all men being finners, they are all upon the matter in the fame condition, and do all fin alike, fo that there is no great odds between them. Such notions must needs make way for libertinism. - tal at we T

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 $4b_{3}$ . If Chriftians have fome knowledge concerning the duties of morality; yet that knowledge is too general and fuperficial. They know perhaps in the main, that fome fins are to be avoided, and fome virtues to be practified; but that they only know confufedly, they content themfelves with fome general ideas, which for the moft part prove ufelefs and infigrificant. The defign of morality, is to regulate mens actions, in all the circumftances they may be in, and to teach them how they ought to behave themfelves, in all the different cafes and emergencies of life. Now as thefe cafes and circumftances are infinitely various, it is neceffary that men fhould know their duty with fome exactnefs, and that they fhould have rules at hand applicable to all particular cafes, by the help of which they may differn, what is lawful from what is not. For here fuperficial knowledge and general ideas, will not ferve the turn; becaufe they do not determine particular cafes.

The principles of morality are clear, but it is requisite to make a just application of them, and to draw right confequences from them. Every body acknowledges, that wrong is not to be done to any man, but few know what the doing of wrong is. There are innumerable ways of violating justice in relation to our neighbours, or of getting money, which are finful; and yet these are made use of every day, and people think that there is no harm in them; and fo they are guilty of cheating, extortion and injustice, and they do not know it. Whence does this proceed but from ignorance, or from those general and superficial notions which I have mentioned? This is one of the reasons why some books and difcourfes of piety produce fo little effect, they handle things only in the lump; they treat of virtues and vices, of temperance, of covetoufnefs and injuffice ; they exhort and threaten ; but they ufually go no further than generallities, and they feldom defcend to those particulars, which are fo neceffary to inform and direct the confcience.

5/y. Men are no lefs ignorant concerning the degrees, than they are concerning the parts of holinefs. Chriftians are not only obliged to the practice of many virtues; but they ought befides that to practice them in the most perfect manner. Our Saviour does not require in his difciples a mean and ordinary degree of holinefs; but he calls them to perfection. He demands that they should carry virtue much farther, than either the heathens or the Jews did, that they fhould practice charity, even to the loving of their enemies; that they fhould be fo patient, as to think it their happiness to fuffer; fo humble as chearfully to bear contempt and injustice ; fo pure, as to banish all uncleanness from their very thoughts; and fo of all the other virtues. But an infinite number of Chriftians, are ftrangers to these ideas of perfection. They never knew the extent of the duties of Christianity; they have neither tenderness of confcience, nor elevated fentiments about morality. They think they do much, if they observe that which is most simple and easie in every virtue; they confine themfelves to that, and aim at no other perfection; fo that fublime virtue and piety are not to be fought for amongst them.

6*b*, Laftly mens ignorance does not only appear in that they do not know their duty; but it does likewife difcover it felf in this, that they do not know themfelves. The knowledge of one's felf is a capital point in religion. For it is not enough to be informed of ones duty; every fhallow CAUSE I.

one must know befides, whether he observes it or not, whether he really has religion and piety; for upon this depends the judgment he is to make of himfelf, and of his own condition: now people are as much in the dark about this article, as about the others I have mentioned. The greateft part of men live without reflecting upon themfelves, and in a prodigious unconcernedness about their spiritual state. They do not trouble themfelves to inquire, whether they are of the number of good or bad men, whether they are in a ftate of grace, or of damnation or not. Or, if at any time they take this into confideration, they most commonly flatter themfelves, by pronouncing too favourable a judgment upon their own condition. There are many who boldly rank themfelves among good men; and yet are not able to give a folid reafon of that opinion they have conceived of their own probity and virtue; nay they are perhaps actually engaged in vice and impiety. If they are but free from noify and fcandalous fins, if they feel now and then fome good motions. if they have fome good qualities, or an inclination to fome virtues, or an abhorrence of fome vices; that is enough to fill them with a good opinion of themfelves. Now when men are thus blinded by felf-love, and do not know themfelves; there is but little hope of them, and they will undoubtedly fall into a ftate of fecurity.

These confiderations plainly fhew, if I am not milfaken, that men for the most part live in very great ignorance. But I think my felf bound to answer an objection, which may be offer'd againft what has been faid. Some will think no doubt, that it is very difficult for men, to be fo well instructed as I suppose they ought to be; and that the people are not capable of fuch an exact knowledge of morality.

To fatisfie those who make this objection, and to clear this matter fully: I observe first; that by all I have faid, I do by no means pretend. that all Chriftians can, or ought to be equally inftructed. I know that there are degrees of knowledge, and that in morality, as well as in doca trines, divines and men of parts, go a great way beyond the bulk of mankind. It is fufficient for every one to be inftructed, according to his capacity and his condition. But after all, it must be granted, that the knowledge of the principles of morality, is neceffary to every body; or elfe we muft ftrike feveral precepts out of the Gofpel; unlefs that we imagine that those precepts, are intended only for a fmall number of learned and fubtil men; which is directly opposite to our Saviour's words." who faid, that his doctrine is defigned for all mankind, for the little ones and the fimple, rather than for \* the wife and prudent. There is no Chriftian but ought to be a spiritual man and taught of God. When St. Paul fays, prove all things, hold fast that which is good. Whatfoever things are true, whatfoever things are honeft, whatfoever things are just, whatfoever things are pure, whatfoever things are lovely, whatfoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise think on these thingse When St. Peter exhorts Christians. to add to their faith all Christian virtues, to grow and abound in all these virtues; such exhortations do belong equally to all the professors of Christianity.

It must not be faid, that there are men in the world of very dull and I '2 fhallow

• Matth. xi. 25. 1 Cor. x. John vi: 45. 1 Theff. v. 20. Phil. iv. 8. 2 Pet. ii. 5, 6, 7, 8. fhallow capacities, and that country people and mechanicks cannot comprehend all these maxims of morality. This is not fo difficult as it is imagined, The duties of morality are clear, they prefently affect a man, because they are confonant, to the common notices and fentiments of confcience. Chufe what part of morality you pleafe, and you may with due endeavours, make either a handy-crafts-man, or a day-labourer apprehend it; fo you confine your felf to the knowledge and practice of those duties which are neceffary to fuch people in their feveral callings. Is there any thing more fubtil or difficult in the rules of morality, than there is in a hundred dexterities and fhifts, which are practifed in the affairs of this life; and which common people can attain too without any great pains ? If therefore mens understandings are fo grofs and ftupid in moral matters; it is not because these matters are above their reach; but because they were never taught them, or never applied themfelves to them. We ought not to judge of what men might be by what they are. The best ground becomes barren, when it is not cultivated. If things were well ordered among Christians, in relation especially to the inftruction of the people, and the education of children; the generality of them would not be fo ftupid and ignorant as they are. We may therefore conclude, That ignorance is one of the general Caufes of Corruption. Chriftians being ill informed of the truths and duties of their religion; and wanting inftruction both as to faith and manners, they must needs live in a great neglect of religious matters.

It may be afked, Whence does this Ignorance proceed? I fhall obferve three principal Caufes of it. The firft is Education; the way in which children are bred up, does infallibly lead to Ignorance. The fecond is the want of means to get good infruction, and particularly the defect of thofe infructions which are delivered to Chriftians, in fermons, catechifms, and books. The third is the floth and carclefnefs of men, who will be at no pains to acquire neceffary knowledge. We might beflow very weighty confiderations upon every one of thefe three heads, but fince they will come again in our way, in the fequel of this Treatife, it is enough to have pointed at them in this place, as the three main fources of Ignorance. In truth, if men are ill educated, if they are deflitute of the neceffary means of infruction, and take no care about it; whence fhould they have fufficient knowledge? unlefs they were infructed by miracles, by revelations, and infpirations, they cannot but be igporant and corrupt.

But now if Ignorance be the first Caufe of Corruption; it is plain that the first remedy to be used against Corruption, is the removing that Ignorance. It is that we are to begin at, if we would bring back Christians, to a life worthy of the religion they profes. Exhortations, cenfures, and all other fuch methods will fignifie nothing, as long as mens minds are not prepared by proper instructions.

From all that has been faid in this chapter, it may be gathered. That the right way to inftruct men, is before all things to convince them of the truth of religion; and to make them fenfible that there is nothing more certain, or of greater confequence in the world, than the principles of Christianity. The belief of the General Truths, ought espeially to be well fixed in their minds; as that there is a God, a Provielence. dence, a judgment and another life. After this we mult proceed to the Particular Truths of the Golpel, and as we go on in explaining them, we ought to thew, what influence the truths have upon holinefs and falvation.

But the most important thing of all, when these truths are fettled; is to shew, that the bare knowledge of the Christian doctrines, is not able to make men happy; that the scope of religion, is to make men truly good; and that without piety and good works there is no falvation.

It will not be fufficient to recommend fanctification in general, but the nature of it must besides be distinctly explained; it must be shewed which are the general and particular obligations of a Christian life, and what fins are contrary to thefe. And here those whose business it is to instruct the people, ought to be as particular, as possibly they can; shewing upon each virtue and vice what the nature of it is, and what are the feveral characters, kinds, and degrees of it; and proposing likewife the motives which fhould difcourage men from those vices, and prompt them, to the practice of the opposite virtues; as also the directions which may facilitate the performance of all these duties. When teachers shall go thus to work, they will foon perceive fome amendment ; God's bleffing will accompany the use of those means which he has appointed. Christians being rightly informed, will of their own accord apply themfelves to virtue; Corruption will leffen by degrees; and Chriftianity recovering its ancient luftre, will begin to appear with another face than it does at this day.



#### CAUSE II.

#### Prejudices and falle Notions concerning Religion.

OW ignorant and corrupt foever men may be, they cannot H & live absolutely without religion; very few at least can go fo far. Exx I If they are hindered by their Corruption, to know and practice pure Chriftianity; yet a remnant of light and confcience within them, does not fuffer them to run themfelves wholly into irreligion, and to lay afide all thoughts of falvation. But to reconcile these two principles, of which one draws them off from religion, and the other leads them to it; they form to themfelves fuch ideas of religion, as are agreeable to their inclinations, and flatter their fecurity; and being poffeffed with those ideas, they confirm themfelves more and more in their Corruption. Thefe falfe Notions and Prejudices are worfe than Ignorance, and prove a greater obstacle to the reviving of virtue and piety. It is better to deal with men who are fimply ignorant, than with people who have wrong apprehenfions, and are full of prejudices. The former being not prepoffelled, may more eafily be reclaimed ; but it is much harder to prevail upon preingaged perfons, especially in point of religion; because while they maintain their errors, they fancy they defend the truth, and that they 13 promote

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promote the glory of God. False Notions and Prejudices in Religion, are therefore one of those Causes of Corruption, which it concerns us most to take notice of. I shall endeavour to point at the chief of them in this chapter.

I. The first I shall name, is the opinion of those, who think that religion is intended only to comfort men, and to render them happy. And it is no wonder that men should commonly refolve all religion into this. The defire of happiness is natural to men; and as they are fensible upon ferious confideration, that perfect happiness is not to be obtained in this world, if it were for no other reafon but that they must die; they feek in religion fome confolation and remedy, against that fatal necessity, of quitting all the pleafures and advantages of this prefent life. Indeed the fense of their Corruption should restrain them from flattering themselves with the hopes of falvation; but they rely upon the affurances of the Divine Mercy, which religion gives to men; and they perfuade themfelves, that their fins will not obt ruct their felicity. This is properly the Notion which men entertain of Religion, and that which they think it is good for. But that religion should indispensably oblige men to fear God and to live well, and that without this, there is neither true religion, nor happinefs; is that which is not commonly believed.

There is no queftion but that the defign of religion is to comfort men, and to lead them to happinefs. This was God's purpole in fquding his Son to redeem the world. But this is not the only end of religion; it is intended befides for the glory of God and the fanctification of men; and it does properly confift in the fervice and obedience which are paid to God. Salvation is a confequence of this fervice, and a gratuitous reward, which God is pleafed to beflow upon thofe, who honour and ferhim. Nothing therefore is more abfurd than the conceit of thofe, who look only upon that fide of religion, which promifes comfort and falvation; and nothing is more dangerous or more apt to make men remifs and carelefs in their duty; yet this imagination is very common, and if I was to define religion, by the ordinary apprehentions which men have of it, I would fay; that it is nothing elfe, but a mean to bring finners to heaven, and to make men eternally happy, whatfoever their courfe and manner of life may be.

If. But men would not fo eafily promife themfelves falvation, if they had not very mean and imperfect ideas of religion. I fhall therefore obferve.

Secondly, That men commonly place Christianity, either in bare knowledge, or in an external profession, or in confidence. But holiness does not make a part of their Notion of Religion, or at best it makes but a very inconfiderable part of it.

It is not to be denied but that knowledge is effential to religion, and that as it holds the first rank in it, fo it is the foundation of it al. Nay it is impossible to engage men to holinefs, without laying first in them the foundation of good and found doctrine. This I have proved in the first chapter of this Treatife. An outward and publick profession is likewife effectial to religion, for one cannot be a Christian without it. And further, it is beyond all doubt, that religion infpires confidence, peace and joy. The knowledge of Christ, and of the falvation he has procured ed for us, must naturally produce these effects. Knowledge, profession, and confidence, are therefore included in the idea of religion, but as neceffary as they are, yet they are not fufficient.

Knowledge is not the whole of religion, fince the Gofpel as well as experience teaches us, that it may be found in the worft of men; it is not therefore a faving knowledge but when it produces piety and charity. The definition which St. *Paul* gives of the Chriftian religion, is that it is \* a knowledge of the truth according to godlinefs. We may read what the Apoftle tells us concerning that knowledge which is void of charity, I Cor. xiii. As for an outward profefion, it is altogether ufelefs without fanctity. A hypocrite may live in the church, and perform even with applaufe, the external duties of piety. This we may likewife learn from Scripture and daily experience. Laftly, all confidence which is not fupported by piety, is vain and deceitful. The bare perfuafion that one fhall be faved, gives no man a right to falvation. A very wicked perfor may without any ground rely upon God's mercy, and this is what divines call prefumption and fecurity.

But tho' all this is very plain, both from Scripture and good fenfe, yet men entertain opinions contrary to it. A great many think themfelves Chriftians, becaufe they know the truths and doctrines of Chriftianity. I do not enquire here, Whether all those who think they know religion, do really know it ? But howfoever this knowledge true or falfe, makes many judge most fayourably of themselves; it does to puff them up, that they look on themfelves as the ftays and fupporters of religion. Others, of whom there is an infinite number, imagine that fo they profess the true religion, they need not fear any thing concerning their falvation ; efpecially if this outward profession is attended with some apparent zeal, and fome affiduity in the publick exercises of religion. Lastly, it is believed by many, that God requires nothing elfe of men, but confidence, and that if they are in that disposition they cannot come short of falvation. They think that in order to falvation, it is enough to acknowledge that they are miferable finners, and to truft in the Divine mercy, and in the merits of Jefus Chrift.

This laft Prejudice which reduces Religion to acts of confidence, is perhaps the commonent of all. And yet if we were to determine which of these three, viz. knowledge, profession, and confidence, is the least effential to religion; we mult fay, that it is confidence. It is a thing unconceivable and contradictory, that a man should be a Christian without knowing and without making publick profession of his religion: but a man may be a Christian and a good man too, and yet want confidence. For as it frequently happens that a bad man is animated with a falle confidence; fo a good man may have a timorous conficience, and be polledfed with groundless fears. Sometimes melancholy, or a want of knowledge, or of force of mind, or even confistution, may throw good men into a flate in which they feel no comfort. But without infilting upon this; it is visibly an error as common as it is pernicious, for men to pretend, that knowledge, profession, or confidence, are fufficient to falvation, when they are feparated from the practice of holinefs.

It may perhaps be objected, that no man has these opinions, and that I 4.

• Tit. i. r.

every body acknowledges, that religion obliges men to be holy. I grant that no man does exprefly exclude holinefs; it is confeffed by all, that the practice of it is neceflary. But yet I maintain, that it is look'd upon as the leaft neceflary thing in religion. And to prove this; I need but alledge the difference which is made between knowledge, profeffion, and confidence; and the practice of good works. The three first are generally prefied and recommended in another manner than the laft.

As to knowledge, it is not without reafon reprefented as abfolutely necellary; it is faid, That a man muft know and believe all the articles of the Chriftian faith; and whoever denies any one of them, is excluded from falvation. This neceffity is extended to many doctrines, which is not of the fame importance with fundamental truths; many quefitions are determined, and all thefe decifions are made articles of faith. If any one raifes any doubt about them, he is treated as a Heretick, and people cry out as if religion was upon the brink of ruin. So that upon this head extreme feverity is ufed, every fault is capital, and no allowance is made for humane infirmity.

As to outward profefion; the neceffity of it is openly maintained, and not without juft caufe. In this point man's duty, and the precepts of the Gofpel are rigoroufly prefied. The leaft diffembling of a man's belief, the leaft act of unlawful worfhip, is called Apoftacy. It is declared, That men are bound upon pain of damnation, to forfake and fuffer all; rather than do any thing againft their confcience. In relation to this nothing is remitted or foftned, and the weak and timourous, are no ways indulg'd.

As to confidence, it is fpoken of in fuch manner, as makes people conceive, that it is the more effectual to falvation, the firmer it is, and the more removed from doubt. The greateft finner relies boldly upon the mercy of God, and does not queftion but that he has a right to apply to himfelf all the promifes of the Gofpel, provided he believe; that is to fay, as it is meant, fo he has but confidence enough.

But when the practice of good works is difcourfed of the declarations of the Gofpel are not preffed with the fame rigor. That zeal which upon all other heads hearkens to no accommodation, becomes here very tractable; and a great deal of remifnefs appears as to this article. The doctrines are prefied, publick profession is strictly enforced, and confidence is highly recommended; but it is faid, That moral duties must not be fo feverely urged, and that fomething is to be allowed for humane frailty. And yet it feems that as the Scripture inculcates nothing for much, as the neceffity of a good life; fo it were neceffary to infift as much at least upon this point, as upon any other, and that it should not be rank'd as it is, in the lowest degree, and among the least necessary things, One would think likewife, that the preffing fanctification, is to require nothing of men, but what is as eafy, if not more, than certain, other duties, which are abfolutely imposed on them, upon pain of damnation; fuch as the forfaking all that is dear to them in this world, and the fuffering of death in time of perfecution. But without enlarging upon this fubject, it is evident, that the generality of Chriftians, do not believe, that holinefs is fo effential a part of religion, as it really is; and that

that they do not well understand the nature of Christianity; from whence it necessarily follows, that they must neglect the practice of holines.

III. But there are fome Prejudices, which do yet more directly attack piety, and they are those which people entertain concerning piety and morality it felf. I shall instance this first in the opinion of those, who pretend that morality, is not of fuch great moment in religion, who speak of it with contempt, and cry it down; and who unreasonably fetting faith in opposition to good-works; maintain, that it is enough to believe, and that those who infift upon morals do not apprehend the nature of the Gofpel. Now one would think that fuch abfurd and unchriftian imaginations, fhould be univerfally rejected; but becaufe whatever gratifies corruption is ufually welcome to men; thefe opinions have their advocates, even among divines, as might eafily be fhewn from the printed works of fome authors, who feem to have had a defign to difparage good-works, and to oppole the necessity of fanctification. This Prejudice overturns the foundations of morality, by deftroying its neceffity, and rendring it contemptible. I only give here a hint of it, becaufe I am to fhew in other places, that it is the heighth of extravagance, thus to fet up faith against morality, to afcribe all to the one, and to speak but very flightly of the other.

IV. And yet fome people do not ftop here. They think it is dangerous to infift fo much upon morality; nay, fome have proceeded fo far, as to fay, This was one of the characters of Herefy. I confefs, this opinion is not very common. It ought not to be imputed to the people, nor even to the Libertines. None but a few conceited divines have had the face to maintain it, which by the by increases the fcandal, that is occafioned by fuch propositions. I am willing to believe that those who advance them, qualifie them with fome reftrictions, and that they are not fenfible of the terrible confequences which flow from them; but that they have been betrayed into the fpeaking or writing of fuch things, either through fome Prejudice, or through the heat of difpute. But after all, if these propositions were strictly taken; and set out in their true colours, they could not but be looked upon, as falle, rafh, fcandalous, and capable of producing most difinal effects, especially, being afferted by divines: and if we did not judge charitably of the intentions of their authors, we might justly fay, That those who dare disparage morality, and infinuate, that the preffing it is a mark of Herefy; do themfelves publifh, a most pernicious Herefy. Can it be a mark of Herefy to infift upon that, which our Saviour has fo vehemently prefied; which is the only thing he inculcates in his fermon upon the mount; which the Apostles perpetually \* urge in their epistles, + and declare to be the end of our whole religion, and the character whereby the children of God are difcriminated from the children of the Devil; and without which, both Chrift and his Apoftles affure us, # that no man shall enter into the kingdom of heaven?

By this, the truth of religion is as much flruck at and injured as piety it felf. It gives one an indignation to fee, that the honour of defending virtue and piety, fhould be yielded up to Hereticks. To fay that for the

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<sup>\*</sup> Matth. v. 6, 7. + 1 Tim. i. 5. 1 John iii. 8.

<sup>1</sup> Matth. vii. 21. Heb. xii. 14.

moft part, Hereticks are ftrong upon the head of morality, is in a manner to give up the caufe; it is the ready way to confirm them in their errors; and it does basely to afcribe that to Herefy, which belongs to true religion, and is the glory of it. It would be to no purpose to alledge, that fome Hereticks have writ upon morality with good fuccefs, For granting this to be true, it is not a token of their Herefy; on the contrary, fo far they are orthodox. Some orthodox Chriftians have recommended morality as much and better than the Hereticks, becaufe they have established it upon the foundations and motives, which pure) doctrines afford. On the other hand, there have always been Hereticks, who did fubvert and ruin morality; as for inftance, those who are defcribed by St. Paul in the fecond to Timothy, and by St. Peter in his fecond epiftle. It is then very unreasonable to fay, That a thing which neither agrees to all Hereticks, nor to Hereticks alone, is a mark of Herefy. There is much more reafon to charge those who speak to injurioufly of morality; with maintaining a Herefy, which comes very near that of the Gnaflicks, who were opposed by the Apostles, and condemned and detefted by the whole church, as corrupters of the morals of the Gofpel.

V. But tho' the greatest part of Christians, reject the opinions I have now mention'd, and acknowledge the excellency of morality; yet they form to themfelves too eafie a notion of the duties of it. This is another Prejudice, which does not a little contribute to that neglect of piety they live in. The notion of those who think, that the practice of piety is easy, is true in the main ; \* God's commandments are not grievous : + And Chrift's yoke is eafy, and his burthen light. We fhould therefore always suppose, that it is not difficult to lead a good life, and to work out one's falvation. But the error lies in imagining, too great an eafinefs in this, and in not confidering aright, the nature and the extent of the duties of morality. There are but few whole notions in this matter, come up to the standard of the Gospel, and to that perfection which Chriftians are to aim at. Few understand to what degree the practice of virtue is to be carried : as for the purpole ; what fort of juffice, equity, honefty, difinterestedness, purity, or charity becomes a professor of Chrift's religion ? Instead of rifing up to that high and fublime pitch of morality which the Gofpel demands; and inftead of being acted by noble views and defigns worthy of Christianity; men commonly take up with mean and flight apprehenfions of it. According to the general opinion, a very extraordinary and elevated virtue is not requifite, in order to be a good man. It is enough for a man if he is not a notorious villain, or a profligate wretch; and if he observe some of those duties which have a fnew of fanctity. Thus holinefs is reduced to the loweft degree of virtue, or rather, to the leaft degree of fin; it is brought to very little, and yet that little is often neglected; for men never go fo far in practice as they do in fpeculation ; they always do lefs than they think themselves bound to do; fo that their actions still fall short of the idea which they form of their duty.

VI. What judgment then are we to make of Chriftians now a-days? Tho' they fhould act fuitably to their notion of piety and morality ; yet they

\* I John v. 3.

. . . . . . Mat. xi. 30.

they would difcharge their duty but very indifferently, becaufe that notion is but low and defective. But yet as mean and imperfect as it is, their practice does not reach it. They frequently allow themfelves in things which are against their own conficience; and tho' they violate the clearest and the easiest rules of virtue, yet they fancy those to be fins from which no man is free, and which will however be forgiven. At this rate Corruption must needs be very great.

But as men often form to themfelves too eafie a notion of piety, fo they have fometimes too fevere an idea of it. It may perhaps feem at firff fight, that it is not very neceffary to remark and confute this Prejudice. The general depravation of manners feems to make it evident, that the notions which prevail at this time are not the rigid ones, and that men do not much trouble themfelves about the rules, of too auftere a' devotion or morality. But yet it is ufual enough for men to run into this other extream; and fuch an exceffive feverity is not fo inconfiftent as it may be thought, with the corruption of manners. For tho' many frame to themfelves bound to live according to it, but they leave thofe maxims to the devout, and they imagine that fo much piety is not menfuely; fo that they falhion to themfelves a commodious religion, and fuch a morality as has nothing that is troublefome or difficult in it.

Howfoever there are many who look upon piety as an auftere thing; they conceive it to be an enemy to all joy, and that it debars men of all pleafure, fo that it produces nothing but fadnels, and melancholy. And they are befides polleffed with this error; that the practice of it is uneafie and difficult, or even impofible. But why do men judge of piety with fo much prepoficifion and injuffice? This proceeds from two Caufes.

The first is their carnal disposition. They are incapable of relifning any other pleasures, but those of the body or of this present life, because they are accustomed to be governed only by their senses; and that is enough to represent piety to them as sower and distafful; not only because it does not procure to them those gross pleasures; but because it does likewife in many cases oblige them to renaunce them,

The fecond reason why men entertain this Prejudice against piety, is that it is not represented to them in its true shape. And here first, there is a great deal of hurt done by the falle pretenders to devotion; who affect a mournful and fevere outward appearance, and whose behaviour is often intollerably stern and favage. In the next place, profane men contribute to this mischief; for as they neither know nor love religion, fo they make odious pictures of it, and they take a delight in carrying the notions of devotion too far, that it may appear ridiculous.

Thirdly, there are feveral well-meaning perfons, whole zeal being not regulated and formed, by a different and prudent knowledge, gives an occafion to those unfavourable judgments, which the world paffes upon piety. Such people think that it is the duty of a devout perfon, never to be feen but in an auftere appearance, and with a dejected look; they are continually confuring and never pleafed; their zeal is either fuperfitious, forupulous, or ignorant, tharp, or unfeafonable; and fo it is extremely apt to alienate mens minds from devotion and piety.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, fome divines and moralifts confirm this Prejudice, by their way of recommending the practice of piety, both in their publick difcourfes and in their books. Religion and its duties, are often propofed to the people from the pulpit, in fuch a fevere and frightful manner, as is not very fit to make it appear lovely to men, who for the noft part, have already a Prejudice againft it. We find too rigid a morality, and feveral ftrained maxims in many fermons and books of devotion. And it may perhaps be of fome ufe, to give here fome inflances of this kind.

When worldly-minded men are told, that falvation is a moft difficult thing, and that whoever will obtain it, ought to fpend his life in perpetual mourning; this is no great attractive to gain them to the love of religion. Such maxims may be true in fome refpect; but they are falfe and extravagant, when they are propoled without diffinction or explication. By the deferiptions which are fometimes made of the vanity of the world, and of devotion; one would think, that a man cannot live like a Chriftian; without laying afide all fecular concerns and bufinefs, and giving up himfelf to folitude and retirement. Now this is what few men are capable of; and befides it is againft the order of Providence, which has placed us in the world, to live and labour in it, and to enjoy the good things which the Divine liberality has provided for us.

That which is afferted by fome moralifts, concerning the love of God, and their zeal for his glory; fuppofes that men are obliged, to think actually upon God at all times, and to have a politive intention to promote his glory in all the actions of their lives. But fuch morality to fay no more, is abfurd, and impoffible to be reduced to practice. It is not poffible for a man to have God always in his thoughts, and to make, pious reflections upon every ftep he takes, or every word he fpeaks. And there are fuch actions in life, which cannot without profanation be referred to the glory of God by a direct intention. St. Paul, indeed enjoyns us, \* to de all things to the glory of God; but this rule is not to be taken in the utmost firicines, nor extended to all particular actions. It is enough to have a fincere and general intention to procure God's glory, and to do one's duty upon all occasions. In order to which, these four things are neceffary. I. That we fhould not fail to think of God actually, in all those actions that require it. 2. That if by reason of the prefent state we are in, we cannot think on God at all times, and in all our actions ; we fhould at least think often upon him, and make frequent reflections upon our own conduct. 3. That in indifferent actions, we fhould not abufe our liberty, but demean our felves according to the rules which the Gofpel prefcribes; and that we fhould efpecially have a great regard to the edification of our neighbour; it being particularly in that fense that this commandment of doing all things to the glory of God, is to be understood. 4. That we should love God above all things, and that it should be our chief care and endeavour to obey him, and to advance his glory to the utmost of our power.

How many fcruples have been infufed into mens minds, by ftraining the fenfe of this declaration of our Saviour's, † Men *fhall give an account* 

• 1 Cor. x. 31.

+ Matth. xii. 36.

#### Corruption of Christians.

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at the day of judgment of every idle word that they shall speak. What inferences have not been drawn from this place, to fill good men with dread and terror? It is expounded as if all difcourfes, which neither contribute to the glory of God, nor to the edification of our neighbours, nor to the promoting of our own falvation; were those idle words, of which men are to give an account to God. And yet it does not appear that words purely idle, are always finful, or that they deferve the fevere, threatning which our Saviour denounces here. We cannot forbear talking every day, of many indifferent things, and holding feveral difcourfes which do neither good nor harm. Indeed if this fhould grow into a habit, if we should for the most part speak only of trifling and frivolous things; it would be a fin. But I do not apprehend what hurt there can be, in talking now and then of news, of rain, or of the weather. Certainly these are not the words which are meant in this declaration. The place where we find it, and the terms in which it is conceived ; do manifeftly fhew, our Saviour's meaning to be this; That men shall give an account at the day of judgment, of all the wicked and impious words which they have spoken; and that the Pharifees particularly should be answerable to God, for the blasphemics which they uttered against his miracles.

These strain'd maxims produce very pernicious effects. They expose piety to the flouts and contempt of libertines ; and they difcourage great numbers from it. Young people especially, are by this means difgusted with religion, and they take up an averfion to it, which they feldom shake off afterwards. They accustom themselves in that age which is fo fenfible of pleafure, to look upon piety under an auftere and melancholy form; whilft on the fide of the world and of their paffions, they fee nothing but fweetnefs and charms. Between thefe two objects; one of which is fo enticing, and the other fo difguftful; it is eafy to imagine which fide they will chufe. They run into the embraces of the world with the full fwing of their affections. But as to religion they must be urged and driven; and it is much if they can be brought to make fome steps towards it. Even good men being difcouraged by this exceffive feverity; do not make that progress in fanctification, which otherwise they might. Their confciences are diffurbed with troublefome fcruples. and continual fears. It is therefore very neceffary to remove this prejudice; by reprefenting virtue and piety, under that eafy and agreeable. fhape which is natural to them; and by proposing fuch ideas of religion. as may neither on the one hand, produce fecurity, and lull mens confciences afleep, nor on the other hand, involve them in groundless fcruples.

VII. But if men are averfe to things auftere and painful; they are wont likewife to defpife thofe, who they think have fomewhat in them that is mean and ridiculous. And there are many who have fuch an opinion of piety: which proceeds firff from the ignorance and corruption of men; who becaule they are not well acquainted with religion, or are poffeffed with falle notions of honour; look with contempt upon every thing, which does not agree with the prevailing cuffoms and maxims of the world. And then we may take notice belides, that libertines do fometimes obferve either in that religion which obtains in the fociety wherein they live; or in the deportment of thofe who have the reputation

reputation of being devout, feveral things, which lead them into this opi-With relation to doctrines, they find certain articles which men nion. of good fenfe cannot digeft, and they perceive manifest abuses in the worfhip; they fee the people amufed with childifh devotions, which fayour of nothing elfe but fuperflition, credulity or bigottry. Some of those who do profess devotion feem to them to hold opinions, contrary to found reafon, and to have fome odd and ridiculous ways with them. They perhaps, obferve in the minifters of religion feveral whimfies, lgnorances, and weakneffes; they do not always find the beft fenfe in difcourfes of piety, neither do they think the idea which is given them of religion and it's duties, to be true, rational, or fatisfactory. From all this they conclude, that to give themfelves up to it, would be a difgrace to them; that it is calculated only for the vulgar, and for weak minds; and that the being neither pious nor devout, argues a ftrength and a greatnefs of foul. This certainly is a moft falfe and unjuft prejudice. There is nothing more ferious, nor more worthy of effeem and respect than religion, and it is the highest pitch of injustice, to take an estimate of it by the errors and weakneffes of men. But yet this prejudice is very common.

VIII. Laftly, we are to rank among the prejudices and falfe notions of men concerning religion, the opinions of those who are infatuated with myffical piety and fanaticism. And it is the more neceffary to caution men againit those opinions, because they are grown of late years; to be very common. Fanaticism spreads very much, and there is fcarce a country in *Europe*, where it does not obtain under various denominations, and where it has not occasioned fome diffurbance.

It would be difficult to give here an exact account of myftical piety and fanaticifm. It is a fubject upon which we cannot fpeak very clearly, becaufe we can hardly have perfpicuous and diffinct ideas of it; befides, that the *Myflicks* are not agreed among themfelves: they are a fect which is fub-divided almost to infinity; for not to mention the *Anabaptifls*, the *Quakers*, the *Quietifls*, and all thofe who come up to the heighth of fanatical extravagances; there are many particular fects which would feorn the name, and yet are wholly, or in part, possible with the principles of the fanaticks. But in the main here is their character.

They are almost all agreed in one thing; which is, that they make but very little account of outward means, and of those acts which concern the exterior of religion; fuch are the order of the church, government, discipline, preaching, liturgies, and the publick exercises of devotion. All these, if we believe them, are to be confidered, as the first elements of piety, which are useful only to imperfect Christians. They have no great efteem neither for those labours and fludies, by which men endeavour to acquire knowledge. They reason little about religion, and for the most part, they alledge no other arguments for the articles of their belief, but the inward fense they have of them. They do not condemn morality and good-works, but among themselves, they speak but feebly of them, and in such a strain, as leftens confiderably their usefulnes and neceffity. They fay, that our works are nothing but defilement and abomination; that God does not look upon works, and that man ought not to judge of his condition by them; but that all depends upon faith;

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and an union with God.' Hence it is that those books, which lay a great firefs upon the practice of Chriftian virtues, do not relifh beft with them. They prefer contemplations, meditations and inward recollections, before an active life and the practice of morality. Nay there are fome who think, that all the care which men ufe, and all the efforts that they make to advance in piety, fignifie but little. According to them, the way to perfection and folid virtue, is for a man to be in a ftate of inaction, to go out of himfelf, to annihilate himfelf ; to have neither thoughts, nor defires, nor will, but to be as it were dead in the fight of God; for thus they express themselves in figurative and mysterious words. Under pretence of afcribing all to God, they affert, that man is a meer nothing, and an aby/s of mifery; that in order to be happy, it is enough for us to be fenfible of our nothingness, and to wait in filence and tranquility, till God is pleafed to work his will in us; and that when the foul is thus in the ftate of inaction, and intirely abandons it felf to God, then it is, that God fpeaks to, and operates in it. What they fay concerning man's nothingness, does not hinder but that most of them pretend to be in a ftate of perfection, and look upon the reft of Christians, as carnal men, who are yet in darkness, and who never tafted that which they call the heavenly gift. I might relate here their refining upon divine love and upon prayer; but what I have faid is fufficient, to difcover the fpirit and character of fanaticifm.

<sup>1</sup> I am far from charging all those who hold these opinions, with hypocrify and impiety; I am perfuaded that there are good men among ft them, who are not fensible of their errors; fo that I cannot but blame the feverity which is used towards them in fome places, and the odious imputations that are cash upon them in order to vilify them all, withous diffinction. If they err, it is for the most part, thro' weakness and preposition, rather than thro' malice.

Nay it may be faid in their behalf, that thefe illufions would not have grown fo common, if there had not been a general, and in fome meafure an incurable corruption in the world. But they faw every where a prodigious decay of piety, and little hope of amendment. For what may we not fay of the prefent state of Christianity? There is in many places an ignorant and fuperflitious Clergy and people; whole whole religion confifts, in ceremonies, and in devotions, which are merely external, and often ridiculous; above all, there appears in those places a deluge of immorality. Is it then to be wonder'd at, that quietifm and fanaticifm fhould rear up their heads in fuch places? These gross abuses do not indeed prevail every where; but generally speaking, there is but little of true piety among Chriftians, there is fcarce any order or difcipline left amongft them; men live as they pleafe; the facraments are prophaned; the precepts of the Gofpel are trampled under foot; charity and honefty, are almost entirely banished. No man fets about the redressing of these diforders; church-men make it their capital bufinefs, to maintain their difputes and their tenets, and they apply themfelves but faintly to the reforming of manners. Religion being upon this foot, many who had good intentions, could not but perceive that this was not true and genuine Chriftianity. But becaufe they faw no likelihood of things being brought to a better pofture; or because they wanted capacity to find out the occafions

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cafions and remedies of fo great an evil; or laftly; becaufe they were men of weak parts, they hearkned to thole who propoled to them this myflical piety.

This is the caufe of the progrefs of fanaticifm, and the reafon why fome perfons of virtue and piety are engag'd in that party. And therefore the true way to reclaim them, would be to re-eftablish order in the church, and to labour for the reformation of manners. As long as thefe are neglected, all the precautions and methods ufed againft fanaticks by the clergy, or by the magiftrate, will either prove unfuccefsful, or be found contrary to the fpirit of Christianity.

But after all, this fpirit of fanaticifin is highly pernicious. For first it opens a gap to all manner of licentiouincis. Not to mention the mifchiefs which may redound from thence upon civil fociety; myftical piety is a large fountain of illufions; it leads men into endlefs errors, and it is apt to turn all religion upfide down; for as it is lodged only in inward fentiments it cannot happen otherwife, but that vaft numbers of men who either want knowledge or ftrength of parts, will take the wandrings of their own fancies for divine infpirations. I know that fome of those contemplative men, acknowledge the Scripture for the rule of their faith, and read it carefully; but the mifchief is, that thro' their prejudices, they fix a wrong fenfe upon it, fo that what they read does but confirm them in their errors. Their expositions are very fingular; they do not affix to words the fame ideas which other men do; they forfake the literal fenfe, to run after myftical explications fuitable to their preconceived notions; they reject or make very light of those helps which the knowledge of languages, hiftory, and the scope of facred writers, afford; and it is one of their principles, that women, mechanicks, and the most fimple people, are able to understand the Scripture as well, if not better, than the most learned doctors.

2. Fanaticifm is an evil which is hardly to be remedied: a heretick, or a prophane perfon, may fooner may be undeceived, than a man intoxicated with myffical devotion; for thefe will reafon, but the other will hearken tono reafoning; fo that he is proof againft all the arguments which can be offered to him. It is in vain to difpute with people, who look on all thofe who are not of their mind, as ignorant men; who think themfelves illuminated above the reft of mankind, and who return no other anfwer to the objection urged againft them; but that they are otherwife perfuaded in their minds. There is no good to be done upon them; either by reafoning or by fenfe, of which they make but little ufe; or even by the Scripture, wherein they feek nothing lefs, than the literal meaning.

3. Tho' myftical men profefs a fublime piety; yet their principles favour corruption more than one may be apt to imagine. How can we reconcile thofe maxims concerning *contemplation*, *imanition*, and *filence*, with that activity, zeal, and fervour which the Scripture recommends? If a man is a meer nothing, if he is to wait patiently till God works his will in him, and fpeaks to his foul; it is in vain to exhort men, and it would be to no purpofe for them to use any endeavours on their part. Befides, that contempt of outward means which the Myflicks exprefs, makes way for a total neglect of devotion, introduces diforder and licentioufness, and is directly opposite to God's defign, who thought fit to preferibe preferibe the use of those means. I might add, that the principles of fanaticism are commodious enough for finners, to that I do not wonder, that some of them should go over to that party. A devotion which confists in acknowledging a man's own *nothingnels*, or in *contemplation* and *filence*, is much more acceptable to a corrupt perfon, than an exact morality, which obliges a man, to do acts of repentance, to put his own hand to the work, and to fet about the reforming of his life, and the practifing of Christian virtues.

Upon the whole matter, fanaticilin, makes religion contemptible; becaule the men of the world confound true with myflical piety. They fanfy that a man cannot be devout, without being fomething vifionary and enthuliaftical; and that devotion does not well agree with fenfe and reafon.

The prejudices I have mentioned in this chapter, are not the only ones which foment and cherifh corruption; fome others might have been added, but they may more conveniently be ranged under the titles of fome of the following chapters. What I have faid in this, does yet farther fhew the neceffity of good inftruction; which may conquer thefe prejudices, and give men true notions of religion and piety.

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# CAUSE III.

# The Maxims and Sentiments which are made use of to authorize Corruption:

T has been fhewn in the two preceding chapters, that men are generally involved in ignorance, and that they entertain fuch notions concerning religion and piety, as mult of neceffity maintain corruption in the world. But they are likewife poffeft with divers particular maxims and fentiments, which lead directly to libertinifin. A modern author very well observes; \* That people are not only very little acquainted, with the extent of that purity which the Gofpel requires; but that they are befides full of maxims, incomparably more pernicious, than errors of pure speculation. These maxims do the more certainly produce corruption, because they are used to authorize and countenance it. And in fact, men's blindnefs and licentioufnefs are come to that pafs; that not being contented with the practice of vice; they do belides plead authority for an ill life. They proceed fo far as to defend the caufe of corruption; they difpute with those that condemn them, and they yent fuch maxims and fentiments, as (if we believe them) will juftifie, or at leaft excufe all their diforders. I could not omit here the examining of those maxims, fince their effect is fo pernicious; I shall therefore observe them as the third caufe of corruption.

The maxims and fentiments which favour corruption are of two forts. Some are vifibly profane and impious; fuch are a great many maxims of the libertines, which go for currant in the world: but there are others which

\* New Moral Esfays, Tom. I. in the preface. Vol. VI. K. which men pretend to draw from religion. I fhall infift particularly upon the latter, becaufe as they are taken from religion it felf, they are by much the more dangerous. When profane people undertake to defend vice with maxims which are manifeftly impious, we ftand upon our guard againft them, and we may confute them by the maxims of religion. But when they employ religion and the truths of it, in the defence of vice; the danger of being feduced is infinitely greater.

I fhall reduce the maxims which are made use of to authorize corruption to these four orders.

I rank those in the *fir/l* order, by which men endeavour to prove, that holines is not absolutely necessary.

The *fecond* order contains those which tend to fhew, that the practice of holines is impossible.

The *third* comprehends those which infinuate, that it is dangerous for a man to apply himfelf to good-works.

The *fourth* and the *laft* includes those which are alledged to excuse corruption.

But as it is not lefs neceffary, to know the remedies against corruption, than to difcover the caufes of it; I shall not only mention, but as I go on confute those maxims.

I. Although nothing is more clearly afferted in the Gofpel, than the neceffity of good-works; yet Chriftians entertain many opinions which deftroy this neceffity, and which confequently open a door to licentioufnefs. The neceffity of good-works cannot be overthrown but one of thefe two ways; either by faying, that God does not require them; or elfe by maintaining, that tho' God requires them, yet a man may be faved without the practice of them.

1. In order to prove that God does not require fanctity and goodworks, as a condition abfolutely neceffary to falvation, thefe two maxims are abufed. 1. That we are not faved by our works. And 2. That faith in fufficient to falvation. The first of thefe maxims is intended to exclude good-works; and by the fecond men would fubfitute another mean for obtaining falvation. I referr the difcuffing of thefe two maxims to the next chapter, becaufe they are drawn from the holy Scripture.

II. Men endeavour to perfuade themfelves, that tho' they neglect holinefs, yet for all that, they fhall not be excluded from falvation. And that which contributes most to flatter them in this imagination, is first, the notion they have formed to themfelves of the mercy of God. God, fay they, is good, and will not judge us with the utmost rigour. This is faid every day, and it makes every body hope for falvation. The Divine mercy indeed is without queftion, the only ground we have to hope for falvation. But the vileft affront we can offer to that mercy, is to make it an occafion of fecurity. Becaufe God is good and merciful, muft not we therefore endeavour to pleafe him? May we freely offend him, becaufe he is good, and we hope he will forgive us?

Those who reason at this rate, understand very little what the Divine mercy is. They must suppose that it extends indifferently to all men without any regard to their obedience or disobedience. But this suppofition is evidently falle, and contrary to the holy Scripture. The effects of God's mercy, are promifed only to those who fear him and depart from i evil; and by confequence, it is a falfe and pernicious maxim, to fay, So much holinefs is not neceffary; God is good, and he will not mark feverely what is done amifs. This is to afcribe to God an eafinefs and a connivance, utterly unbecoming the fovereign Judge of the world.

It is faid befides, That God will not judge us rigoroufly. That indeed, is true; God is indulgent towards us, and the Gofpel is a covenant of grace, in which God has a great regard to our prefent condition, and weaknefs. But it is likewife certain, that God will judge us according to the rigour of the covenant of grace; and that no falvation is to be had for thole who do not fulfil the condition of the Gofpel; now this condition, is a true faith, inciting us to holinefs. This muft be granted, and we muft acknowledge the neceffity of performing this condition, and of leading a holy life; or elfe the Gofpel is but a jeft; and we muft fay, that God does not fpeak ferioully in it; that indeed he preferibes certain conditions, that he commands and threatens; but that nothing of all this is to be frictly underflood; fo that tho' a man does not comply with the conditions which God requires, yet he fhall feel the effects of his clemency. If this is true, there is an end of the Chriftian religion.

2. It will no doubt be replied, That provided a man reperts, and afks God's forgivenefs, be fhall be faved. This is an unqueftionable truth; fo by repentance we mean that, which the Gofpel requires, and which confifts in a fincere deteftation of fin, in true convertion and amendment of life. But this is falfe, if by repentance, we mean only a general confeffion of fins, accompanied with fome fenfe of grief and fear, whereby finners hope at the hour of death, to attone for all the diforder of a vitious life. I would fhew here that this is no faving repentance, but that I am to handle this matter purpofely in another chapter.

If men commonly neglect those things, which are not very neceffary; they apply themselves much less, to those which they think to be impossible. Now this is the notion which men commonly have of piety. It is faid first, That it is impossible for a man to be so bely, and to do that which God commands. A great many like the precepts of the Gospel very well, and acknowledge their justice and excellency, Would to God, fay they, we could live thus, but we are not able to do it: and being possible with this opinion, they use no endeavour to practife those duties which they own to be just; or to attain to that holiness, to which God calls them. And indeed, what man would attempt that, which he looks upon as impossible.

Now what is faid of man's incapacity to do good, is very true, when we fpeak of man confidered barely as man, in the corrupt flate of nature. But the queftion is, Whether those whom God has refecued out of that flate, and called to the communion of the Gospel, are incapable to arrive at that degree of holines, which he requires of them? The Apofiles gives us another notion of those who know and believe in Jefus Chritt. They represent to us indeed the milerable condition in which men naturally are, and the greatness of their corruption; but they tell us at the fame time, that Chrift is come to deliver them from that flate, \* that a *Chriftian can do all things through Chrift, that flrengthemeth him:* + that be is perfect and throughly furnished to all good works;  $\ddagger$  that he who loves God keeps his commandments, and overcomes, the world. This plainly imports, K 2

\* Phil. iv. 13.

<sup>+ 2</sup> Tim. xi. 21.

<sup>1 1</sup> John ver. 34.

## Gaufes of the prefent

that we are no longer in that flate of corruption and death, wherein man being left to himfelf, is a flave to fin; or at leaft that we ought to be no longer in that flate, after all that which the grace of God has done for us. It is the greateft injury, that can be done to Chrift and his grace, to fay, That his coming, his death, his Gofpel, and his Spirit, are not able to fancilify men; and that after they are redeemed and adopted by God, it is impoffible for them to be good, and to do what he commands.

If this was true, where would be the power of the Chriftian religion. and what could we think of God's proceeding when he addreffes his commandments to us? At this rate, he gives us a law, not that we fhould keep it; but rather to convince us that we cannot obferve it. In this cafe, what will become of our Saviour's precepts, and what are we to think of those pure and exalted morals which he has left us? Evangelical holinefs will be nothing elfe but an imaginary and unpracticable fanctity. Those ideas of perfection will be but meer ideas, without any reality; like those of that philosopher, who form'd a fine scheme of the best government of a common-wealth; but it was a project which could never be executed. It were to be wifhed, we might remember, that, thanks be to God, we are no longer heathens; and that men should be encouraged, and not difheartened by extravagant maxims and difcourfes. Which is the imitating those cowardly spies, who after they had viewed the land of Canaan, went about to difpirit the Ifraelites, and to perfuade them, that the conquest of that land was imposfible.

2. It is not only faid, that we are not able to be fo holy as the Gofpel requires ; but it is added befides, that God would not have us be fo; that he makes use of fin to keep us humble, and to make us feel the constant need we have of his grace, as well as to kindle in us, the defire of a better and more perfect life. This maxim reprefents corruption as a thing unavoidable, agreeable to the will of God, and in fome meafure ufeful. But what can be more false than to pretend, that God would not have us to be holy? Why then does he command us to be fo? Why does St. Paul fay, \*This is the will of God, to wit, your functification? What can be meant by these words of St. Peter, + As he who has called you is holy, be ye also holy in all manner of conversation; for it is written, be ye holy, for I am holy? If it be faid, that God would have us to be holy, but not perfectly holy, as we fhall be in heaven: I afk no more, Who did ever pretend that we ought to be as holy in this world, as we are to be in the life to come? Nothing elfe is required of men, but that they fhould be as holy, as God would have them to be, and as holy as his grace enables them to be in this life. . 'To alledge against this, That God would not have us be fo holy; is a ridiculous evafion, which implies a contradiction. Befides, this maxim taken in that fense, which it first offers to the mind, feems to make God the author of fin. For it fuppofes, not only that God would not have us to be fo holy, but which is more ftrange, that he wills the contrary, that he has his views, defigns, and reafons, why he fhould not permit us, to attain that degree of holinefs, to which the Gofpel calls us. That is the meaning of these words, That God makes use of fun, to keep us humble, to make us feel the need we have of his grace, and to make us long for another life. If it was faid only, That God had fome reafons to permit fin: fuch

1 Theff. iv. 3.

+ 1 Pet. i. 15, 16.

fuch an affertion would be true; but those who alledge this maxim, to excuse themselves from obeying the Gospel, ascribe to God a politive defign; and a direct intention, which renders that obedience impossible; which derogates from his holinefs and juffice, and which is manifeftly contrary to those declarations which he himself has made in Scripture. If it were further faid, That our fins ought to humble us, and that they should ferve to make us wifer, and more circumspect for the time to come, and to raife in us a longing after a happier flate ; this would be very reasonable. But it does not follow from thence, that we are to ascribe to God, those views and intentions which this maxim ascribes to him. There is a vaft difference between the defign which God propofes to himfelf, and the event of things. These two should never be confounded. Neither ought the natural effect of fin, to be confounded with the con-fequences of it. The natural effect of fin can be no other but evil; if the confequences of it are not always fatal, and if men reap fome advantage from it, that is, as we fay, by accident. However God has no need of vice to form us to humility; he has other means to humble us, and to make us feel the need we ftand in of his grace ; without being neceffitated to let us live under the dominion of fin, to produce those dispositions in us. And there remain ftill even in the very holieft men, matter enough for them to have recourse to the Divine mercy, and to aspire to a better life, notwithstanding all the progress they can make in holinefs. This will be fully cleared in the fequel of this chapter.

3. Here is another maxim which is pretty common; it is faid, That this world is the place of corruption, that this life is the time of fin, and that holinefs is referved for heaven. Men's minds are to infected with this imagination; that we hear it faid every day, even by those who have fome piety; That we live in this world only to offend God, and that we do nothing but fin. But certainly, nothing is more contrary to the doctrine of the Gospel, than this: for tho' it is true, in a found sense, that this world is the place of corruption, and that fin will never be intirely abolifhed but in heaven; yet that does by no means excufe us from ferving and fearing God, as long as we live here. The first thing a Christian ought to know; is that God has placed him in this world, not to offend, but to to glorifie and ferve him. The gofpel tells us, every where, that this life is the time which God gives us to fanctify our felves in. That this earth is the place where Christian virtues are to be practifed; that now is the time to labour, to walk, to fight, and to fow, if we intend to obtain falvation; and that whoever neglects these duties shall be shut out of heaven. In the life to come these opportunites will be over, the door will be shut, and the fentence which God fhall pronounce at the day of judgment, will be founded upon that which men do in this life.

Nay, we may draw an argument from the nature of holinefs it felf, to demonstrate, that the practice of it is not referred to another life. The greatest part of the duties which God prefcribes; fuch as repentance, patience, chaftity, fobricty, almigiving, and hope, cannot be practifed in heaven. Here then, is the time, the place, and the opportunity, to perform these duties. Let us reflect upon what St. Paul fays, in his epiftle to Titus, chap. xi. There he declares, That the grace of God which brings falvation, teaches men to live foberly, righteoufly, and godly in this prefent K 3 world.

### Causes of the present

world. That is, in this life, and upon earth; and then he adds, looking for that bleffed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our faviour Jejus Chriff. He makes a diffinction between the duty, and the hope of a Chriftian; between this world and that which is to come. This life is the time, and this world the place, wherein we ought to practife temperance, juffice, and godlinefs. It muft not be afked, where the difference then lies, between this life and the other, between grace and glory? For the difference is great and fenfible enough in other refpects. In the next life we fhall be perfectly holy; our holinefs will be of another nature than it is here; we fhall be like the angels, and as we fhall practife no longer a great many duties, which we practife here on earth, fo we fhall exercise many virtues, which cannot be exercised in this life.

4. I ought not to omit here another maxim, which is not only very common, but is likewife moft pernicious, by reafon of the ufe that is made of it. Some fay, That there was always, and that there will always be corruption; that this is the way of the world, that men will always be men, and that the world will not change. It is neceffary to dwell a little upon this maxim, becaufe it is fpecious, and tends as well as the former, to make men believe that corruption is neceffary and unavoidable. It has befides a general influence upon the fubject matter and defign of this book; for it is to little purpofe to defcant upon the fources of corruption, if there is no amendment to be hoped for, I have four things to fay upon this maxim.

1. The inference which is made from it is abfurd. For tho' an evil is general, it does not follow, that it is to no purpole to endeavour to keep our felves free from it; unlefs it were an evil from which men could not poffibly preferve themfelves. There have been always and there will always be difeafes in the world; and yet no man hitherto has been fo weak as to maintain, that the precautions and remedies which are ufed againft difeafes, are altogether ufelefs. Thus tho' corruption reigns in the world; yet that does not hinder, but that men ought to ufe thofe means which God affords them to that end.

2. This maxim is founded upon a falle supposition. For tho' it is true, that there has been always, and there always will be corruption in the world; yet it ought not to be fuppofed, that this corruption is alike at all times, or that things are always to be in the fame state they now are in. This were a falfe fuppofition and contrary to experience, as may eafily be proved with respect to the time past, the present, and the future. First, when we reflect upon paft ages, we cannot fay that all times have been alike, in reference to religion. It is not to be denied, but that before Chrift's coming, the world was plunged in a general corruption, and that the ftate of it has been confiderably altered by the preaching of the gofpel. Can any one deny but that the primitive church was purer, than the church which we find in the ninth or tenth century? At this day, tho' there is a general diffolutenefs, yet there is more or lefs corruption in fome places than in others. It is true in fact, that where the gofpel is duly preached, and where there is fome order and difcipline left, there appears more piety and religion than in other places. As for the time to come we must not think it impossible to reftore things to a better fate, or imagine that the world will always continue as it is, tho' the means

means were used which God has appointed to reform it. For this will no fooner be done, but corruption will abate; as I hope to make it appear, in the fecond part of this book.

3. This maxim is directly contrary to the word of God. The fcripture often speaks of the corruption of the world, but does it always in fuch a manner, as gives us to underftand that Chriffians may, and ought to renounce it. St. Paul speaks of the finful courses which the world lies in, Eph. xi. But he fuppofes, that the Ephefians did no longer follow those courses after they were converted to the Christian religion. The fame apostle commands us, \* not to be conformed to this prefent world. And St. Fames when he describes the spirit and character of that + pure and undefiled religion, which is acceptable to God, he tells us, among other things, that it confifts in a man's keeping bimfelf unspotted from the world.

4. In the last place, this maxim is extreamly dangerous. In that fense and defign in which it is proposed, it leads to impiety, it robs religion of all its power, and it furnishes libertines with a plea, which does intirely justify them. For in fhort, either corruption may be remedied, and men may be reduced to a more Chriftian life; or it may not. If it cannot be remedied, this maxim is true, and prophane men are in the right. But in that cafe, I fay it again, religion is but a name; for if no ftop can be given to corruption, if things must still go on at the fame rate; why do we talk of religion, or why do we preach the gospel? We may teach and exhort as long as we pleafe, but for all that, there will be neither more nor lefs fin; men will always be what they are, and the world will not alter. What notion must this give us of the efficacy of Christianity, or of the fincerity of its precepts, promifes and threatnings? I grant then, that corruption is great, that the course of the world is very bad, and that in all probability, there will always be wickedness upon earth. But that this corruption should be always the same, fo that no reformation can be hoped; is what cannot be maintained without affronting religion, without introducing fatality and extinguishing all zeal among Chriftians.

III. By the maxims we have hitherto examined, men endeavour to prove, that the practice of holinefs, is either of no great neceffity, or that it is impoffible. But there are fome others, which represent the fludy of virtue, as dangerous; fo that here vicious men do not fland barely upon the defensive part, but they attack their adversaries, who recommend the duties of holinefs.

1. They pretend, that we cannot infift fo much upon works, without obscuring the glory of the divine mercy. We must ascribe all, fay they, to mercy, and nothing to our own righteousness. There is no true Chriflian, but acknowledges, that our falvation is entirely owing to the divine mercy; and rejects the opinion which attributes any merit to goodworks. It is that mercy which gave us Chrift for our redeemer, and our falvation is founded upon that redemption. It is that mercy which pardons the fins of those who believe and repent, and which bears with the infirmities of regenerate Christians. And it is from the fame mercy, that we expect that glorious and un-merited reward, which is laid up in heaven

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\* Rom. xii. 2.

+ James i. 2, 7.

ven for good men. All thefe are fo many acts of the pure mercy of God. But as we have thewed that the mercy which faves us, does not excuse us from good-works, fo the neceffity of good-works, does not leffen in . the leaft the riches of God's mercy. Unlefs we admit that there are contradictions in foripture; we mult acknowledge, that the doctrine of fanctification, does perfectly agree with the doctrine of grace.

And in truth, to fay, that God gave up his Son to death, in order to fave men, and that he will grant remifion of fins, and eternal happinefs, to every believing and repenting finner; is as much as can be faid to magnify the divine mercy: except we fhould pretend, that God would be more merciful, if he did indifferently fave all mankind, and reward vice and virtue alike; but this would a horrid thought, and no lefs than downright blafphemy. Then finners might fay indeed, Let us continue in fin, that grace may abound.

Let us fuppofe that a prince pardons a rebellious fubject, and that he is ready to confer the greateft honours and benefits upon him, on condition that this fubject, fhall accept of the pardon that is offered him, and fhall relapfe no more into the fame crime; would any man be fo unreafonable as to fay, that the elemency of that prince would be much greater, if he did grant his favours to this rebel, tho' he fhould perfift in his crime? And yet this is the fame thing which fone would have God do. It is very firange, that any one fhould think to honour God, by fuch conceits, as do not only injure his mercy, but his other perfections too. Becaufe God is merciful, muft we for et that he is holy, juft and good? It is faid, *That we muft eferibe all to the mercy of God*; what then, muft we have no regard to his holinefs, his juftice and his truth? Muft what the for input relis of thefe laft perfections, be faintly and tenderly expounded, whilf we prefs and force up to the higheft pitch, what it fays of mercy?

As to what is added, That we ought to affribe nothing to our own righteoufnefs; it is unqueftionably true. But do we affribe any thing to man, when we fay, that he is bound to do his duty, and to accept the favour which God is pleafed to beftow upon him? Can any man fay, that the rebel I mentioned juft now, is the author of his own happinefs, and that he deferves the pardon granted him by his prince; becaufe he accepts of it, and fulfils the condition upon which it is offered? What reafon then has a man to value himfelf upon his own righteoufnefs, or to arrogate any merit to himfelf, fince he is indebted to the grace of God; both for the beginnings and the progrefs of his fanctification? In fhort, we fhould take heed, that for fear of afcribing any thing to man, we may not rob the divine grace of what belongs to it, by not acknowledging its gifts and power in a regenerate man.

2. Here is another maxim, which is alledged in confirmation of the preceding and which aims at the fame mark; it is this, *That we muft not fpeak fo much of good-works, left we infpire men with pride and prefumption.* And to support this maxim it is usual, to run out upon mens' inclination to pride; and upon the heinoufnets of that fin. But this maxim proceeds only from the falle and confused notions which men have about religious matters.

Either this maxim has no fenfe at all, or elfe it amounts to this; that whofoever applies himfelf to holinefs and good-works, is in danger of falling

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falling into pride; and that a neglect of virtue contains a man within the bounds of humility. Which is as much as to fay, thet a man may be holy without humility, and humble without holinefs. Two things which are the most ridiculous and contradictory, that can be afferted. At this rate it would be a dangerous thing to be a good man, and more fafe to be otherwife. By purfuing virtue and holinefs a man draws near to fin, and to the greatest of fins, I mean pride; and by neglecting holinefs, he attains humility, which is one of the chief Christian virtues. If this is true, all that we call vice or virtue, is but an empty found. It is much that men fhould not fee, that there can be no holinefs without humility, nor humility without holinefs; that where there is holinefs; there is humility, and pride is excluded; and that where pride is, there is no true fanctification. The holier a man grows, he becomes the more humble; and he is fo far from coming the nearer to pride by proceeding in holinefs, that on the contrary he removes the farther from it. The instance of our bleffed Saviour, who was both perfectly holy, and perfeetly humble: is a proof, that humility is not incompatible with holinefs.

But the nature of humility is not well underftood. There are many who conceive no other humility, but that which arifes from the diforders of a vicious and irregular life. So that when they would humble good men, they rank them among the vileft finners, they make them fay, that there is nothing but wickednefs and abomination in them; and that they have deferved eternal damnation by innumerable fins which they have committed, every moment of their lives, and even by the beft actions they have done. The ftrongeft expreffions and the moft exceffive hyperboles, are fearce fufficient to exaggerate the number and greatnefs of their fins. But there is enough of other inducements and motives to humility, without thus confounding vice with virtue. It would be a pretty fort of humility, for a man to live in fin, to be at defiance with God, to do nothing for his fake, and then with all this to confefs himfelf a miferable finner.

Pride and prefumption fhould not be encouraged; but yet under the pretence of humbling men, we ought not to turn them into blocks, or to confound a good man, with a profligate finner. When we inveigh againft the pride of man, we ought not to fink his courage; for that would immediately make him incapable of any thing that is good. Under colour of honouring God, we muft not difhonour his workmanfhip, fpeak flightingly of his gifts, and overlook his image, in those who bear it in a double capacity; as they are men, and as they are Chriftians. It is a piece of pride to arrogate any thing to our felves which we have not, or which does not come from us; but it is a falle humility, it is hypocrify, not to acknowledge the graces of God in us.

It is objected; That fone prefume much upon themfelves, that man is very apt to flatter himfelf, and to this purpofe, the Pharifees are mentioned, who irufted in their own righteoufnels. To this I reply, that thole prefumptious perfons are hypocrites, who have no folid piety. I fay, that the grace of God, beats down that pride, and that the Pharifees had nothing but an external righteoufnels, a deceitful and hypocritical fanctity. It is therefore without reafon, that men cry down holinels, and pretend that the fluidy of good-works begets prefumption, becaufe there have been, and and there ftill are hypocrites. If we may fay where pride is to be found; it is in those wild and extravagant moralilits, who make all these objections. Those men aferibe very little to good-works, and yet what opinion do they not entertain of themfelves? They fancy themfelves God's favourites, and the truly humble men; and all this by virtue of their flock of confidence: and which is yet worfe, they judge rafhly of those, who endeavour to live better than themfelves, and they make bold to call them *Pharifees* and hypocrites. Is not this a most intolerable prefumption and boldnefs?

3. The abettors of corruption infift mightily upon this maxim, That excefs in all things is to be condemned; and that piety, when carried too far, degenerates into fuperflition and hypocrify. It is not only the libertines speak after this manner; many who would be thought wife and rational men, use the fame language. They pretend to virtue, they condemn atheism and impiety; but they likewise condemn those who would the men to the first practice of the duties of holines. In all things, fay they, a just medium is to be observed. The worst of it is, that fome moralists give an occasion to these opinions, by the pictures they make of hypocritical and fuperflitious men. They represent them as men, who carry all the appearances of devout perfons; they tell us, that hypocrify goes beyond true devotion; and they are not aware that by this, they turn religion into ridicule, and render it odious.

This maxim as well as the former, is founded upon the un-accurate notions, which most people have concerning morals; for it will appear to every man who examines this matter with fome care. I. That piety can never be carried too far, and that we can never do too much in obedience to God, and in compliance with our duty. And 2. That piety, and fuperflition or hypocrify, are things opposite to one another : fo that to imagine, that a diligent and earnest application to piety, leads men to fuperstition, or hypocrify, is a monstrous absurdity, and the highest contradiction that can be maintained. It is just as if one should fay, that gold or filver by being very much refined might at last degenerate into lead, or earth. How or which way can piety turn to fuperflition, or hypocrify? This is a thing that cannot be conceived. As long as men reafon upon true principles, they may purfue them with affurance, and without fear of running themfelves into falfe or dangerous confequences. Men will never fall into fuperfition or hypocrify, by the practice of vir-So far from it, that the more true piety a man has, he will find himfelf at the greater diftance from fuperflition and hypocrify: and a fuperflitious perfon is fo far from out-ftripping a good-man, that on the contrary he comes infinitely behind him. Solid virtue is always attended with these two characters : first it is fincere and from the heart, and by that it deftroys hypocrify, inflead of producing it : and then fecondly, it is well-informed and rational, it fills the mind and heart with true notions, with great and elevated views; and fo it fets men at an infinite diftance from those mean, ignorant, and trifling things which the fuperstitious are taken up withal. Let us conclude then, that hypocritical and superflitious men, are so far from having too much piety, that they have none at all: if it happens fometimes, as it certainly does; that men who have a found and honeft heart, are fomewhat given to an odd kind of devotion. votion, which in fome refpects favours of fuperflition; this does not proceed from piety it felf, but from a defect in those that profess it, who may either want knowledge, or force of mind.

IV. Tho' men endeavour to defend corruption, with thole maxims I have related; yet as thele maxims may eafily be confuted, fo they are fometimes forced to acknowledge, that the depravation of the age is great, and that the life of Chriftians is not agreeable to the rules of their religion. But for all this, they do not give up the caule. They betake themfelves to various excufes, by which they think to exempt themfelves from their duty, or at leaft to leffen and extenuate the fin of not obferving it. Thefe excufes muft needs maintain them in fecurity; they are befides very common, and even pafs frequently for good and juft. Therefore I think it may be proper to refute them too, in this chapter. It would be a difficult tafk, to reckon up all the excufes which are alledged in the behalf of corruption, and to trace out all the doublings and artifices of man's heart, upon this matter. It will be fufficient to mention thofe which are most general and ordinary.

1. It is cuftomary to excufe corruption, by faying, That we are men, and not angels. This excuse might be deftroyed by what has been already faid, but yet it may be usefull to dwell a little upon it. It is faid then, That we are men, and not angels; and that is a most certain truth; but there is no ground to juftify or excuse by that the ill lives of Christians. For first, that very thing that we are men, obliges us to the practice of virtue, inftead of exempting us from it. We are men, and as fuch, we have a reafon which diffinguishes us from brutes, and a confcience which difcerns between good and evil ; we ought then to live according to reafon, and the principles of confcience; and to do that which becomes the nature of man. We are men, and by confequence mortal, we know we are not to live always in this world; and knowing this, we must either think of another life, or propofe to our felves no other end, than that of beafts ; which follow their inftinct while they live, and then die never to live again. We are men, but we are not independent, we have a creator and a mafter; and as we are endued befides with understanding, we are to give an account of our actions before his tribunal; it is therefore agreeable to the nature of man, to live like a creature that depends upon God, and that must be judged. So that this confideration, that we are men, is fo far from excufing, that it condemns corruption.

But it may be faid that we are weak men. This is very true, our nature is frail, and has befides a ftrong byass to evil. But God speaks to us as to weak men; he commands us nothing but what is proportioned, to that flate of imperfection we are in. Beides, this excuse does not at all become Christians. To say, we are weak men, is to shew we have but little fense of God's kindnels towards us. We are not only men, but we are Christians too, and this quality raises us above the natural condition of men; it makes us new men and new creatures. Why do we then forget the glory to which God has exalted our nature through Jesus Christ? Why would we still lie under the burden of frail and corrupt nature?

It is further faid, that we are not angels. But neither is it neceffary that we fhould be fo, to do that which God commands us. When God gives.

PART I.

gives us his laws, he knows he gives them to men; and therefore they are admirably fuited to our prefent condition in this world. If we were angels, God would give us quite other laws, the gospel would be abolifhed, and the world fhould continue no longer in the ftate it is in. It is therefore an abfurd imagination, to think that one cannot perform the duties of religion without being of an angelical nature.

Let us then no longer pretend, That becaufe we are men we are too weak to observe the dutics which religion prescribes; this excuse charges God with injuffice, as if he did require from us fuch things, as are not agreeable with our nature and condition; it is injurious to the gospel and to the Chriftian religion, as well as to the grace of Chrift, and the power of his fpirit; it is falfe, fince the fcripture declares, that grace regenerates and ftrengthens us, and that it makes us able to overcome the vitious inclinations of our nature, and to free our felves from the dominion of fin: and laftly, it is contrary to experience; for those many faints and good men, who practifed the moft \* fublime and difficult duties of piety, were men as we are, and as the + facred writers obferve, they were fubject to the fame infirmities with us, and many of them perhaps, had not those advantages which we have.

2. It is often alledged as an excuse, That no man is perfect, and that every one has his faults. This is faid every day, and fome pretend with that faying, to excufe every thing. Excufes for the most part, have fomething of truth in them. This proposition, That no man is perfect, is very true in one fenfe, and altogether falfe in another.

No man certainly is perfect, in the ftrict fenfe of that word, or as it imports a full and accomplifhed perfection, free from all defect; fuch a perfection is to be had no where elfe but in heaven. But there is a perfection commenced, or begun, of which a man redeemed and fanctified by Jefus Chrift, is capable. If it was not fo: why fhould Chrift and his apofiles exhort us, \$ to be perfect? Why fhould they tell us, || that he who is born of God does not fin? And that a Christian is Sthoroughly furnished to every good work? If you alk, who those perfect men are? I answer, that they are those who aspire to perfection, in whom fin does not reign, who do not allow themfelves in any vitious habit, who fincerely and honeftly apply themfelves to holinefs, and have accuftomed themfelves to practife the duties of it with delight. Whoever is arrived at fuch a state, has attained that perfection which is attainable in this life, and to which Chriftians are called by the gofpel; tho' there remain ftill in him iome infirmities infeparable from humane nature, and never totally, to be rooted out, before he gets to heaven. We cannot be perfect in that first and flrict fenfe I have mentioned; but we may be perfect, and God will have us be fo, in the fecond and evangelical fenfe of that word.

It is therefore a frivilous excufe in the mouth of corrupt men, to fay, That no man is perfect, and that we cannot attain to the perfection, or to the Itate of the bleffed in heaven; for this is to fhift the queftion, because that is not the perfection which God requires. We ought not to fix a falfe and abfurd fense upon God's commandments, that we may have a pre-

\* James v. 17. 1 Matth. v. 48. Phil. i. 10. 1 Theff. v. 23. || 1 John'v. 9. § 1 Cor. i. 8. 2 Tim. xi. 21.

## Corruption of Christians.

#### CAUSE III.

tence not to obey them. The queftion is, whether Christians are not bound to do that which God would have them do, and which they are able to do in this world; this is the perfection to which he calls us.

We may apply very near the fame answer to that other excuse, That every body has his faults : there are faults which do not deftroy piety ; and God is gracioully pleafed not to impute fuch faults to those that fear him; and in this fenfe, no man is free from faults; but there is another fort of faults, which fhould not be called bare faults or defects; those are the vices and paffions which cannot confift with piety, the great, the reigning, the habitual or deliberate fins. True Christians are free from fuch faults, and those who are not free from them, are not true Christians. If this maxim, That every one has his faults, is not thus explained ; we muft fpeak no longer of virtue and vice; for this excufe will ferve for all fins, and acquit every body. If a man is given to fwearing, if he is revengful, paffionate, or falle, if he commit adultery, it is but faying, Every one has his faults, and no man is perfect. Such language from a man full of vicious habits is unfufferable. What difinal confequences, would not libertines draw from fuch a principle? We mult therefore understand this proposition, in the fense, and with those restrictions I have observed, and then it may be useful to comfort good men, but it will never excuse those who are vicious.

3. Men endeavour to excufe themfelves, by laying the fins they commit, upon the great number and the force of temptations. It is very hard, lay they, to avoid fin, we are fo many ways drawn into it, temptations are fo flrong and fo frequent, that we mult go out of the world, if we would preferve our innocence. Sometimes they impute to the devil the fins which they fall into, and at other times fo great is their audacious fields, that they throw them upon God and his providence.

All these excuses are trifling, and some of them are impious. For, to begin with that which is borrowed from the multitude and ftrength of temptations; it is unreafonable to imagine, that the number of temptations is fo great, that their force is irrefiftible. Temptations are frequent, I confess; but it is an error to think, that there is nothing but fnares and folicitations to fin in the world. This would give us a ftrange notion of God and of his works, and in that cafe man's condition would be very miferable. It is certain on the other hand, that the opportunities and folicitations to good, are very common, efpecially in relation to Chriftians, whom an infinite number of objects and motives call back to God, and to their duty. Even temptations themfelves give them occafions of doing good. God fupplies them abundantly with all things neceffary to life and godlinefs; as we are told, 2 Pet. i. Certainly we are to prefume, that if God permits that men should here meet with temptations and opportunities of undoing themfelves, he offers them on the other hand, many occafions and inducements to take care of their falvation. So that the great number of folicitations to good, does already deftroy the excuse which is taken from the great number of temptations.

Neither is it more reasonable to complain of the ftrength of those temptations. Such a complaint is very unfeenly from Christians, who are appointed to overcome the world, the flefth, and all other temptations. When all things, are well confidered, it will appear, that it is within within our felves, in our own negligence, and in the perverfuefs of our wills, that we ought to look for that which makes temptations fo ftrong and too hard for us. They have no more ftrength than we give them. St. James has decided this queftion in fuch a manner as fhould ftop the mouth of those who feek the cause of evil any where elfe but in their own hearts. \* Every man, fays he, is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and inticed.

The devil has no more power over us, than temptations have: for he can but tempt us. But yet we are apt to afcribe to him a kind of omnipotence. According to the vulgar opinion, one would think, that the devil is the author of all the fins that are committed; that he is every where; and that men are but his infruments, which he ufes at pleafure. If this was true, men were indeed to be pitied, and it would be fome excufe to thofe who live ill. The Scripture teaches us no fuch thing.

But the higheft pitch of temerity, is to charge God and Providence with our fins. Thus fome men are wont to fay, Such a thing comes ta pafs becaufe God would have it fo; and fuch another thing did not happen becaufe it did not pleafe God that it flould. When this excute is made with relation to fin, it amounts to the moft horrid of blafphemies; it lays upon God all the evil that happens, and makes him the author of it: for either this excute fignifies nothing; or elfe it imports, that God is the caufe of what happens, and not we. This muft needs be the meaning of it, becaufe men pretend to excufe themfelves with faying, God would have it fo. In a word, here is no middle way; either the caufe of fin is in man, or it is not. If it is in man, he can accufe no body elfe but himfelf; he caunce clear himfelf by faying, God would not have it fo. If the caufe of fin be not in man, he is difcharged, and all the evil lights upon God. It is an aftonifhing thing, that men who believe God to be infinitely holy and juft, can entertain fuch thoughts.

4. Another excufe is often alledged, and it is fetched from common *practice, cuftom and example.* That which is generally done is thought to be innocent, or at leaft pardonable. But the greatnefs and the univerfality of corruption excufe no body: cuftom and example cannot make any thing lawful which is bad. Where there is an express law, it is to no purpose to plead practice to the contrary. Cuftom or numbers exempt no man from doing that which God commands, and will never protect him at the day of judgment. Cuftom and example are fo far from excufing vice, that on the contrary, this very thing that the cuftom is bad, ought to make men fensible how necellary it is, to fet about a good reformation.

5. But if men think that example and cuftom excufe them, they fancy themfelves yet much more excufable, when they can alledge the examples and the fins of good men. The libertines triumph here. To what purpofe is it, fay they, to recommend bolinefs fo frielly, and to enforce it with fuch fevere penalties, when we fee many good men follow a courfe quite oppofite to the maxims, and to that exact morality? But they ought to confider that it is extream hard, or rather impoffible, to know certainly, whether a man is truly a good man or not. We cannot be affured of this, unlefs we knew mens hearts, which belongs only to God. This reflection

1 James i. 14.

reflection does already defeat the excufe, which is borrowed from the fins of good men. We frequently imagine the perfon who fins to be a good man, when he is but an hypocrite, or an atheist. Indeed piety and charity require, that we fhould think the beft of our neighbours, efpecially of those in whom the marks of folid piety and virtue appear; but neither charity nor piety obliges us to confound vice with godlinefs, or to call evil good. Sin is fin, and ought to be condemned wherever we meet with it, and more particularly in those, who pass for better men than others. When men who feem to be pious fall into fuch fins as are inconfistent with regeneration; we ought to think, that those men either give the lye to their character, and are not what we took them for; and then we may apply to them the words of Ezekiel, chap. xxxiii. v. 18. When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby; or elfe we must think, that tho' they have fome piety, it is but weak as yet, fo that they are not what they appear to be; but however, we ought to be politive in this, That the examples and the fins of others, will excuse no man in the fight of God.

6. Another very common evafion, by which men endeavour to excufe the neglect and omiffion of their duty, is that they do not profess devotion and piety. This is the ordinary plea of men of bufinefs, of worldlings, of young people, of courtiers, of military men, and of a great many befides in all conditions. We do not pretend to devotion, they cry, we are ingaged in the world. And with this fhift, they not only think themfelves excufable for neglecting piety; but they fancy they have a right to neglect it, and that they do a great deal, if they obferve fome of the external duties of it. One can hardly believe, that these perfons are in earnesft, who have the confidence to fay, That piety is not their bufinefs, that they are of another profession, and that they are not at leifure to be devout.

I fancy, there are two things which deceive those who alledge this excufe. I. That they do not well understand what devotion is; they look upon it as a very auftere and fingular way of living; from whence they conclude, that but few people are able to apply themfelves to it, and fo they turn it over to the clergy, to women, or to those who have much leifure. I have observed already the falfeness of this prejudice, and shewed that piety is neither fingular nor austere. 2. The other caufe of their error feems to be this; that they do not confider, that piety is every bodies business, and that fuch is the nature of it, that it may be practifed by all men. Not but that fecular occupations and callings, do frequently obstruct piety, and ingage men in vice; and therefore a Christian should never be fo taken up with the affairs of this life, as thereby to difable himfelf from performing the duties of Chriftianity. But after all, a man may live like a good Chriftian in any lawful calling; and in that fense properly we are to understand the words of St. Paul, \* That the grace of God which brings falvation, has appeared unto all men, teaching them to live foberly, righteoufly and godly, in this prefent world.

Do those who plead it for an excuse, that they do not profess devotion, imagine, that there are two ways to go to heaven, the one for devout, and the other for worldly men; the one narrow, and the other broad? Do they think that the commandments of God do not concern all men, that there is refpect of perfons with God, or that he differences with his own laws? How can they prove thefe diffinctions? Are not we all Chriftians? Have we not all been baptized? Does not God give us all the fame laws? Or have fome more reafon to love God than others? And ought not the great concern of our falvation, to be equally dear to us all?

I grant, that those who have greater opportunities, and more leifure than others; ought to make use of these advantages: but I maintain at the fame time; That none fland in greater need of piety, than those who fay, We are ingaged in the world, we do not pretend to devotion. It is because they are not devout, that their condition is very fad; and the more they are ingaged in the world, the greater are the temptations and difiractions to which they are liable: now he that is exposed to a florm, had need take more care, than he who enjoys a calm.

Thefe are the principal maxims and fentiments, which are made ufe of to authorife corruption. Whoever takes notice of what is faid and done in the world, muft needs acknowledge that thefe and the like maxims are vented abroad every day; fo that in order to obfruct the progrees of corruption, it is abfolutely neceffary to undeceive men, in reference to thefe fentiments, and to oppofe that criminal boldnefs, which fhamefully corrupts the truths of religion, and turns impieties into religious maxims, and articles of faith.

# CAUSE IV.

## The Abufe of Holy Scripture.

T is a daring piece of confidence to authorize Corruption with maxims borrowed from religion; but it is the laft degree of aufrance dacioutines and impiety, to turn the holy Scripture to fuch a france dacioutines and impiety, to turn the holy Scripture to fuch a france dacioutines and impiety, to turn the holy Scripture to fuch a for vice; and yet the extravagance and temerity of many bad Chriftians come up to this pitch. Several declarations of the word of God, are made by them as many maxims, under which they think to fhelter themfelves; and if we believe them, there is nothing either in their practice or opinions, but what is agreeable to the will and intentions of God himfelf. This abufe of the Scripture, 1 defign to fhew in this chapter, to be one of the caufes of corruption; and it cannot be too ferioully confidered.

The paffages of Scripture which are abufed to this purpole, may be reduced to thele four heads. The *Firft* comprehends the places which are brought againft the neceffity of good-works. Under the Second, we will examine those declarations of Scripture, by which fome endeavour to prove, that all men without exception, are in a flate of coruption which CAUSE IV.

which fubjects them to fin. In the *Third* place, we fhall answer the arguments drawn from the examples of those faints, whose fins are recorded in Scripture. And  $la\beta ly$ , we fhall make some reflections upon those Scriptures, in which the divine Mercy is promifed to the greatest finners.

There are divers paffages in Scripture, which being ill underftood, lead many into this perlualion, That good-works are not of abfolute neceffity. And first, nothing is more confidently alledged to this purpose, than what we read in many places ; \* That we are justified by faith, and not by our works. No doctrine is more clearly and expresly delivered in the Gospel, than that of juffification by faith. But it is a perverting of this doctrine to conclude from it, that falvation may be obtained without good-works. This conclusion must needs be falle, fince the Gospel enjoins good-works as a necessary condition in order to falvation. St. Paul tells us, that + without holinefs no man shall fee God. And does not that import, that none shall be faved without holiness and goodworks? The fame apostle teaches us, that at the day of judgment, when men shall be admitted into, or excluded from heaven ; God will have a regard to their works, to the good or evil which they fhall have done. I God will render to every man according to his works. || We must all appear before the judgment-feat of Christ, that we may receive according to what we have done, whether good or bad. This is very politive, and therefore fince there can be no contradiction in Scripture, here is enough already to convince us, that the doctrine of juftification by faith, has nothing in it which deftroys the neceffity of good-works.

But it will appear yet lefs difficult to reconcile thefe two doctrines; if we fuppofe that which no man can reafonably conteft, namely, That when the Scripture fays, that *faith* is fufficient to falvation, we are to underftand by the word *faith* in this propofition; *that true faith* which the Golpel requires. Now if we afk, What that faith is, and by what marks may it be known? All the apoftles will unanimoufly tell us, That true faith produces a holy life, and that it difcovers it felf by all manner of good-works. They affign good-works as the effential mark and character, that diffinguifhes a faving from an hypocritical faith. By that very thing therefore that the Golpel requires faith, it does likewife require good-works, fince faith cannot be without works. And by confequence the opinion of thofe, who fancy that faith is fufficient without works, is evidently abfurd, and contrary to the Golpel, and to the nature of faith it felf.

But to fet this matter ftill in a clearer light; it is necefiary to take notice here of two miftakes, which men are apt to run into when they fpeak of faith and good-works. The first is, that they separate faith from works; they look upon faith as a thing quite different from works, and which supplies the want of them; or rather they oppose faith to works, as if these two things were contrary to each other. A corrupt man will say, I confess that I have not good-works, but however I have faith.

Those who speak thus, suppose that they may have faith tho' they have not works; but St. James has directly confuted this imagination; What

\* Rom. iii, &c. † Heb. xii. 14. ‡ Rom. ii. 6. || 2 Cor. v. 10. Vol. VI. L. \* What does it profit, my Brethren, though a man fay he has faith and have not works? Can faith fave him? If faith have not works, it is dead, being alone.

Who can after this feparate faving faith from good-works? Can we feparate that from faith, which God has declared to be infeparable from it? It fhews that men are firangely blinded with ignorance and prejudice, when at this time of day we are fain to prove things fo plain and unquefitionable.

The fecond illufion is, that men place faith in confidence alone, and many define it by that. They fancy that to have faith, is nothing elfe but to believe that God is merciful, and to rely upon the merits of Chrift; becaufe faith embraces the promifes of the Gofpel, the natural effect of which promife is to fill the heart with affurance and tranquility. It is beyond all doubt, that for the moft part true faith is attended with confidence. But confidence is not the whole of faith; and I cannot imagine what part of God's word countenances that notion, which places the effence of faith in confidence alone.

The faith which the Gofpel speaks of, confists in believing that Jefus is the Chrift, the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world; in embracing his doctrine as true, and in making profession of it, in doing his commiandments, and hoping for falvation from him. But the refolving all faith and religion into acts of confidence, is the most extravagant conceit that can enter into a man's head. If this notion was true, it would follow from it, that in order to be faved, it is enough for a man to believe that he fhall be faved. Which is the fame thing as to fay, That whoever would have a right to confide in God, needs do no more in order to that, than actually to trust in him; and that is a most ridiculous thought, which turns all religion into a ftrong fancy. Before we believe a thing we ought to know why we fhould believe it, and have good reason and solid grounds for our belief. Before we trust in God, we ought to fatisfy our felves that we have a right to confide in him : for can a man be faved only becaufe without any ground or reafon he fancies that he fhall? We ought not to rely upon God but according to his promife. Now God has promifed nothing to those who live and are hardened in fin; far from promifing any thing to them, he threatens them with inevitable ruin. What claim or title then can an obdurate finner have to the mercy of God ? What confidence can he repole in God's promifes, as long as he continues impenitent? None at all,except we suppose in God a general decree, to fave indifferently all forts of perfons.

It muft not be faid, That these confiderations are apt to alarm and diffurb the peace of mens conficiences, for they will alarm none of those who are animated with true faith and fincere piety. And as to others; we do them a great piece of fervice; when we awaken and terrify them out of that falfe quiet, into which a groundless confidence has betrayed them. On the other hand, it is a dangerous thing to teach, That confidence is the most effential thing to faith; for by this we may alarm some good men, who either through melancholy or want of instruction, are defitute of confidence and inward peace. And it has certainly happened,

\* James ii. 14, 17.

ed, that feveral pious perfons are fallen into black thoughts and fad feruples concerning their falvation, and that they have in fome measure defponded, becaufe they did not find confidence, and a fenfe of the love of God in themfelves.

From all these reflections it does evidently appear, that faith never ought, nor can be feparated from good-work ; and that Chriftians are as much obliged to apply themfelves to good-works, as they are to believe, and to have faith.

But now if it be afked, Why St. Paul then oppofes faith to works, and why he excludes works, when he treats of juftification ? I anfwer, That the Apostle aims at two things by this. His defign is to shew, 1. That works are not the caufe and foundation of mens lalvation; but that it flows from the pure mercy of God through Jefus Chrift. This he proves with respect both to the Heathens and the Jews, in the first chapters of his epiftle to the Romans. But he did not mean to fay, That good-works are not neceffary under the covenant of grace. His expressions are too clear to leave the least room for any doubt about this matter: to reject the meritorioufnels of good-works is one thing, and to deny their necessity is another. But 2dly. because it may be objected, that St. Paul does intirely exclude works, and that he uses expreffions which imply, that Chriftians are no longer obliged to the practife of them, and that they have no influence on mens falvation either as caufes or conditions; but on the contrary, are opposed to faith : therefore I add, That he fpeaks thus with relation to the works of the ceremonial law, and efpecially to circumcifion. There were many in St. Paul's time, who afferted, that Chriftians were bound to obferve those legal ordinances. It was about this queftion that the Apoftles met at Jerufalem, and determined, \* That Christians are justified by faith only, and that the yoke of Mofaical ordinances, ought not to be laid upon them. The fame controverfy is handled by St. Paul, in his epiftle to the Galatians, where giving an account of his difpute with St. Peter; and of his reproving him for his too great compliance with the Fews; he affirms, That we are justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law.

Why has not that difference been observed which St. Paul makes about works? When he fpeaks of the works of the Mofaical law, he calls them the works of the law, or barely works; but when he treats of the works which the Gofpel prefcribes, he calls them good-works; becaufe they are really good, holy and profitable in their own nature; but this title of good-works, is never bestowed upon the works of the ceremonial law, which confidered in themfelves had nothing of goodnefs or holinefs in them. In a word, good-works in St. Paul's ftyle, are quite another thing than barely works, or the works of the law.

If this had been confidered, fuch great pains needed not to have been taken, to make + St. Paul agree with St. James.  $\ddagger$  St. Paul fays, That man is juftified by faith without the works of the law;  $\parallel$  and St. James, That man is justified by works, and not by faith only. There is no contradiction between these two Apostles. Both follow one hypothesis; and argue upon

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· Acts xv.

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on the fame principles. St. Paul difputing against the Jews, who would tye Chriftians to the observance of the works of the Mosaical law; affirms, That faith in Chrift is fufficient, provided it brings forth goodworks; and that it is not neceffary to obferve the Mofaical rites. James difputing against Hereticks, who pretended that faith did fave without good-works, and fo did intirely ruin our Saviour's morals; declares, that faith which does not produce good-works, is not fufficient to falvation. Is not this the fame doctrine with St. Paul's? But inftead of reconciling these two Apostles, some people find here great difficulties. They do not reconcile St. James with St. Paul, but they ra-ther refute St. James by St. Paul. St. James is expounded with great caution; as if he had gone too far by faying, That man is justified by works, and not by faith only. This proposition is foftned as much as possible, it is excufed rather than explained; but as for what St. Paul fays, That faith alone justifies without works, it is taken in the utmost firicines; fo that all is afcribed to faith, and nothing to good-works. Nay, faith is fet in opposition to good-works, and God to God himself; the passages of Scripture which speak of faith being brought out against those which relate to works. It is true, fay fome, the Scripture fays, that without holinels no man shall fee God; but it is likewife written, That we are not juftified by our works, but only by faith. And by this way of reasoning, men raife themfelves above the reproaches and acculations of their own confciences. I fay it once more ; this is to attack and confute the word of God by it felf, and to charge the Holy Ghoft with felf-contradiction. For in fhort, if a man can be juffified without good-works, he can be faved without them too; fince the being juftified is the fame thing with the being faved : now if a man can be faved without good-works, he may fee the face of God without holinefs; which is directly contrary to what St. Paul tells us, \* That without holinefs no man shall fee the Lord.

2. A great many people imagine, that it is one of the privileges of Christians, not to be tyed to the observation of God's law as the Jews were; fome miftaken places give occafion to that error, and particularly this; + We are no more under the law but under grace. These words are thus interpreted. The law did prefcribe works, but the Gofpel requires only faith; the law did threaten, but the Gofpel speaks only of grace and pardon. So that to require works, at this time of day, is to bring back the difpenfation of the law. There is fomething of truth in this reafoning ; but those who make use of it to free themselves from the observation of God's commandments, do very little understand either what the law or the Gospel is, and wherein these two dispensations differ. It is certain, that the law was a difpensation of feverity; it did not propose to men remission of fins and falvation as the Gospel does. The law had not that power and efficacy to fanctify men, which grace has. The law laid upon the Jews, a great many obligations which were not only burdenfome and painful; but which befides had no intrinfecal holinefs in them; and those duties were enjoyned under a curfe. The law it felf was a time of feverity and malediction, in respect to all the nations of the earth, fince all the while that æconomy did fubfift, they were excluded from

\* Heb, xii. 14.

+ Rom. vi. 14.

from the covenant which God had made with the Yews. In these several regards, we are not under the law, but under grace.

But if from this, that we are not under the law, we fhould infer, that we are no longer bound to do what is just; this inference would overturn the whole Gospel, and transform religion into libertinism. If becaufe we are under grace we ought to fpeak no more of works; why fhould the Gofpel prefcribe works, and the fame works which the law enjoyned, excepting only the ceremonies? Why fhould this Gofpel call us to a holinefs, which exceeds that of the Jews, and enforce this obligation, with more terrible threatnings, than those of the law? Why did our Saviour, John the Baptist and the Apostles, preach up repenpentance, and enter upon their ministry with these words, \* Repent ye? According to the hypothesis of these men, they should have spoken to them after this manner, This is the time of grace, the law is past, and the covenant of works is abolished; therefore fear nothing, let not your sins trouble you, for falvation is promifed to all mankind, Whence comes it to pass that our || Saviour speaks only of works, in his fermon upon the mount ; or that St. Paul declares, that the natural intention and the proper effect of grace, is to teach men to live according to the rules of temperance, justice, and godlines? Must we fay, that God is altered, that he does not love holinefs fo much now, as he did heretofore; or that fin is become lefs odious to him, fince it was explated by the death of his Son? But (it is faid) we are no more under the law. What, are Christians then a lawlefs people ? On the contrary we are under the law, I mean under the law of Christ, under t the law of the spirit of life, which makes us free from the law of fin and death.

But let us hear St. Paul himfelf, in what fenfe and refpect does he fay, That we are no more under the law but under grace? He fays this, precifely to fhew, that we ought to live no longer in fin. These are his own words, + What then? Shall we fin becaufe we are not under the law but under grace? God forbid. On the contrary, fin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law but under grace; you were formerly the fervants of fin, but now being made free from fin, and become the fervants of God, ye have your fruit unto holinefs. We need but read the fequel of his difcourfe to fee how he inveighs against those, who turned the grace of the Gospel into a pretence to live in fin.

Before I leave this matter, I fhall take notice of two errors, which are pretty common. The first is, the applying to Christians at this day, all those things which were spoken of old by the Apostles, to the converted Jews. It is faid, That we are no more under the law; and Chriftians are often exhorted to blefs God for being no longer under the curfe of the law, and the yoke of Mofes. And upon this a great many oppofitions are observed betwixt the law and the Gospel. For my part, I do not think those exhortations and oppositions, so very proper to be infisted on, when we are fpeaking to men who never were Jews; unlefs we do it with a defign to fhew the excellency of the Gospel covenant, above that of the law, and the advantages of Christians above Jews. For after all, the law was given only to the Jews, and the Gentiles were never

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|| Matth. v. 6. 7. t Rom. viii. 2. \* Matth. iii. 2. & iv. 17. + Rom. vi. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18,

ver fubjected to the ceremonies or the curfe of it, as the Jews were. Why fhould we then lay to people who never were under the law, You are no more under the law? The Apofles indeed fpoke in that manner to the converted Jews; but as to those who were formerly Pagans, it would be more fitting to tell them; \* You have been converted from idols to the living God, Remember that ye were in times pass for dentiles without hope, and without God in the world; and therefore live no longer like Heathens. It is a great fault not to expound the Scripture according to the true fcope of it, and to apply all that it contains, to all forts of perfons without difinction.

The other error is of greater confequence. People fancy, that becaufé we are not under the law, which was a covenant of rigor, we are now to speak of nothing elfe to men, but of grace and promifes, and that it is contrary to the fpirit of the Gofpel, to threaten and to denounce curfes against finners. It has been faid already, in what fense the law was a covenant of rigor, in opposition to the covenant of grace; but the Gofpel has also its curfes, and they are much more terrible than those of the law. The Golpel fpeaks of the future punishments of another life, in much clearer and stronger expressions, than the law does. To be convinc'd of this, we need but reflect upon that opposition which St. Paul makes between the law and the Gospel, in the tenth chapter to the Hebrews, He that despifed Moles's law died without mercy, under two or three witheffes; of how much for er punishment, suppose ye shall he be thought worthy, who has tredden under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was fanctified an unboly thing, and has done defpight unto the fpirit of grace? We know him that has faid, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, faith the Lord. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hand of the living God.

3. The Libertines do likewife abufe what St. Paul fays in the epiftle to the † Galatians concerning Christian liberty; when he declares that Christians are freed from the bondage of the law, when he exhorts them; to fland fast in that liberty, and proteits, that Christ profiteth nothing to those, who would be justified by the law. But a man may fee with half an eye, that the \$possible mean only, that Christians are no longer bound to obferve circumcifion, and the other ceremonies of the law of Moses. That St. Paul has no other view or defign but this, will plainly appear to every one who will read the whole epiftle, and particularly the fecond chapter of it.

In the V chapter we find two things which are decifive in this matter. 1. St. Paul speaks there expressly of circumcifion. ‡ Behold I Paul fay unto you, that if you be circumcifed, Christ holl profit you nothing; for I testific again to every man that is circumcifed, that be is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of none effect unto you, wholeever of you are instified by the law, ye are fallen from grace. 2. It is very observable, with what circumspection the Aposs delivers himself, left his doctrine should be wressled to favour licentious is after the had faid, *Wou are called liberty*, he adds, immediately only use not liberty for an occasion to the fless. What what

Theff. i. 9. Ephef. ii. 12. & iv. 17. Gal. v. 2, 3, 4. Ver. 13. + Gal. v. 1.

what he means by living after the flefh, by making an enumeration, of those fins which the flesh produces, and which exclude men from the kingdom of heaven. He exhorts men to live after the fpirit, and to practife the Chriftian virtues. In the IV chapter, he purfues the fame exhortations, and he ends the epiftle with these remarkable words, which contain the fum of his doctrine; \* For in Chrift Jefus neither eircumeifi-on availeth any thing, nor uncircumcifion, but a new creature: that is to fay, Whether a man be a Jew or a Heathen, it matters not, fo he believes in Jefus Chrift, and obferves God's commandments ; || Peace and mercy be on them all, who walk after this rule. Is there any thing plainer than this doctrine? And yet how clear foever it may be, Chriftian liberty is alledged to fet men free from the obligation to keep God's commandments. All that St. Paul fays against circumcifion and the ceremonies of the law, is by an enormous blafphemy, turned against the holy commandments of the Son of God. Can any thing more odious or prophane be imagined, than the perverting of the Holy Scripture at this rate ?

4. Those who plead on the fide of corruption, are wont to object against what is faid in behalf of holines, this fentence of Solomon's, # Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thyself over-wise. And what inferences do they not draw from thence? They conclude from this place, That a man ought not to pretend fo much to holines, or to fet up for a good man, and that in all things a mediocrity is best. One may eafily apprehend that fuch fentiments must needs introduce licentiousnes; especially, when they are thought to be supported by a Divine authority.

But let us fee whether or no, fuch conceits can be founded noon this fentence of *Solomou's*. I fhall afk in the first place, Whether it is poffible for a man to be too just or too wife, and whether there can be a vicious excefs in righteoufners or wisdom? If a man may be over righteous, he may likewife love God too much; for to be righteous, and to love God is the fame thing. Now God requires that we should love him with all our heart, and confequently that we should be as righteous, as it is possible for us to be. But far from being over-righteous, we can never be righteous enough. And if we can never be righteous enough, is there any occasion to exhort us, that we should not be overrighteous? I wish men had at leaft that reverence for the Scripture, as not to make it speak abfurdities.

I know the ordinary evafion: vicious men will fay, that when piety runs to excefs, it leads to fuperfitition or pride, and becomes troublefome and ridiculous. Every body fays that, but without reafon. I have refuted that opinion, and fhewed that true piety never degenerates into fuperfitition, or pride, and that devout men who are fuperfittious, or troublefome, have but a falfe devotion, or a mifguided zeal.

This may direct us to the true meaning of the fentence in queftion; Selonon does not fpeak here of true juffice and wildom. For whether he may have an eye here upon fuperfittious or hypocritical perfons whofe righteoufnefs is but imaginary, which fenfe is adopted by many interpreters, or whether he fpeaks of those who exercise juffice with too much L. 4. feverity,

\* Chap. vi. 15. || Ver. 16.

1. 4. 1. Var. 16

t Eccles. vii. 16.

feverity, as fome think; or whether as it is conceived by others, he gives this advice to bufy and prefumptuous people, who meddle in things which do not concern them, and fancy themfelves able to determine all matters; however, it is plain, that *Saloman* does not fpeak here of good men, who exactly follow the rules of true juftice and wifdom. If we flick to the laft of thefe three expositions, which feems to agree beft with *Soloman*'s defign; then the meaning of this place is clear and rational, and has nothing in it contrary to piety; whereas the fenfe which is put upon thefe words by the Libertines, is both abfurd and impious.

Those who would either justify or excuse corruption; use to object in the second place, That fince the Scripture teaches that all men, and even good men are deeply engaged in corruption; it mult follow from thence, that holines and good-works are not to very necessary, and that the practice of these is impossible. Now to prove this universal corruption of all men, they bring feveral declarations of Scripture, and this among the reft, There is not one that doeth good, no not one, &cc. Pfal. 14. Rom. 3.

If their meaning in citing these words, was only to shew, that there is no man altogether free from fin; and if it was granted on the other hand, that good men do not fin in the same manner that the wicked do; I would not quarrel much about this interpretation, though not altogether exact or agreeable to the scope of *David* in the 19th *Pfalm*. But there is another design in it, which is to infer from these words, that men differ very little from one another, that they are all guilty of many great fins, and that none do, or can practise the duties of holines. In a word, this is intended for the apology of corruption, and to filence those who oppose it.

If what David fays in this place is to be firifily underftood, it will follow, that there is not one good man upon earth; that all men are perverted, that they are all become abominable by their fins, and that there is not one fingle perfon that is juft, or that fears God. But this confiquence raifes horror, it is contrary to truth and experience, and to what the Scripture declares in a thoufand places, where it fpeaks of good men, and diffinguifhes them from the wicked. Nay, this confequence may be deftroyed from what we read in that very  $P_{falm}$ , which mentions the juft who are protected by God, and the wicked who perfecute them. This complaint of *David*, muft therefore be underftood with fome refiricitions.

By reading the XIV Pfalm, we may perceive that David intends to defiribe in it, the extream corruption of men in his time. There he draws the picture of impiety and Atheifm, and fpeaks of thole facls, who fay in their hearts that there is no God, and whole life is a continued chain of fins. It must be observed in the next place, that when St. Paul cites these words out of the XIV Pfalm in the epistle to the Romans, chap. III. he does it with a defign to fhew, that the Jews were not much better than the Heathens, and that they had as much need of a Saviour. \* What then, are we better than they? No in no wise, for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under fin. This is the affertion which St. Paul maintains, and which he proves from

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that complaint which David made of old, ‡ There is not one that does good, &cc. From whence he concludes, that all mouths muft be flopped, and that all the world is become guilty before God; to that the law of Mojes could neither juftify nor fanctify the Jews. But he teaches at the fame time, that Chrift was come to refcue men out of that milerable condition. And it were a ftrange thing if we muft fill fay of Chriftians, That there is none that does good, no not one.

2. This answer is to be applied to that place in the Ephefians, where it is faid, || That we are dead in trefpasses and fins, for to the fame end thefe words are quoted. I do not deny but all men abstracting from the Divine grace, are to be confidered as dead in their fins. That is St. Paul's meaning in that place; he fpeaks here of the natural state of men, and particularly of Heathens; which was a flate of corruption and death, in which they had perished had not God taken pity upon them. But the Apostle intends to make the Ephesians fensible of that unparallel'd mercy of God by which they were converted to Christianity, being but poor Heathens before, who were dead in their fins, and obnoxious to the wrath of God. He does not fay to them, you are dead in your fins ; it is a falfifying the text to cite it fo, and to fay, we are dead in our fins; but you were dead, he speaks of the times past when they were Heathens ; \* Among whom, fays he, speaking of the Jews, we had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, but now, he adds, God has quickned us together with Chrift; both you that were Heathens, and we that were Jews, are raifed again from this fpi-ritual death by virtue of God's great mercy. This is the true meaning of that place, which gives us a lively idea of mens natural corruption, and of that happy flate to which Chrift has exalted them. I do not deny but that many Christians, are still in the fame condition with Heathens, or very near it, being dead in their fins, and following the course of this world; but this can be faid only of bad Christians, and not of those who have felt the divine and fanctifying virtue of the Christian religion.

3. It will be further faid, That we 'muft needs acknowledge, that all men without exception are finners, becaufe that is St. John's doctrine, + If we fay that we have no fin we deceive ourfelves. That is a truth which no man denies, becaufe it is too evident both from Scripture and experience. But we muft take care to underftand this proposition aright, that all men are finners, and that we explain it fo, as that it may comport with that just difference we are to make between good and bad men; elfe under a pretence that all men are finners, the diffinction between virtue, and vice will be taken away. It is fit to remark upon this occasion, that the Scripture does not give the name of finners to all men, but only to the wicked and impious, this may be feen in the whole book of Pfalms. When we fay then, that we are all poor finners we muft know in what fenfe we fay it.

As to these words, If we fay that we have no fin we deceive ourselves. It is visible that St. John fays this upon two accounts, which relate to two forts of fins, into which men may fall. First there are great fins, there

1 V. 19. Ephel. ii. 3, & 5, &c. || Ephef. ii. 1. † 1 John i. 8.

#### Caufes of the prefent

there is that corruption in which men lived before their conversion. In. this regard St. John might fay to those he writes to, who were new converted Chriftians, that they were all finners, meaning, that they had all been fo; for indeed both Gentiles and Jews had been extreamly corrupt. Secondly, There are fins, into which those whose regeneration is not yet perfect, may fall; as there are infirmities from which the most regenerate men, are not free. In this fenfe all men are finners, and the Christians to whom St. John directs his epistle, were all finners also, tho' already converted. But the question is, Whether a true Christian fins like other men, and whether he who is a finner, taking that word according to the ordinary use of Scripture, that is to fay, one in whom fin reigns, is a true Christian ? That can never be faid. To this purpofe we may hear St. John himself in the III chapter of the fame epifile: where he expressly tells us, That he who is born of God does not commit fin, that whoever finneth is of the Devil, and that by this we may know the children of God and the children of the Devil. Are not these words very plain? Who can have the confidence after this; to excufe corruption by faying, we are all finners? But yet it is not only faid that we are all finners by thefe men, but befides, that we are all great wretched and abominable finners. It is no wonder that men who have fuch fentiments, fhould be fo corrupt.

4. But to this, there is a reply at hand, to fhew that the justeft men are guilty of very frequent fins, and it is taken from these words, The just man fins feven times a day. I might let this alone, because I am engaged only to answer those places of Scripture which are wrested into an ill fense about this matter. And this, that the just man fins feven times a day, is no where to be found in the Bible. Those who quote these words as if they were Scripture; will pretend no doubt, that they are contained, in Prov. xxiv. 16. But there is nothing like this in the facred text. These are the words of Solomon, A just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again : but the wicked shall fall into mischief. Solomon speaks of the frequent afflictions of good men, and particularly of the ill ufage they meet with from wicked men. In the 15 verse he addresses himself to the wicked, and tells them, that it is in vain for them, to lay wait for, and to perfecute the just, for, adds he, a just man falleth feven times, and rifeth up again, but the wicked shall fall into mischief and perish. The meaning is, that God takes care of the juft, and that if he permits that they fhould fall into many calamities, he does likewife deliver them. This is afferted almost in the fame words, Pfal. xxxvii. 24. Though the just fall he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his kand. To the fame purpole we are told, Job v. 19. He shall deliver thee in fix troubles, yea in feven there shall no evil touch thee : this admits of no difficulty, and all interpreters are agreed about it. And yet for all that, as men are apt to entertain every thing which excufes corruption; this proverb, That the just man fins feven times a day, prevails and passes for an article of faith. Is it not a lamentable thing, that men should be thus obstinately bent to wrest the Scripture, into a fense favourable to corruption, and that they fhould dare to falfify it at this rate?

There are many fallifyings in the way of citing this paffage. I. Whereas Solomon fays only the juft, he is made to fay the jufteft man, to give

give the greater force and extent to this fentence, to debafe piety the more, and to infinuate, that the best and holiest men, are great finners. 2. Solomon is made to fay, that the just fins, but he does not fay that, he fays only that the just falls. I know that to fall, fignifies fometimes to fin, but falling denotes likewife very frequently, to be afflicted, and a man is blind who does not fee, that in this text, the word fall is used in this fecond fenfe. The 17 verfe which comes immediately after that which we are now examining, proves it beyond exception, Rejoyce not when thy enemy falleth, &c. Befides those who are acquainted with the facred ftyle, know, that it does not ufually express the fins of infirmity, to which the just are fubject, by the word fall, that word importing commonly, the fall of wicked men. 3. Saloman is made to fay, That the justeft man fins feven This is another falfifying, an addition to the text, which is times a day. of no finall confequence. Seven times a day, is not in the text, there is only feven times. Every body knows that feven times fignifies, many times. And fo the meaning would be, that the just do nothing elfe but tranfgrefs; that many times a day he falls into fin. But who does not fee, that this would be the defcription of a man in whom fin reigns, and who is habitually engaged in it, and not the character of a good man? I do not fay, but that just men have their weak fides, and fall fometimes into fin; this happens more or lefs according to the degree of their regeneration; but it is impious to fay, that their life is spent in continual fins, and that they offend God at every foot; and yet this is what men would establish from this maxim, That the justeft man fins feven times a day, Those who have a mind to quote the Scripture; should neither add to, nor diminish from it, they should not alter the words, nor divide fentences from what goes before and what follows; for otherwife there is no abfurdity nor impiety, which may not be proved from the word of God.

5. But our adverfaries will fay, Whether that place is alledged right or wrong, it does not matter much, fince there are others which fay the fame thing in ftronger expressions. Does not St. Paul fay, Rom. vii. \* I am carnal, fold under fin, for in me dwelleth no good thing: for that which I do, I allow not: and what I would, that do I not; but what I hate that do I. I fee a law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of fin, which is in my members. O woretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death I fSt. Paul himfelf speaks after this manner, who can deny, that the greatest faints fall into very heinous fins, and have ftill a large flock of corruption in them?

Thole who draw this inference from the words of St. Paul, make him fpeak that which is quite contrary to his thoughts. He is fo far from faying any thing that favours the caufe of finners; that on the contrary his defign is to prove, the neceffity of a good life, and to make men fenfible of the efficacy of the Gofpel in reference to fancification. He had this in his view, in the vii chapter to the *Romans*, where he reprefents the difference between a corrupt and a regenerated man, and between the condition of man under the law, and his flate under the Gofpel. So that all he fays of the carnal man fold under fin, &c., is to be underflood of a corrupt man, living under the law.

" Rom. vii. 14, 15, &c.

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I am not ignorant that divines, otherwife able and pious men, have thought that St. Paul fpeaks of himfelf in this chapter, and that he reprefents there, what paffes within a regenerate man; but I know likewife that a great many orthodox divines, have rejected that exposition, as contrary to the fcope of the apoftle, to the conflant doctrine of the New Teftament, and to the fpirit of the Chriftian religion. It is a fad thing that when a place is capable of two fenfes, men fhould pitch upon that, which comes nearer to the pretenfions of finners. I do not intend here to enter info a difpute, nor to offend thofe of a contrary opinion; I am perfuaded that they have no defign to countenance corruption; but as in all things we ought to feek the truth, and as the truth here, is of great confequence for the promoting of piety, fo I entreat thofe who might have feruples concerning thofe words, to make thefe following reflections.

I. Let them ferioufly and impartially confider, Whether it may be faid, that St. *Paul* was a carnal man fold under fin, a man who did no good but evil, and a man involved in death; thefe are the ftrongeft expreffions which can be ufed, and which the Scripture ufes to give as the character of wicked and impious men? To believe this of St. *Paul*, is fo very hard, that a man muft be able to digeft any thing, who is not ftartled at it.

2. I defire them to attend to the drift of St. Paul, he had undertaken to fhew, that the doctrine of juftification by faith, did not introduce licentioufnefs; this he had proved in the whole vi chapter, as may appear by the reading it. Is it likely that in the vii chapter, he fhould overturn all that he had eftablifhed in the preceding, and fay, that the holieft men are captivated to the law of fin? If this be St. Paul's doctrine, what becomes of the efficacy of faith to produce holinefs, and how could he have anfwered that objection which he propofes to himfelf, chap. vi. 1, and 15. Shall we continue in fin, fhall we fin, we that are under grace? St. Paul ought to have granted this objection, if it be true, that the moft regenerate, are fold to fin. But it is plain, that in the vii chapter he goes on to prove what he had laid down already, to wit, that the Gofpel fanctifies men, and not only this, but that the Gofpel alone can fanctify men, and that the law could not. This is the fcope of the whole chapter.

In the very first four verfes, he shews that Christians are no longer under the law, nor confequently under fin, and that they are dead to the law, that they may bring forth fruits unto God. He expresses himself more clearly yet in the 5th verfe, where he fays, that there is a confiderable difference between those who are under the law, and those who are in Jesus Christ. He plainly diffinguishes these two states, and the time past from the prefent. When we were in the steps, has the motions of fin which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruits unto death, but now we are delivered from the law, that we should ferve in newsels of spirit. These are the two states; the state past was a faste of corruption, the prefent state is a state of holines. But as it might have been inferred from thence, that the law was the caufe of fin, the apostle refutes that imagination, from the 7th to the 14th verfe.

After this, he deferibes the miferable condition of a man who is not regenerated by grace, and who ftill is under the law. He begins to do this

this from the 14th verfe, by faying, the law is fpiritual, but I am carnal fold under fin, &c. And here no doubt it will be faid, that St. Paul speaks of himfelf, and not of those who are under the law; for fays he, I am carnal, &c. But one may eafily fee that the apostle uses here a way of fpeaking which is very ordinary in difcourfe, and by which he that fpeaks puts himfelf in the room of those he speaks of. And St. Paul had the more reason to express himself after this manner, because he had been himfelf under the law, before he was converted to Christianity. There are many inftances in Scripture of this way of fpeaking, and we find one in this very chapter which is beyond exception. St. Paul fays in the oth verfe, I was alive without the law once, &c. If we do not admit here a figurative expression, or if these words are strictly taken; then we must fay, that there was a time when this apoftle was without law, which is both false and ridiculous. As therefore it is plain, that when he fays, verse q. I was without law, he speaks of the state of those men to whom the law was not given; fo it is unqueftionable, that when he fays, I am carnal, &c. he defcribes the ftate of a corrupt man living under the law, and not his own. This is the key which lets us into the meaning of his difcourfe, in which the law is mentioned, almost in every verfe.

3. Laftly, That which makes it as clear as the fun, that this is his true fence, is, that when the apoftle confiders and fpeaks of himfelf as a Chriftian, he uses quite another language. To be fatisfy'd of this we need but run over this chapter, and compare it with other places in his epiftles.

If he fays here, verfe 7, 8. That concupiscence is felt and reigns within a man who is under the law; he declares, Gal. v. 24. That Christians have crucified the flesh with the lusts of it. If he fays, verse 9, 10. That fin lives within him, and that he is dead; he had faid, chap. vi. 2, 11. That he was dead unto fin, and living unto God through Jefus Chrift. If he fays, verfe 14. That he is carnal and fold under fin, it is apparent that he does not speak of himself, fince chap. viii. 1, and 8. he tells us, That these who are in Christ Jesus are not in the flesh, and that those who are in the flesh cannot please God, and have not his Spirit. If he fays here, verse 19. I know that in me dwelleth no good thing; he declares, Eph. iii. 17. That Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. If he fays, verfe 19. The good that I would, I do not, and the evil which I hate that I do; he testifies in many places, That the faithful do that which is good, and abstain from evil. If he complains, verse 21, 22, 23. of his being captivated to the law of fin; he teaches, chap. vi. 17, 22. That Christians are no longer the fervants of fin, that they are freed from it, and become the fervants of righteoufnefs. If he crys out, ver. 24. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death! It is manifest, that these are not the expressions of a man regenerated by Jefus Chrift; for he adds immediately, I thank God through Jefus Christ our Lord. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, has made me free from the law of fin and death, chap. viii. 12.

Now let any body judge, whether what is faid in this chapter, can be applied to St. *Paul*, confidered as a regenerated Chriftian? Can it be faid, that concupifcence reigns in him who has crucify'd it? That fin lives in him who is dead to fin? That he who is not in the flefh, is a carnal 174

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carnal man? That he who is freed from fin, is fold to fin? That no good thing dwells in thole in whom Chrift dwells? That a man is at the tame time miferable and happy, a flave, and yet delivered by Jefus Chrift, dead and alive? To fay this, is it not to call good evil, and evil good; to put darknefs for light, and light for darknefs? Is it not to admit downright contradictions in Scripture? But efpecially, is it not to open a door to licentioufnefs, and to give us a ftrange notion of a regenerate man?

By all that has been faid, I do not mean that there are no remnants of corruption, in those who are regenerated. Neither do I deny, but that, in those whose regeneration is but begun, there is fome fuch fruggle as that which is deferibed in this chapter. This is Mufculus's notion, in his Commentary upon the \*Romans. But that this chapter fhould be the picture of a regenerate man, and of a true member of Chrift, is a thing fo contrary to the Gospel, and to all the ideas of religion, that one can hardly imagine, how there could ever be men, who believed it.

III. But that which corrupt Chriftians endeavour to prove by thole paffages I have mentioned, they think to put out of all queftion, by the examples of thole faints whole fins are recorded in holy Writ. To this purpole they alledge Noah, Lot, Abraham, Sampfon, David, Solomon, St. Paul, St. Peter, &c. and from thele inftances they conclude, that fince thole great faints, fell into fuch heavy fins; fin is no obflacle to falvation, and that it is not inconfiftent with piety.

If we did make a right ufe of the word of God, we would draw a quite contrary inference from these inftances; and confider that it is about to plead precedents against an express law. If we must needs be governed by examples; we ought certainly to chuse the good, and not the bad ones; to initate what is praise worthy in the faints, and not what deferves blame; their faults being like so many beacons, fet up to keep us from flriking upon the fame rocks.

But to anfwer directly; I fay firft, that we are a little too apt to rank among faints, fome illuftrious perfons mentioned in the facred hiftory; who perhaps were nothing lefs than holy men, and who it may be did perifh in their fins, tho' God thought fit to make ufe of them, to carry on the defigns of his Providence, and to deliver his people. It would be a rafh thing to pronounce upon any man's falvation, or to fpeak irreverently of those great men; but the inflance of Solomon, whose falvation has been at all times questioned by divines; fhould teach us, not to be fo hafty, in placing those among faints, of whom the Scripture fpeaks. with fome honour, and in fheltering our felves under their examples.

As to those who by the testimony of the Scripture it felf, did truly fear God; I might observe that they fell but once into those fins related in the facred history; which would by no means favour imperitent and habitual finners. But this answer does not fully fatisfic; for besides that it supposes a thing which in respect of several perfons cannot certainly be known; there are fome fins which are for black, such as adultery and apostacy, that a man can hardly commit them more than once, except he is altogether fold to fin, and further, any one of those fins is incompatible with a flate of regeneration. CAUSE IV.

We must therefore frankly own, that when those great men finned in that manner, they did not act like faints, that they put themfelves into a ftate, which confidered in it felf, was a ftate of damnation, and that they had perifhed, if they had continued in it; for as Ezekiel fays, chap. xxxiii. 18. When the righteous turneth from his righteousfields, and committeeth ini-quity, he shall even die thereby. We may judge of the heinousfields and danger of those fins, by the degree of repentance, which some of these men have expressed for them, and by the publick acknowledgments they made of them. What alarms was David in, when he composed the li Plalm, which is the Plalm of his repentance? What a deep fenfe had St. Peter of his fault, in denying his master ? What do then such examples fignify to those who live in fin and impenitency; who can be fure that God will give him the grace, to recover himfelf as those holy men did ? Those who prefume to fin as they did, in hopes that they shall in like manner wipe off their fins by repentance and amendment, reafon juft like a man, who fhould fwallow down poyfon, and conclude, it would not kill him, becaufe fome who have been poyfoned, have efcaped death.

But that which deferves here our greateft confideration, is the time which those faints lived in. There is great difference between us Chriflians, and the good men under the old Teltament. Men before Chrift, had not by a great deal that light which we have; and did not know as we do, the duties of holinefs. Our Saviour teaches us that diffinction, when he fays, \**That John the Baptist was the greateft among those who were born of a woman, but that the least in the kingdom of beaven was greater than John the Baptist; that is to fay, That Chriftians have a much greater light than either John Baptist, or all the ancient prophets had. Now the measure of knowledge, ought to be the measure of piety; and therefore Chriftians ought to excel the Jews in holinefs. What God did bear with at that time, would be in us altogether intolerable; and how can it be lawful for us to imitate the ancients in their vices, when we are bound to furpas their virtues ?* 

This principle is of great moment, and without it we can hardly filence prophane perfons. A libertine infifting upon precedents, will fay, that polygamy, the keeping of concubines, murder, divorce upon the flighteft pretences, and fuch like diforders; are not fo criminal as they are imagined to be; he will produce the inftances of *Abraham* and *Jacob*, of the judges of *Ifrael*, of *David*, and the *Jews*. Far be it from us to detract from the honour and praife due to thofe ancient worthies; they have done much for the time they lived in. But God forbid too, that we fhould leffen the glory and the advantages of the Chriftian religion. If we fpeak like Chriftians, we will fay, That God in his goodnefs did pais over many things, by reafon of the time, and of the natural temper of the *Jews*, who were a groß and carnal people. Our Saviour's anfwer to the *Pharifees* concerning divorce, is very much to our purpofe. +Mofes *jiffered you to put away your wives*, but from the beginning it was not *jo*; and then he adds, that whofoever fhould imitate the *Jews*, and do that which had been done and tolerated till then, should be guilty of adultery.

We may eafily apply this answer to the instance of St. Peter, fince before our Saviour's ascension, the apostles were weak as yet, and posselled with

<sup>·</sup> Matth. xi. 11.

<sup>+</sup> Matth. xix. 8.

with various prejudices. But I think my felf bound to add a word or two concerning the example of St. Paul, becaufe it is commonly miftaken. That apoftle fays, +That be was a blafphemer, a perfecutor, who was not worthy to be called an apoftle, and that he was the chief of finners. At the first hearing of these words many imagine, that St. Paul had been a profligate man, a fwearer, and a godlefs wretch: and yet he means nothing elfe, but that he had once perfecuted the church. For otherwife, St. Paul before his conversion to Christianity, was a good man, and his life was blameles and exemplary; for this he appeals to God, and the Jews, ASIs xxiii. 1. and xxvi. 4. If he did perfecute the church then, it was through a blind zeal and ignorance; and for that reason, as he tells us himfelf, verfe 13, He obtained mercy from God. Is not this quite another cafe, than that of those Christians, who knowingly and wilfully allow themselves in fin?

It is another miftake to make St. Paul fay, as fome do, That he is the greateft of finners; he does not fay that, he fays only, That he is the chief or the first of those finners whom Jesus Christ did Jave. His meaning is, that he holds the first rank among converted finners, that he is a remarkable inftance of the divine Mercy, and that Jesus had begun by him, to fhew his clemency and goodnefs. Thus he explains himfelf, verfe 16. For this cause, fays he, I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereaster believe on him. This is exactly what he meant; for as to what fome imagine, that St. Paul out of humility acknowledges himfelf the greateft of all finners; I think that explication is wrong, and that it neither agrees with truth, nor piety, nor good fense. A good man is not bound to think himfelf worfe than the greateft finners; on the contrary, he ought to blefs God, for that good which the divine Grace has wrought in him.

IV. But as the laft refuge of finners is the mercy of God, fo they commonly abuse those places, which set forth the greatness of that mercy. They found this principally upon these words, Where fin does abound, grace does much more abound. Under the covert of this fhort fentence, the most flagitious finners think themselves fafe. But the bare reading St. Paul's difcourfe, will foon convince us, that this is to wreft the Scripture into a false and pernicious fense. The apostle's defign is to shew, that all men being rendred finners in Adam, and by the law; the goodnefs of God was fo great, that he was willing to fave them through Jefus Chrift. In order to this, to establish this truth, he had proved that before Chrift, fin and death reigned every where; not only among the Heathens, but also among the Jews; upon this he adds, That where fin did abound, grace did much more abound; to fignify God's having mercy on them, when they were involved in fin and death. In a word, St. Paul fets the happy condition to which men were advanced by Jefus Chrift, in opposition to that which they were in before. This is the fense of that place, and the drift of the whole epiftle. Can any one infer from thence, that now we may freely fin, and that grace will exert it felf towards us, whatever fins we may commit ?

It is fit to obferve befides, that when St. Paul speaks of grace, he does not only mean the pardoning, but likewise the fanctifying grace; which deftroys

+ 1 Tim, i. 13, 15. 1 Cor. xv. 19.

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deftroys the pretention of the libertines: The apofile himfeif confutes it with a great deal of vehemence. He forefaw that fome would argue like those we now contend with; and he makes this objection to himfelf, *iWhat then? fhall we continue in fiv, that grace may abound?* And this is his answer, God forbid! how shall we that are dead to fin, live any longer therein? We who have been baptized into Christ's death, that we should walk in neumofs of life. Reckon ye also your selves dead unto fin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ aur Lord. Let not fin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the luss thereof. The apostle purfues these exhortations to the end of the chapter.

2. The promifes and inftances of God's mercy, see frequently alfo taken in a fenfe which favours corruption and fecurity. All that the Golpel fays upon this head, is interpreted by vicious men, as if the Son of God was come into the world, to give men a licenfe to fin. To this purpose the inftances of that woman who was a finner, of Zacheus and the converted thief, are often alledged; as likewife the parable of the prodigal fon, of the publican, and of the labourers. And from thefe instances, as well as from our Saviour's declarations, + That he is not come to call the righteous, but finners to repentance. It is concluded, that the greatest finners may obtain falvation, as well as the just. But if those who quote thefe inftances, did narrowly examine them, they would read in them, their own condemnation. For first, all these finners mentioned in the Gospel, did repent and were converted. That woman who had been a notorious finner expresses the most lively forrow; the publican fmites his breaft, the prodigal comes to himfelf again, and detefts his former excelles; Zacheus, if he was an unjust man, restores fourfold. From these instances we may very well infer, that God never rejects returning finners. But even this, is an invincible argument, that there is no mercy for those, who perfift in their fins, and that too in hopes of pardon.

Befides, we muft know that our Saviour's defign in all thefe parables and inftances, was to inform men that he was come to invite the greateft finners to repentance; and efpecially to let the *Jews* underfland, that for all the high opinion they had of their own dignity and merit, the Heathens, who lived in the greateft corruption, were to be admitted into God's covenant, and to have a fhare in his favour. Which actually happened to all thofe Heathens, who did believe in Jefus Chrift. Thefe inftances and parables then reprefent the flate men were in at that time, and not the flate of thofe, who are entred already into the Chriftian church. It can never be faid too much, nor remembred too often in the reading of the Gofpel; that there is a vaft difference, between thofe Heathens, who never heard a word of God or Jefus Chrift; and Chriftians who were born in the church and live in the covenant with God.

Thus I think I have examined those places of Scripture, which are most commonly abused by the libertines. If I have omitted any, I hope what has been faid in this chapter, may ferve to suggest pertinent and satisfactory answers to them.

+ Mark ii. 17:

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<sup>\*</sup> Rom. vi. 1, 2, 3, 11, 12.

# CAUSEV.

# A falfe Modesty.

CRUPTION is not wholly to be imputed to that ignorance, C or to those prejudices and loose opinions which prevail among Christians. For men do not always fin through want of knowledge, or out of meer wantonness and libertinism. There are many who acknowledge the viciousness of the age, and the necessfrity of a good life; and yet they neglect their duties intirely, or at least they are very remiss in the doing of it; acting for the most part, against their own perfurations.

There must have been then other causes of corruption in men, befides those which we have hitherto discovered. It is necellary to fearch into these, and to find out, if possible, why many perfons, who want no inftruction, and are folicited by the motions of their own conficiences, to embrace the fide of virtue and piety, do notwithstanding, continue in vice and corruption.

This feems to proceed chiefly from two difpolitions, which men are commonly in.

On the one hand, they are reftrained by an ill fhame, from acting fuitably to the fentiments of their own confciences; and on the other hand, they put off their convertion, hoping they fhall one day make up all the irregularities of their conduct, by repentance. I look upon thefe two difpofitions, as two of the principal caufes of corruption, and therefore I thought it might be proper, to confider them both diffinctly. I defign to treat of *falje Modefly* in this chapter, and to fhew, I. The nature, and 2. The effects of it.

1. By falfe Modefly, I mean that fhame, which hinders men to do that which they know to be their duty. I call this fhame vicious or ill, to diftinguifh it from another kind of fhame, which is good and commendable, which confifts, in being afhamed to do ill things. If falfe fhame is a fource of corruption; that other fhame which reftrains from evil, is a principle of virtue, and a prefervative againft fin; and therefore it ought to be as carefully cherifhed and maintained, as vicious fhame fhould be avoided or fhaken off. For as foon as the fenfe of this commendable fhame is gone, innocency is irrecoverably loft. It is a part of the character of finners in Scripture, that their wickednefs raifes no blufhing, or confuifion in them.

I fay then, that this falle fhame, keeps men from doing at the fame time what they know and approve to be their duty; and it is under that notion particularly, that I am to confider it here. It is not my defign to fpeak of that hame, which arifes from ignorance, or contempt, and which is to be met with in those profane and worldly men, who because they do not know religion, or judge it unworthy of their application, think it a difgrace to follow its maxims. I refer fuch men to the first chapter of this book, and to fome further confiderations, which I am to infish upon elsewhere. The fhame I fpeak of at prefent, suppose fome knowledge in the mind, and fome value for, and inclination to piety. From whence it appears, how dangerous the effects of that fhame are, and

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# Corruption of Christians.

and how important it is to know and obferve them; fince it feduces and corrupts even those who are none of the worst men, and of whom otherwife, we might reasonably hope well.

Now to apprehend the nature of this vicious fhame; it must be obferved, that fhame commonly fprings from two caufes; fometimes it proceeds from the nature of the thing we are ashamed of, or from the opinion we have of it : thus men are afhamed of things, which either are, or appear difhonest in their nature. But sometimes also shame is an effect of the regard we bear to other men's judgment, and then we are ashamed to do things which may bring contempt upon us, and difgrace us in the world. One may foon perceive that the fhame that is vicious does not arife from the first of these causes. Religion has nothing in it, that is fhameful and difhoneft; for far from that, it is of all things the most comely and honourable, and the most worthy of a man; and it appears fuch, even to those, who by reason of a groundless shame, dare not practife the rules of it. The true caufe then of this falfe modefly, is a feeble regard to men's judgment, and a fear of falling under their contempt or hatred. Piety is little practifed in the world, it is defpifed, and it is hated; and these are the three principal causes of vicious shame.

I. Piety is little practified in the world; few people love or practife it. Now a man is very inclinable to do that which is commonly done; he thinks it is fafeft and moft honourable, to fide with the multitude: he is afraid of making himfelf ridiculous, by being fingular. It is a maxim generally received, That we ought to comply with cuftom, and to do as others do. The reafon then why many have not the courage to be on the fide of religion, is becaufe that fide is deferted and abandoned.

2. Piety is often defpifed in the world. It is looked upon as a mean and difgraceful thing. The firicfnefs of a man, who acts upon principles of religion and confcience, is imputed to weaknefs of mind, fingularity of humour, or caprice, and fometimes to hypocrify and pride. Those who profes devotion and piety, are turned into ridicule: and on the contrary, it is thought honourable to comply in every thing, with the ways and fashions of the age. Tho' these fentiments are very unjuft, yet they make a great impression, because few people have firmness enough to flight the judgment and contempt of men. We have naturally a quick lense of honour, and nothing is fo unfupportable to felf-love, as contempt; fo that this temptation is dangerous, and it eafily produces in a man a falle fhame, which diverts him from religion.

3. Piety does likewife procure the hatred of the world; becaufe a good life accufes, condemns, and reproaches those who live ill. Bclides, religion obliges us fometimes to do things which difpleafe and offend men. How cautious foever it may be, it is much, if upon many occafions, it does not flir up their jealoufy, their hatred, or their fpleen. A good man is often bound to refule what is defired of him. He is unacquainted with the maxims of that mean and fawning complaifance, which is neceffary to get every bodies love. Many for this reafon neglect piety. They dare not let fhine a light, which difcovers the weakneffes and errors of others; and fear and fhame together make them think, that it would be ill-breeding, as well as a piece of imprudence, to fellow a courfe of life which might render them odious.

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From these confiderations it appears already, that this fhame is one of the general fountains of corruption, and that it can produce none but very ill effects; first upon those in whom it is, and next upon other men.

T. The natural effect of vicious fhame, is to diffuade a man from his duty, and to draw him into fin. It makes his knowledge useles, it fruftrates the warnings which his confeience gives him; and fo it extinguifhes in him the principles of virtue. Those who are poffeffed with this fhame, dare neither speak nor act as they ought, they diffemble their true fentiments, they offer violence to their confeiences, they have not the courage to speak the truth, or to reprove their neighbours, when occafion requires; they are loath to confeis or to amend their faults; in a word, they frequently neglect the most indipenfable duties of piety and charity: and all this, because they are checkt by a false shame.

But if this fhame hinders us to do good, it does as forcibly prompt us to evil: as foon as a man thinks it a difgrace to do good, and to diffinguifh himfelf by a Chriffian deportment; he prefently conceives likewife, that it would be a fhame to him, not to imitate the irregularities of others. Hence it is that we applaud fin, that we are carried away by the folicitations, or examples of perfons of authority; that we cannot withftand the entreaties of friends; that we ingage in unjuft enterprizes, or criminal diverfions; and that we fall into many other wicked practices. A very little reflection upon our felves, will eafily convince us, that fhame produces all thefe ill effects. A heathen author\* has proved long ago, in an excellent tract, That falfe modefly is one of the greateft obffacles to virtue; and that men commit many faults, and bring a great deal of mifchief upon themfelves, only becaufe they dare not refue to comply with others.

2. The effects of this shame are not less fatal in respect of other men. As it proceeds from the regard we bear to their judgments, fo it ufually fhews it felf in their company; fo that we cannot but fcandalize and corrupt them, when we govern our felves by the fuggeftions of this falfe thame. For not to mention here the fcandal which this gives to good men; those very perfons for whose fake we use fuch finful compliances, and who defpife religion; conceive yet a greater contempt of it, when they fee, that those who ought to support it's interest, are ashamed of it, and dare not openly profefs it. They judge that piety must be indeed a very mean and contemptible thing; and when they observe that men are afraid to difpleafe them, they take fuch an afcendant over them, that virtue dares no more appear in their prefence. Befides, that fuch an indulgence towards vice, gives a new force to it. If vicious men are not reproved, it confirms them in their ill habits; if they are imitated, they are authorized; if we are ashamed to confess our faults before them, we do not heal the fcandal which we have given them, and that is the greater for having been occasioned by men who are thought pious, and not by libertines. But that we may be the more fenfible of the pernicious effects of this kind of fhame, we ought to take notice of three things, which are very remarkable in this matter.

I. Shame is a thing which has an abfolute power over a man. Other paffions may more eafily be refifted; but when fhame has gained an afcendant

\* Plutarch. ~

afcendant over the mind, it is extream hard to be conquered, efpecially if it proceeds from the regard we have for men; for when it arifes from a natural difpolition, it may fooner be overcome. The greatest threats and promifes will not fometimes fhake a man, who will prefently yield if fhame can be excited within him. How often do we find the most vigorous efforts we can make upon our felves, and our best resolutions quite dashed, by a filly bashfulnes? A jeft, a bare look, or a flight apprehenfion of being thought ridiculous, or a bigot, is fometimes enough to confound us, and to make all our good purpofes vanish.

2. It ought to be confidered, that the fhame we fpeak of here, reftrains those perfons, who in their hearts are inclined to virtue; those who live in a profound ignorance, or in a total obduration, being not fusceptible of this fhame. It supposes, as has been faid, some remainder of confcience and knowledge foliciting man to his duty; but it overcomes that knowledge and those good fentiments. We are to impute to this vicious fhame, a great part of the fins of good men; and this is one of the articles upon which they have most reason to reproach themselves; as is well known to those who make any reflection upon their conduct. And if this fhame is able to fpoil those who otherwise are virtuous, and to extinguish their zeal and piety; we ought to reckon it among the principal caufes of corruption.

3. Shame may lead men to the highest degrees of wickedness. For belides that a man fins against his confcience, when for fear of men he dares not do his duty; befides that he offends God in a very provoking manner, when he is afhamed to obey him, and fears men more than him; I fay, that this fhame is apt to betray him into the greatest enormities. A man is capable of every thing when he becomes a flave to other men's judgment, and when complaifance or humane confideration, have a greater force upon him than the laws of religion, and his duty. Whenever a man dares not appear good, he dares appear in fome meafure wicked. And when he tyes to virtue an idea of fhame, he is not far from affixing an idea of honour to vice, and from complying in every thing with the opinions of loofe and prophane perfons.

1. Men do not arrive of a fudden at this degree of corruption; falfe fhame carries them to it by little and little. It makes one fin at first through complaifance, tho' with fome reluctancy. By this, confcience grows weaker; a man contracts the habit of flighting its fuggeftions, and vice becomes more familiar to him. Then he begins to fin more boldly; the fhame of doing good increases, and the fhame of finning grows lefs. In a little time he comes to do out of cuftom and inclination, what he did before but feldom, and with fome inward conflict. From thence he proceeds to an open contempt of piety, and fo he forfakes an interest to which he was well affected at first, but which this fhame has made him diflike. Thus many perfons, who had good difpofitions in their youth; being let loofe into the world, have loft their innocence, and are turn'd libertines and atheifts.

Now this falle modefty being fo pernicious we can never labour too much to prevent its ill effects. And this we fhall fucceed in, if we ferioufly confider, that there is a great deal both of error and cowardice in

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in the fentiments and conduct of those, who are hinder'd by fhame, from discharging the duties of religion and confcience : first, there is a great deal of error in their proceeding. This shame is founded upon nothing elfe, but the judgment which the world makes of piety. But if those who defpife religion are in the wrong, as they most certainly are; if it is extravagance and folly in them, to pals a falle judgment upon piety; it is a much greater madness in those who understand better things, to fubfcribe to a judgment which they know to be falfe and erroneous, and to make that the principle of their actions. If virtue is a thing that is good, juft, neceffary, acceptable to God, and ufeful to those who practife it; if with it we cannot fail of happinefs, and if without it there is nothing but dread and terror ; why fhould we be afhamed to give up our felves to it? A wife man ought to effeem that which deferves effeem, and if ignorant and corrupt people are of another mind, he ought to fet himfelf above their judgment, and to defpife the contempt of the fenflefs multitude. The judgment of men cannot make that just which is unjust, nor fuperfede the necessity of what is necessary; fo that it fhould be of no weight in fo important a concernment, as that of our falvation. Our happines is not to be decided by man's effeem, or contempt; and the approbation of God and our confcience, is infinitely to be preferred before their groundlefs opinions.

But if there is fo much of error in vicious shame, there is likewife a great deal of cowardice in it. Nothing is more bafe and unworthy, than for a man to defert the interest of virtue, when he is folicited by his own confcience to adhere to it. Not to have refolution enough to do his duty in fuch a cafe, is on the one hand to fubmit his reafon and confcience to the caprice of others, and to deprefs himfelf below the vileft things in the world; and on the other it is to have greater regard for men than for God. And is there any thing more abject than this proceeding? Is not this a fhameful cowardice in a Chriftian, who is called to profess openly his religion and faith, and ought to think it his glory, to maintain the caufe of virtue and juffice, in fpight of all the contradiction and contempt of the age? That threatning which our Saviour has denounced against those, who should not have the courage to embrace the Christian profession, or should abandon it, belongs also to those mean-fpirited Christians we are now speaking of. \* Wholever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and finful generation, of him alfo thall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

The first and chief remedy, against this false shame, is then to be polfeffed with the following reflections. Before all things to have a right apprehension of the certainty and importance of religion; to confider that it proposes to us infinite rewards, but that those rewards are referved only for those, who have the courage to observe its precepts; to think what pleasure and glory it is, to be approved of God and of one's own conficience; to fix deeply this great truth in our minds; that men's judgment is very inconfiderable; that our felicity depends neither upon their them nor contempt; and to remember that the Scripture calls the men of

\* Mark viii. 38.

of the world fools, and that a time will come, when *fhame*, confusion and misery, fhall fall to the lot of those despisers of religion, while + glory, ho-nour and peace shall be to every one that does good.

2. We fhall eafily conquer this fhame if we confider, that the danger of incurring men's contempt or hatred by doing our duty, is not always fo great as we may imagine. I confes piety is often defpifed; but yet it frequently commands refpect. Even those who think it ftrange that their example fhould not be followed, cannot help having a fecret efteem and veneration for good men. When zeal is accompanied with meeknefs and difcretion, there is no fear that a man fhould make himfelf odious or ridiculous by practifing virtue. A Chriftian deportment, is fo far from exposing men always to the contempt of the world; that on the contrary it frequently happens, that those who would avoid this contempt, by neglecting their duty, do thereby bring it upon themfelves.

3. There might be yet another remedy againft this vicious fhame; and that is the example of men of authority. Whatever they approve or do, is reputed honourable in the world; and on the other fide, what they defpife or neglect, is thought mean and difgraceful. It would therefore be an eafy thing to them, to correct the notions which men commonly have of religion. As foon as they fhall love and honour it; other men will no longer be afhamed of it, but will place their glory in practifing it. This I am to inlarge upon in the fecond part of this treatife.

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# CAUSE VI.

# The Delaying of Repentance.

DO not know whether any illusion is more ordinary, or con-I & tributes more to the fupport of vice in the world, than that which I defign to attack in this chapter, and that is the delaying repentance. We must not believe that men are fo blind and fo hardened, as never to think of their falvation. There are few who have not a general intention to obtain it. Even among those who live ill, many are convinced, that conversion is necessary, and that they are not yet in a ftate of grace. If it be afked, why then they do not repent ? I anfwer, that fo unreasonable a proceeding, which feems to contradictory to it felf; ought to be imputed to the hope they entertain, of clearing all fcores one day by repentance; and of obtaining the pardon of all their fins, through the divine Mercy. This is the true caufe of the greateft part of those fins which are committed in the world. It is that deceitful hope which fruftrates all the endeavours that are used, to make men forfake their vicious habits. The delay of conversion, ought therefore to be placed among the caufes of the bad lives of Chriftians; and the importance of this fubject, has made me refolve to beftow a particular chapter upon it.

+ Rom. ii. 10.

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Now to handle this matter right, we are to obferve two different ways of putting off conversion; for all men do not delay it in the fame manner, and the fame fentiments and diffositions ought not to be fuppofed in them all. Some put it off to a remote time, and to the very end of their lives. Others do not adjourn it fo long; they defign to go about it a good while before death; at leaft they hope fo; and they put it off to an undetermined time. The first, fin properly in hopes of pardon, but the others fin in hopes of repentance. The former deceive themfelves more grofly, they think that in order to be faved, it is enough to beg for mercy, and to repent tho' never fo late; the illusion of the others is more fubtil, they conceive it is necellary to reform and to forfake fin; but for all that they do not convert themfelves. Tho' thefe two ways of delaying have an affinity with one another, and might in a great measure be encountered with the fame arguments, yet I fhall confider them here feparately.

I. Men commonly entertain this opinion, that if they do but repent at the end of their lives, their fins will be no hindrance to their falvation. They allot for this repentance, the approaches of death, old-age, or the time of ficknefs; and they fuppofe that then, they fhall fit themfelves for a Chriftian death, by confeifing their fins, and having recourfe to the divine Mercy. It is not, I think, needful to prove, that this opinion is very common, for who can deny it? Neither will I go about to finew that it feeds corruption and encourages fecurity, by proposing to men fuch a method of falvation, as leaves them at liberty to live fill in fin; for that is felf evident. It is more important to let men fee how falle and dangerous an imagination that is, which makes them believe, that fo they repent before death, they fhall avoid damnation and be fared. In order to this, we muft endcavour to difcover the principle they act upon, and to unfold the true fentiments of their hearts.

The delay of repentance includes two different motions; the one carries a man towards falvation, and the other towards fin. On the one hand, man is neither fuch an enemy to himfelf, as to be altogether unconcerned about his falvation, nor fo blind as not to perceive that repentance is neceffary. On the other hand, he is fo addicted to his lufts, that he cannot refolve to renounce them. In this perplexity, felf-love finds him out an expedient by which he thinks to reconcile with his appetites, the care of his falvation. And that is, that if he fins, yet he intends to repent.

But here it is manifeft, that this man puts a cheat upon himfelf, and that fuch fentiments proceed only from felt-love, and from a ftrong affection to fin. Nothing elfe but the abfolute neceffity of dying, and of giving an account to God obliges him to deflin the end of his life to acts of repentance. For it cannot be faid, that the love of God and of virtue has any fhare in this conduct. Is it any love or regard to God, that makes a man defire him in his laft extremity, and when he can enjoy the world no longer? This fhews that a man thinks of God only becaufe be expects falvation at his hands; which is to deal with him aswith an enemy, to whom we furrender our felves as late, and upon as good terms as we can, and only that we may not perifh. Such a delay includes a politive refolution to offend God, and to gratify one's paffions, at leaft for the prefent. He that thinks to repent hereafter, is not wil-

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ling to repent now. He allots the prefent time for the fatisfying of his lufts, and for the committing of thole fins, which are to be the matter of his future repentance. This is all that is fixed and certain in his refolution; for as to what he promifes for the future it is moft uncertain; and if we confider the thing right, he promifes nothing at all, for he does not know, whether he fhall not die very foon, nor what he fhall do, in cafe he lives fometime longer.

- The hazard to which a man expose himfelf by this delay, is evident. In order to a complete repentance, two things are requifite. The first is to have time and opportunity to repent; the fecond is, to make use of that time and opportunity. Those who put off their conversion to the last, must suppose that they shall have these two advantages. But these things are extreamly uncertain, and no man in the world can be fure of them.

1. No man can promife himfelf, that he fhall have time and opportunity to repent at the end of his life. It is true in fact, that more than one half of mankind, die without having time to prepare for death. If we reckon up all thofe who are fnatched away in an inftant by unforefeen accidents, or a fudden death, all thofe who perifh in war, all thofe who are feized with diftempers which take away their fenfes, all thofe whom the approaches of death do not move to repentance, becaufe they do not apprehend themfelves in any danger of dying : and if we add to thefe, thofe whofe only preparation is to have a minifter to pray by their bed-fide, when they can hardly hear a few words of what he fays. It is certain, that all thefe together, make up above the half of mankind. Upon this I afk, even fuppoling that it were time enough for a man to repent when he fees death coming, whether it would not be folly and madnefs, for him to venture his falvation upon the hope of repenting then f

It feems to many, that it is the way to drive finners into defpair, to tell them they ought not to build the hope of falvation, upon what they fhall do in the extremity of life. But what I have faid just now proves evidently, that if falvation did depend upon the manner of dying, men must live in continual fears, and in a kind of desperation; fince their falvation would depend upon a thing, which the half of mankind cannot reckon upon. On the contrary nothing is more comfortable to men, than to know that God grants them their whole lives to work out their falvation in; and that if they improve to that purpose the leifure and conveniences they have, their death will be happy, which way foever it may happen. But tho' what I have faid were not true, and tho' all might affure themfelves that they shall perceive the approaches of death, and have time to prepare for that last passage; yet what certainty have they, that they shall make use of that opportunity, and that their conversion will not be most difficult, if not impossible ? Conversion is not wrought, without God interposing, by those means which grace uses for that end. And can any man flatter himfelf with the hope, that these means shall be offered him to the laft, and that God in his just anger, will not withdraw them from him? There is neither particular revelation, nor general promife, to give fuch affurances to any man living. So far from it, that God tells us many things in Scripture, which leave no ground for hope, to those who abufe his mercy,

But further, What can we imagine that God will do in favour of a hardned finner, at the time of death ? When God has made use of the preaching of his word; of exhortations, promifes, threatnings, inward fuggestions and motions of his grace; when God, I fay, has used all these means, for twenty, thirty, or forty years without any fuccess: I cannot apprehend, what men expect that he should do more, at the hour of death. If it be faid, that he can by a particular dispensation, by fudden infpirations, by a kind of miracle, convert a finner in his last minutes; I will not dispute what God can do; but I will not foruple to fay, that in the ordinary course of grace, conversion is not wrought by fudden and miraculous infpirations: the Gospel speaks of nothing like that, and those who look for fuch miracles, had belt fee, what they found their hope upon.

It is certain befides, that repentance is most difficult on man's part, when he is at the point of death. If a man has lived in ignorance and vice, is he not in great danger of dying ignorant and hardned? How will he perform duties then, of which he has not fo much as a notion ; Can a man at that time change his ill inclinations and fhake off his vicious habits of a fudden ? All those who have applied themselves to the work of conversion, know by experience, that the conquest, I will not fay of many, but of one fingle vice, has required both time, and affiduous and conftant care. Vicious habits are not to be deftroyed but by degrees, and good ones are acquired only by reiterated acts. It is repugnant to man's nature, that this fhould be done in an inftant. How can any one then reckon, that fo confiderable a change, as that which true conversion requires, will be effected in the short time of a sicknes? And if this was possible, and through great endeavours might be done, . yet can any man affure himfelf, that he fhall have then all that freedom and all that ftrength of mind and body, which are neceffary to fet about this general reformation; Is the time of fickness wherein a man is fo much funk, and has the least either of leifure or strength, fo very fit for a bufine's of this importance? All that a man can do then, is to betake himfelf to fome confused and abrupt devotions, the ordinary refuge of those finners, who have lived in a state of obduration. But will that ferve the turn? Are fome hafty reflections upon a man's past life, fome acts of contrition, fome prayers proceeding from trouble and agony, and extorted only by the fear of death, fome fobs and groans indiffinctly breathed up to heaven; are thefe, I fay, fufficient to make amends for all that is pail, to extirpate many inveterate habits, and to fecure to a finner an eternity of blifs ?

I shall add two confiderations which are convincing, and cannot be contested.

1. By growing in years, men lofe the fenfe and remembrance of their fins. Age and cultom produce this effect. Excepting fome extraordinary fins which cannot be forgot, most men do not remember their faults. And how fhould they remember them, fince for the most part they do not perceive when they commit them? We daily fee men who will lye and fwear, and fly out into pation almost every minute; and yet do not reflect upon it; nay, they think themfelves free from those faults. This error proceeds fo far, that fome very great finners, who are living in criminal practices, fancy themfelves pious, and make no doubt, but that they are in the favour of God. Now fince the cuftom of finning, does blind men to fuch a degree; is it likely that after they have fpent their lives in this fecurity, they will effectually repent at their death? Can a man repent who does not know the reafons why he fhould, who does not feel, or has forgot his fins, and who thinks belides, that he is in a good flate, and that he needs no repentance.

2. If repentance fuppofes the knowledge of fin, it fuppofes befides a hatred of it. But he who has loved fin to the laft, is lefs able then to hate, than he is to know his fins. I cannot comprehend, how a man who has loved the world all his life, who has made it his only delight and fludy, to gratify his lufts, and who has always been cold and indifferent towards religion; fhould when death appears, fuddenly change his inclinations, hate what he loved, and love what till then he looked upon with indifference. So quick a paffage from the love, to the hatred of fin, is very rare. The forrow for fin, and the hatred of it, are always faint and weak in the beginnings of repentance, even in those who repent fincerely. Convertion proceeds by degrees; a man muft have difficient indig averfion to fin. And what kind of repentance then can that be, which begins in the extremity of life?

1. But here it is objected first, that God is always ready to restore the greateft finners to his favour, when they have recourfe to his mercy, and that there are express promises in the Gospel, which assure us of this. I grant it: God never rejects a repenting finner. But before a man can build upon this, the hope of being received into God's favour at the hour of death, he must be fure that he shall then fincerely repent. Now I think I have demonstrated, that this is what no man can depend upon. As to the promifes which are made to repentance in the Gofpel; I do not deny but that they may be applied in a good fenfe to all finners ; but yet it is certain, that they are made in favour of those, whom God was to call to the Christian religion, and chiefly in favour of the Heathens. Chrift and his apoftles were to affure all men, that the fins they had committed, fhould not exclude them from the covenant of grace, provided they did fincerely mourn for them, and part with them. When the Heathens came to baptifin, nothing elfe was required of them, but that they fhould repent, and make a folemn vow of being holy for the time to come. But as to Chriftians it cannot be faid, that God demands nothing of them but repentance and forrow for fins; for he calls them to holine's upon pain of damnation.

In this fenfe it was, that the apoftles preached repentance, and by this we may know, how much Chriftianity is decayed. That repentance, which confifts in the confeffion of fins, and in a refolution to forfake them, is the duty at which the Heathens began. This was the firft thing which the apoftles required of them; it was preparatory to the Chriftian religion. St. Paul\* places the doctrine of repentance, among the fundamental points, and the firft duties in which the *Catechumens* were inftructed before baptifm. But now Chriftians look upon repentance, as the duty with which they are to end their lives; that is to fay, they defign.

\* Heb. vi. 1.

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fign to end, where the Heathens begun, and to enter heaven at the fame gate, which admitted *Pagans* into the church.

2. It will be faid further, That fometimes men, who have lived in fin; die to all appearance, in very good difpofitions. To this I reply; That we fee a great many more of those perfons who die in a state of infensibility; and that by confequence, a finner who puts off his repentance, has more reason to fear, than to hope. For who has told him, that the fate of thefe laft, will not be his? and what furer prefage can there be of fo tragical a death, than the prefent hardness of his heart? Besides I do not know, whether it happens frequently, as the objection feems to fuppofe, that perfons who have lived ill, are well-difpofed when they die. If repentance can be faving and effectual when it begins only upon a death-bed, every body must own, that it ought to be very lively and deep, attended with demonstrations of the most bitter forrow, and with all the proofs that a dying man can give of the fincerity of his conversion. But we do not fee many inftances of this nature. There are but few great finners, who express a lively computction at their death, or a fincere detestation of their fins, who have a due fense of their wickedness, and endeavour as much as they can to make reparation for it, who practife reflitution, and edify all about them, by difcharging the other obligations of confcience. It is but feldom that we fee fuch penitents.

Befides, the expressions of devotion and repentance, which are used by dying men, are not always fincere. It is much to be feared that their repentance is nothing elfe but a certain emotion, which the neceffity of dying, and the approaches of God's judgment, must needs raise in the mind of every man, who has his wits about him, and has fome ideas of religion. Nothing is more deceitful, than the judging of a man by what he either fays, or does, when he is under the effects of fear or trouble. It is commonly faid of those, who have given fome figns of piety upon their death-beds, that they have made a very Chriftian end : but there is often a great mistake in that judgment. And to be fatisfy'd of it, we need but obferve what happens to fome who have efcaped death, or fome iminent danger. While the peril lasted, who could be more humble and holy than they? They fhewed fo much devotion, and uttered fuch difcourfes, that all the ftanders by were edified by them; their tears, their prayers, their protestations of amendment, in a word, their whole deportment, had in all appearance, fo much of Chriftian zeal in it, that the beholders were ftruck with admiration. But there are many of thefe, who when the danger is over, continue in the fame difpolitions, remember their promifes, or alter any thing in their former course of life; almost all of them return to their old habits as foon as the calamity is paft. These are generally the fruits of that repentance which is excited by the fear of death, in those who recover : and what effects then can it have in refpect of those that die?

I confefs, we ought not to condemn any body; but I think we fhould not pronounce a definitive fentence, in favour of those who have led an llt life. For tho' men's judgment makes no alteration in the flate of the dead; yet it may have a very pernicious effect upon the living, who conclude from it, that a man may die well, tho' he has lived ill. And while I am upon this fubject, I mult fay, that nothing contributes more to the keeping keeping up of thefe dangerous opinions, than when the minifters of religion commend without diferetion, the picty of the dead. And yet this is frequently done, efpecially in great towns, and in the courts of princes. There are to be found in thofe places, mean-fpirited and unworthy preachers, who profitute their tongues and their pens to the praife of fome perfons, who had nothing of Chriftianity in their lives, and whofe condition fhould rather make a man tremble. But if fome remnant of fhame reftrains them from carrying their flattery fo far, as to commend the lives of thofe, whofe panegyrick they have undertaken; then they feek the matter of their praifes, in fome figns of piety, which thofe perfons gave, before they left the world. Now I dare fay, that the moft athelifical difcourfes, and the corrupteft maxims of libertines, are not by much fo fubtil a poyfon, as fuch kind of elogies, delivered before men who are ingaged in all the diforders of the age, and then difperfed through the world.

3. The inftance of the converted thief, who prayed to our Saviour upon the crofs, and was received into paradife, is feldom forgotten. But this inftance is generally very ill underftood. Firft, it is fuppofed, without any ground for it, that this thief repented only upon the crofs, and that his converfion was the effect of a fudden infpiration. But who can tell whether his converfion was not begun, either before he was taken, or in the prifon, where it is probable that he was kept for fome time, before the feaft of paffover? But if his converfion, muſt needs be fudden, and wrought only a few minutes before his death; if we muſt of necefiity aſcribe it to a miraculous infpiration and to thole fingular circumſtances which he then happen'd to be in ; yet I do not fee what can be inferr'd from this inftance; fince no man living can affure himſelf that any fuch thing will befall him.

But be that as it will, we fhould, I think, obferve a vaft difference between the ftate of this thief, and that of a Chriftian. This poor wretch had not been called before, as Chriftians are; he had never known our Saviour; or at leaft he had not profess'd his religion; he had not had that illumination and those opportunities, which grace offers every day, to those to whom the Gospel is preached. And so his repentance the' it came late, yet it might be as effectual to falvation, as that of the Heathens, who embraced Chriftianity in their riper years, and who happen'd to die immediately after baptifm.

I fhall fay a word or two upon the parable of the labourers, where we read, \* that those who went to work in the vineyard only an hour before fun-fet, received the fame wages, with those who had been at work ever fince the morning. From this finners imagine it may be proved by an invincible argument, that those who repent a little before death, will obtain the fame reward with those whose life has been regular. But this was not our Saviour's meaning in that parable. It fignifies only, that those whom God fhould call laft, and who fhould answer his call, were to be received into the covenant, in the fame manner as those, who had been called to it before, and that the Heathens fhould fhare in the fame priviledges with the *Jews*, tho' the *Jews* had been in covenant with God, a great while before the Heathens. This our Saviour declares in thefe words, words, which conclude the parable; fo the laft fhall be first, and the first last. Here is nothing that can be applied to those Christians, who delay their conversion. They are not in the fame case with the labourers, who were fent but late into the vineyard. Those labourers went no fooner, because no man had hired them; but they went as foon as they were fent. I fay, Christians are not in this case, fince they have been called in the morning, and at all the hours of the day, being born and having always lived in the church.

I have been fomewhat large in fhewing how unreafonable and dangerous the proceeding of those men is, who pretend to repent only at the end of their lives. But all those who put off their conversion, do not put it off fo far. There are many who acknowledge, that it is dangerous to ftay till the extremity, and that it is neceffary to repent betimes; they propose to go about it in a little time, and they hope that they shall repent foon enough, not to be furprized by death under a total hardning; but in the mean while they do nothing toward their converfion.

This way of delaying, is an illufion, which does not appear fo grofs and dangerous as the former, becaufe it fuppofes fome inclination to good. But yet it is no better than an artifice of the heart, a trick of felf-love, by which a man deceives and blinds himfelf. Nay, in fome respects, the flate of these last, is more criminal and dangerous, than that of the first. It is more criminal, becaufe they do not what they approve of, and becaufe they fin against the constant admonitions of their conficiences, and do not perform their resolutions and their promifes. But it is likewife more dangerous; for with this intention to repent in a little time, they think themfelves much better than those who are refolved to repent only upon their death-bed; they applaud themfelves for fuch a fense of piety as they have; and they judge, that if they are not quite in a flate of falvation; at least they are not far from it. Now one may eafily fee that fuch an opinion of themfelves, can only lay their conficiences alleep, and infpire them with prefumption and fecurity.

But all these things confidered, they go no farther with these good dispositions, than those, who without shuffling refer the whole matter to the end of their lives. All the difference is, that the latter do all at once, what the others do fucceffively. And therefore all that has been faid in this chapter, may almost be applied to these latt. They run the fame risk with those who defign to repent only upon extremity, fince death may furprize them before they have executed their good refolutions. They have as little love for God, and are as much addicted to their lufts: that which deceives them, is, that they fancy, that there is in them a fincere purpose of conversion. But if this intention is fincere, how comes it to pass that they do not repent ? When a man is refolved upon a thing, when his heart is in it, when he defires it in good earneft, he goes about it without losing time.

But when a man uses delays, it is a fign that he is not well refolved yet: a refolution which no effect follows, is not a fixed and fettled refolution. This purpose of conversion, is therefore but one of those wavering defigns and projects, which are formed every day, but never accomplished. It is no more than a general and unactive intention, which may may perhaps be found in all men. But other forts of purpofes are neceflary for a man who hopes to be faved. Salvation is not obtain'd by bare defigns and projects, but by the actual practice of holinefs.

Now men might eafily be undeceived, and convince themfelves of the un-fincerity of all those resolutions they make in relation to repentance; if they did but reflect upon the time paft, and afk themfelves, Whether they have not been very near in the fame fentiments and refolutions for fome years together ? And yet these sentiments have produced nothing, and those resolutions have made no change in them ; they are ftill in the fame ftate, and perhaps farther from conversion than ever. Must not men blindfold themfelves, when they do not fee, that it will ftill be the fame thing for the future, and that life will flip away in perpetual delays : for what can they promife to themfelves from the time to come, and what ground have they to hope that it will not be like the time paft ? Are they more firmly refolved than they were before ? When will this refolution be put in practice ? Will it be in a month, or in a year ? They must confess, they do not know when it will be. So that when they promife to repent, they do not know what they promife ; nay, they cannot tell whether they promife any thing. They will fay perhaps, that they hope to confirm themfelves in a good purpole; but what do they found this hope upon ? what do they wait for, and what new thing do they imagine will happen to them ? Have they any affurance that God will use for their conversion, other means and motives than those, which he has used already ? Nay, how do they know but that they shall be deprived of those means and helps which hitherto have been tender'd them? How can they tell whether there is a time to come for them, and whether their life is not just ready to end ? All this is very uncertain. But what is certainly true is this, that through fo many procraftinations, their hearts grow harder, and their return to virtue becomes more difficult. The love of fin increases by the habit of finning, and the means appointed to work repentance, lofe fomething of their force every day.

These confiderations do evidently flew, that the deferring of converfion, is an error as gross as it is dangerous.

I think it will not be useless to conclude this chapter, with observing that the reafon why fo many put off their conversion, is, because they look upon repentance as an auftere and melancholy duty. And this notion must needs put them upon deferring the practice of it. It is therefore of the greatest moment, to destroy that prejudice ; and to shew on the contrary, that if there is any fad and deplorable condition, it is that of a man who lives in fin. For that is either a flate of fear and uncertainty, or of fecurity and infenfibility. Such a man can have no folid peace of confcience during his life, and what agitations must he fall into, when the thoughts of death and of a judgment to come happens to make fome lively impression upon his mind ? For granting that then he may use fome endeavour to dispose himself to repentance; yet besides the danger of a late repentance, it is a fad thing to end one's life in those struggles and terrors, which must needs accompany fuch a repentance. A man who delays his conversion, prolongs his milery, and makes it greater and more incurable, But joy and tranquility are the 0 portion

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portion of a pure conficience. There is no felicity or contentment, like that of a foul which is freed from the bondage of fin. Repentance is the beginning of that happinefs, which grows fweeter and more perfect, according to the progrefs we make in virtue. Then it is that a man is happy in all the circumftances of life, befides that he has the comfort of being fupported at the approaches of death, with that peace and joy, which flow from a well-grounded confidence in the Divine Mercy, from the teftimony of a good conficience, and from a fleady hope of immortality.

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### CAUSE VII.

#### Mens Sloth and Negligence in Matters of Religion.

T is natural and ordinary to men, to be unconcerned about those it things which they do not know, or of which they do not apprehend the use and neceffity. And fo we may eafily conceive that men living in ignorance, and being polifield with those notions I have now confuted, must needs be very negligent and flothful, in what relates to religion. But as this floth confidered in itfelf, is a visible cause of corruption, fo it will be fitting to take particular notice of it in this chapter.

I suppose, in the first place, that it is impossible for a man to attain the end which religion propofes to him, without using the proper means which lead to that end. In religious as well as in worldly concerns, nothing is to be had without labour and care. As there are means appointed for preferving the life of the body, fo there are fome ordained for maintaining the life of the foul; and the use of these last means, is of the two the more neceffary, because there is more care and forecast requifite in order to falvation, about preferving the life of the foul, than for fupporting that of the body. It is certain that the more excellent any thing is, the more it requires our care; but befides that we fee the life of the body is eafily preferv'd ; a natural inclination prompts us to those things which are necessary for our subfistence, and the means of fupplying our bodily wants, offer themfelves to us, as it were of their own accord. But it is not fo with the fpiritual life. Confidering our pronenefs to evil, and the prefent flate we are in, we cannot avoid being undone, if we neglect the neceflary care of our fouls, and if we follow all the bents and propensions of our nature. Religion obliges us upon many occasions, to relift our inclinations and to offer violence to our felves, it requires felf-denial, watchfulnefs and labour ; it lays many duties upon us, and it prefcribes divers means, without the ufe of which, we cannot but continue fill in corruption and death : I fhall then but just name the chiefest of those duties and means.

Before all things, a Chriftian ought to be inftructed, he ought to know with fome exactness, both the truths, and the duties of Chriftianity: nity: Now this knowledge cannot be acquired, without hearing, reading, meditation, or fome other care of this nature. In the next place, as religion does not confift in bare knowledge, but chiefly in practice; none of those means should be neglected, which are proper to divert men from vice, and to spur them on to virtue. These means are very many, but they are all comprehended under these two principal heads; the exercises of devotion, and the circumspections which every perfon ought to use.

The exercises of devotion are mighty helps to piety and falvation; I mean fuch as meditation, reading, and particularly prayer, which is one of the most effential acts of religion, as well as one of the most efficacious means to advance holinefs. There are on the other hand feveral methods of circumspection and care, which are of absolute necessity: as for inftance, the forefeeing and fhunning the occafions which may draw us into fin; the feeking those opportunities and aids which promote piety, the not being over-much concerned about the body, the cherifhing good thoughts, and the refifting evil ones: but above all, it is a thing of the greatest importance, that every one should endeavour thoroughly to know himfelf, which he cannot do, but by examining his prefent state, and by reflecting feriously and frequently upon his actions and words, and upon the thoughts and motions of his heart. All these cares are effential and neceffary. For without the use of those means, it is as impoffible to be religious and pious, as it would be to live and fubfift without nourishment. A man who will neither eat nor drink, must needs die in a little time. And fo the fpiritual life will foon be extinct, if the only means which can support it, are not used.

Let us now fee, whether these cares and means which I have shown to be necessary, are made use of. It is so visible, that they are almost totally neglected, that I need not be very large upon the proof of it.

Men take little care of being inftructed, and of getting information and knowledge about religion. The far greater part either cannot read, or never apply themfelves to any uleful inftructive reading. Few hearken to the inftructions that are given them, and fewer yet examine or reflect upon them. Carnal lufts and fecular bufinefs; do fo engrofs them, that they feldom or never give themfelves to fearching the truth. They generally have an averfion to fpiritual things. Hence it is, that in matters of religion, they will rather believe implicitely what is told them, than be at the pains of enquiring, whether it is true or not. And they are every whit as careless about exercises of devotion. Many would think it a punifhment if they were made to read or to meditate. They never do those things, but with reluctancy and as feldom as they can. They go about prayer especially with a strange indifference, and a criminal indevotion. In fhort, very few take the neceffary care to preferve themfelves from vice, and to behave themfelves with regularity and caution; very few feek the opportunities of doing good, and avoiding the temptations to which the common condition of men, or their own particular circumftances expose them : and the greatest number are flaves to their bodies, and wholly taken up with earthly things. One of the most fensible and fatal effects of this negligence, is that those perfons use no manner of endeavours to know themselves. It is very feldom if

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ever that they reflect upon what paffes within them; upon their thoughts, their inclinations, the motions of their hearts, and the principles they act upon; or that they take a review of their words and actions. They do not confider whether they have within them the characters of good men, or of wicked and hypocritical perfons. In a word, almost all of them live without reflection.

Mens carelefsnefs about religion is therefore extreamly great. But they proceed otherwife in the things of the world, about which they are as active and laborious as they are lazy and cold in reference to true piety. They will do every thing for their bodies, and nothing for their fouls. They fpare no induftry or diligence, they omit nothing to promote their temporal concerns. If we were to judge by their conduct, we would think that the fupreme good is to be found in earthly advantages, and that falvation is the leaft important of all things.

I need not fay what effects fuch a negligence muft produce. The greater part of Chriftians being ignorant in their duty, having no knowledge of themfelves, declining the ufe of their means which God has appointed, and without which he declares that no man can be faved; and wearing out their lives in this ignorance and floth, it is not to be imagined, that they can have any religion or piety; and fo there muft be a general corruption amongft them. I fay, it muft be fo; unlefs God fhould work miracles, or rather change the nature of man, and invert the order and the laws which he has eftablifhed.

But becaufe it might be faid that Chriftians do not live like Atheifts, and that their negligence is not fo great as I reprefent it; let us confider a little, what fort of care they beftow upon the concerns of their fouls. Certainly there are fome perfons who are not guilty of this negligence: but excepting thefe; what is it which the reft of mankind do, in order to their falvation ? Very little or nothing. They pray, they affift fometimes at Divine-fervice, and at the publick exercises of religion; they hear fermons, they receive the facrament, and they perform fome other duties of this nature. This is all which the religion of the greatest part amounts to. But first these are not the only duties which ought to be practis'd; there are others which are not lefs effential, and which yet are generally neglected; fuch as meditation, reading, felf-examination; to fay nothing here of the duties of fanctification. So that if fome acts of religion are performed, others are quite omitted. The reason of this proceeding may easily be discovered. There is a law and a cuftom, which oblige all perfons to fome acts of religion; to pray, to receive the facrament, and to go now and then to church : if a man fhould intirely neglect those external duties, he would be thought an Atheift : but there is neither cuftom, nor law, nor worldly decency, which obliges a man to meditate, to examine his own confcience, or to watch over his conduct, and therefore thefe duties being left to every one's direction, are very little obferved.

As to the other duties which Chriftians perform in fome meafure, the want of fincerity in them, does most commonly turn them into fo many acts of hypocrify. They perhaps fay fome prayers in the morning; but this is done without devotion, haftily, with diftraction, and wearinefs, and only to get rid of it; after, they think no more of God all the day, but but are altogether bufied about the world and their paffions; and in the evening they pray with greater wandring of thoughts than in the morning. If it fo fall out, that they go to church, or hear a fermon, they do not give a quarter of an hours cloke attention to any thing that is faid, or done in the publick affemblies. In many places the whole devotion of the people, confifts in being prefent at fome fermons, which are as little inftructive, as they are minded or hearkned to. The ufe which is made of the facraments, efpecially of the eucharift, converts them into vain ceremonies, and makes them rather obffacles, than helps to falvation. As to the mortifying of the body by reafonable abftinence, fafting and retirement, it is an unknown duty. The indifference of Chriftians is therefore but too palpable. What they do upon the account of religion is very little; and yet they do that little fo ill, that it is not much more beneficial to them, than if they did nothing at all.

And now what might not be faid, if after having thus fhewn, that what men do for their falvation is next to nothing; I fhould undertake to prove, that they do almost every thing that is necessary for their damnation; and that they are zealous and industrious for their ruin, as they are flothful and negligent in what is requifite to preferve them. There are means to corrupt as well as to fanctify our felves. The means of corruption and perdition, are ignorance, want of attention, neglect of devotion, the love of the world, and of the flefh, unruly paffions, temptations, and ill examples. Now supposing, that a man was so monstroufly frantick, as to form the defign of damning himfelf; what would fuch a man do? He would neglect the exercises of devotion, he would not pray at all; or he would pray only with his lips; he would profane the facraments by an unfanctify'd ufe of them; he would only mind his body and this prefent life; he would give loofe reins to his paffions, as much as he might with decency and without danger; if he had an opportunity to gratify his fenfuality, his covetoufnefs, his pride, or any other wicked affection, he would gladly embrace it. This is what a man would do to damn himfelf: and is it not what a great many actually do? I confess, no man is capable of fo wild a refolution, as to defign to damn himfelf; but a man fufficiently damns himfelf, when he takes no care of his falvation, and when he does those things, which will infallible bring his perdition after them.

The floth and negligence of men in the concerns of their fouls, being one of the caules of their corruption, it would be highly neceffary to remedy that negligence, and to infpire them with zeal for religion; but it is hard to fucceed in this, lazinefs is attended with a certain fweetnefs to which men give up themfelves with pleafure. The flothful do love and delight in reft; they cannot endure to be egged on to labour. This is one of those habits which are most difficult to be conquered; and to fay the truth, there is but little hope of those, in whom it is grown inveterate: it is a great tafk to rouze them out of that fluggish and lethargick temper. God mult interpose by a particular grace, by great afflictions, or by fome other extraordinary method.

But yet, I do not think it altogether impoffible to overcome this finful and dangerous floth, or to preferve those from it, whom it has not feized as yet. Serious reflections upon the importance of falvation, and

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upon the necessity of working at it, may produce that effect. Men would not live in this carelefnefs, but that they either do not apprehend of what confequence it is to be faved; or that they imagine, there is not much to be done for the obtaining of falvation. These two prejudices maintain their lazinefs. Nothing can therefore be more useful, than to convince them on the one hand, that nothing in the world is of greater moment than religon; and that eternal happines is the highest of all concernments : and to let them fee on the other hand, that this felicity is not to be attained, but by affiduous care, and an exact observation of the duties of Christianity.

I know that it is difficult to make men ferioufly enter upon thefe re-Sections; but yet they ought still to be laid before them, and we should not give over. If they have no effect at one time, there are circumstances in which they will prove fuccefsful. I think, few would continue in this fluggifh difpolition, if they did reprefent to themfelves what notions and thoughts they fhall have at the end of their lives, every man is fatisfy'd that he muft die one day, and that his condition will then be the happieft that can be conceived, if he has made use of the time and opportunities he had to fecure his falvation; but that if he has neglected these means, he shall find himfelf in strange agonies, and be reduc'd to difmal extremities. When death appears, when the world vanishes, a man is then wholly taken up with religion, he would give then all the world, if it was in his poffeffion, to fecure to himfelf a better life. Now fince we all know that this must one day be our cafe, wildom requires, that we should overcome betimes that negligence, of which the confequences will be fo fatal; and that we fhould apply our felves with earneftness and pleasure to that work, upon which our fovereign felicity depends.

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#### CAUSE VIII.

### Worldly Business.

\*\*\*\*EGLIGENCE commonly proceeds, either from indifference, or N & from diffraction. We neglect those things, which we look upon with indifference; but we frequently also neglect things of moment, because we are distracted by other cares. These are the two caufes of mens carelefnets in matters of religion. On the one hand, piety is indifferent to them, they neither know the nature nor the excellency of it; the duties which it prefcribes, do not appear very pleafant or neceffary to them; they love and effeem only the things of the world, all this I have proved, in the fore-going chapters. On the other hand, they are diffracted by temporal cares, which rob them of the leifure and freedom, that are neceffary for the fludy and practice of religion. Worldly bufinefs therefore is another fource of corruption, as I hope to prove it by the following confiderations.

I reckon among worldly employments, all those cares which relate to the

the world, or this prefent life, whether they take up the body or the mind. There are temporal cares which properly take up the body; fuch are the cares of mechanicks, or hufband-men; and there are other fecular cares, which chiefly employ the mind; fuch is the fludy of humane learning, of politicks, or philofophy. Thefe laft as well as the firft, ought to be counted worldly bulinefs. Nay, we may obferve that difference between thefe two forts of temporal employments; that the cares which take up the mind are fometimes the more dangerous. While the body is at work, the mind may be at liberty; but when the mind is employed, when the heart is diffracted and pofiefied with temporal cares, it is much harder for the thoughts of religion to enter, or to make any imprefion upon a man.

But whether thele employments relate to the mind or to the body, we ought not to think, that they are of themfelves hindrances to piety. For this imagination, would be a very groß error. Worldly bufinefs is lawful and neceflary, and it were a fin to negled? it, fince that would be contrary to the order which God has eftablished in the world. Nay, it may be ufeful to our falvation, it may divert ill thoughts, it may take off men from triffling and vicious employments, and it may ferve to mortify the body, and to banish idlenefs, which is the caufe of all manner of vice.

I make this remark, because fome people fancy, that in order to be faved, it must be necessary to live in an absolute retirement, to lay aside all temporal cares, and to give up our felves wholly to fpiritual exercifes, to read ing, contemplation, meditation and prayer. But those who do thus ftretch the obligation of renouncing the world, and infift fo much upon a retired and contemplative life, do not I doubt, very well understand the nature of piety, nor do any great fervice to it. Sometimes by endea. vouring to fpiritualize men too much, we fpoil all, and we make piety appear ridiculous or impracticable. We should always remember that piety is made for man. Now it is not one in fifty that can thus embrace retirement, and abfolutely renounce the world. I am far from condemning retirement; it is fometimes very feafonable, and I think it in fome fenfe neceffary to all men. There are fome perfons who for the fake of their falvation, or the edification of the church, ought to chuse a retired life, difingaged from temporal cares. Others are called to that kind of life by the circumftances which providence has placed them in. And befides, there is no Christian, but ought to allow himself fome times of retirement; nay, there are fome temporal employments which do not hinder a man to live in a retired manner. But after all, it would be the ruin of fociety, and of most Christian virtues, if every one should live a-part, and bufy himfelf only in fpiritual exercifes. God does not require this; He has created man to labour in the world, and those who follow an honeft employment in it, act fuitably to his will, and their bufinefs may prove a help to their falvation.

I need not I think, advertife the reader that I fpeak here only of lawful employments, and not of those which are bad and contrary to the laws of nature or religion. And yet these last are very common; but because every body may easily see that such occupations must unavoidably engage men into fin, I will make it my chief business to fhew, that lawful and innocent employments, prove to many perfons a hindrance to piety and falvation. Temporal employments then being not bad in themfelves, they cannot occafion corruption but by the abufe that is made of them. Now there are four faults which men commit in this matter.

r. The first is, when they are intirely taken zp with worldly things. We have shewed already, that men live in a prodigious sloth and carelefness about religion, and that they do almost nothing for their fouls and their falvation. From this it follows, that they must be employ'd only about their bodies and the concerns of this life. And in fact, if we inquire into their cares, we shall find that they terminate in the world, and in their temporal interest, and this I think, needs not be proved.

2. Their hearts fink too deep into the things of the world. The bufinefs of life is innocent when it is follow'd with moderation; but it diverts men from piety, when it is purfued more, and with greater eager. nefs than it deferves. That exceffive love of the world, makes the unhappinefs of men. Inftead of efteeming temporal goods in proportion to their worth, and as remembering that they are not able to procure them true felicity; inftead of confidering that they are not made for this life only, and that they cannot long enjoy those advantages which they court; they give up themfelves wholly to the world, they fet their hearts and affections upon it, and they act as if this life was the ultimate end of all their actions. They labour only for their bodies, and for the gratifying of their appetites. This is the mark aimed at in all their thoughts and projects : this is what inflames their defires, and what excites in them the most violent passions of grief or joy, of anxiety or impatience. They are far from having fuch a hearty concern for religion and piety. In relation to this, their affections are faint and languid, and they do nothing but with indifference, or by constraint.

3. The third fault is when men are too much employ'd, and when they over-load themfelves with bufinefs. It is a great piece of widdom, both in refpect of the tranquility of this life and the concerns of another, to avoid the excefs and the hurry of bufinefs, as much as poffibly we may, without being wanting to the duties of our calling; to confine our felves to neceffary cares, and to wave all fuperfluous ones. Men would live happy if they did but know, what their profeffion requires of them, and limit themfelves to it, without meddling in that which does not concern them. But here they obferve no bounds; they will fly at all, they will bufy themfelves about many things, which do not belong to their province. This without doubt is a dangerous difeafe, and the occafion of feveral diforders.

4. In the laft place, there is one thing more to blame, and that is when worldly bufinefs, becomes an occasion of fin, by the abufe that is made of it. For befides that it is a very ill disposition in a Christian to be fond of the world; most men are fo unhappy as to direct all the bufinefs of life to a bad end, which is to fatisfy and to enflame the more their irregular appetites. And by this means, many enterprizes and particular actions of theirs, which in themfelves are innocent, become evil and unlawful, and engage them in all manner of fins.

These confiderations prove already, that the greatest part of men's vices proceeds from their temporal affairs; but this will appear yet more clearly by the following reflections.

1. This exceffive application to temporal concerns, engroffes almost

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our whole time, fo that it does not leave us a fufficient fhare of it, to be fpent in cares of another nature. Men confefs this themfelves, and plead it for an excufe. They alledge their bufinefs. A man who is engaged in the world will fay. I have no time to read, or to perform the exercises of religion; I have too much bufinefs, my employ or my calling does not leave me a minute of leisure. And the truth is, they are too bufy for the most part. If they have any fpare time, fome hours, or fome days of reft, wherein the courfe of their ordinary employments is interrupted; they are not in a condition, to improve to the beft advantage those fhort intervals of relaxation.

2. And truly, fecular bufiness does not only take away the best part of men's time, but it does befides diffract their minds and invade their hearts and affections. When for a whole day or week the mind and body have been in agitation, a man is weary and fpent, the activity of his thoughts is exhausted, his head is too full to be clear, he is not able to drive away in an inftant fo many worldly ideas, to calm his paffions, and to turn himfelf of the fudden, to spiritual exercises. So that he must either absolutely neglect the duties of piety, or perform them very ill. When a man has brought himfelf to a habit, of being employed only in worldly affairs, he is no longer mafter of his own thoughts and motions. It is with great difficulty, if he can at all apply himfelf to objects that are foreign to him. Those objects affect him but weakly; he must make great efforts, before he can fasten upon them; and if he fixes there for a few moments, it is a violent state in which he cannot continue long. Those thoughts, of which he is constantly full, crowd in upon him, and he returns immediately to these things which he loves, and which commonly take him up.

This is the true reafon, why men love and relifh fpiritual things fo little, and why they think it fo hard to fubdue their minds with reading, attention, and meditation. This is particularly the main fource of indevotion in the exercises of piety. Why is the mind so apt to wander in prayer? The too great application to temporal affairs is the caufe of it. As foon as a man is awake in the morning, a throng of thoughts and a multiplicity of defigns and bufiness break in upon his mind, and take poffeffion of his heart; he is filled with these things all the day, he follows and plods upon them without diffraction or interruption. And how is it to be imagined that amidst all this hurry and turmoil, he should find that recollection, that tranquility, and that elevation, without which the exercifes of piety are but meer hypocrify? Whence comes it to pafs that men bring fo little attention and fincerity with them, to the publick worthip of God? Why do fermons produce fo little fruit? Why do the most certain and important truths of religion, the clearest and the most folid reasonings, make either no impression at all, or at least no lasting one upon the hearers ? What is the reafon why in the most folemn devotions, and particularly in the holy communion, it is fo difficult for men to lift up their hearts to God, and to fhake off a thousand idle or finful thoughts, which come then to amufe and diftract them ? And laftly, Why do those vows and promifes which are made even with fome fincerity, prove fo ineffectual? Why do the best resolutions vanish to easily and to foon? All this comes from men's being too much taken up with temporal cares. 3. Thefe N4

3. These excessive cares do not only distract the mind, but they do besides directly obstruct fantification, and lead men into fin. For first it is impoffible to love religion and virtue, when the heart is fet upon the world. Our Saviour tells us, \* That no man can ferve two masters; and St. John declares, + That the love of God is not in those who love the world. There is fuch an opposition between bodily and spiritual exercises, that those who give themselves up to the first, are incapable of the others. Worldly occupations render men carnal, fenfual and dull; they keep up ignorance and foment floth, and they weigh down all their inclinations and thoughts, to the earth, fo that they must be careless and indifferent, about fpiritual objects and heavenly concerns. And indeed they are very ill dispos'd to value those good things as they deferve; or to feek them with that eagerness and fincerity which they ought. Can we think that men, who propose nothing else to themselves, but the amassing of wealth. the making their court, or the canvaffing for places; and who live and toil only for fuch things, fhould have a due fense of the concerns of their falvation? It is hard to imagine it.

But further, religion does not allow Chriftians to love the world, or to cleave to it.  $\ddagger$  It requires, that they fhould poffels temporal goods as not poffeffing them, and that, they fhould use the world, as not abusing it; because on the one hand, the figure of the world paffes away, and it would be a folly to fix their hearts upon vain and transitory enjoyments: and on the other hand, they ought to afpire chicfly to the poffeffion of folid and eternal happinels. To be therefore taken up only with earthly things, and to let them enter too deep into one's heart, is a disposition quite contrary to that, which a Chriftian ought to be in.

4. Laftly, An exceffive application to temporal affairs hurries a man into many diforders. We need but reflect a little, to be fatisfied that a man who is filled only, with the thoughts and folicitudes of this life, muft be a flave to his fenfes and paffions; and that he lays himfelf open every moment to a thousand temptations, which he is not able to withstand. . Tho' his employments are lawful in themfelves, yet he makes them criminal, becaufe to him they are only means of gratifying his appetites. And the greatest mischief is, that when a man is once entred upon that courfe, he still confirms himself in it, so that at last he cannot leave it off. On the one hand, his passions are still mounting higher; on the other, bufinefs and toil grow upon him. He first proposes an end to himfelf, and then he will bring it about at any rate, as being engaged in honour and by intereft not to defift. If he meets with obstacles he will do any thing to furmount them. If he fucceeds, fuccefs animates him with new ardour; he is for going further: in a word, it is an endlefs labour, a continual succession of cares, which are still growing greater, and which end only with his life.

From all this we may conclude, that the abufe of worldly bufinefs is moft dangerous, and that if we would not have it obstruct our falvation, we ought to observe these three rules.

The hrft is, That we should purfue the things of this world with moderation. One of the most useful directions for a happy life, is this; To

+ 1 John ii. 15.

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1 1 Cor. vii. 31.

<sup>\*</sup> Matth. vi. 24.

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lay nothing too much to heart. The way to preferve our innocence and tranquility, is to crave nothing too eagerly: not to rejoyce exceffively at any profperity, not to be dejected above measure for any difasters which may happen, and not to be too hot and peremptory upon any defign. The fecond caution to be ufed, is the avoiding multiplicity of bufinels, and excels of employments, as much as is confiftent with the duties of our calling. Every one fhould confider what he is fit for, and what he is called to, and go no farther. In the last place, wildom requires, that among all the affairs of this life, we fhould referve the neceffary time and care, to pay what we owe to God, and to mind our falvation, the most important of all concerns. To this end, it is very useful, to have certain times of retirement and leifure, and to accuftom our felves to make now and then, even in the midft of temporal employments, fuch reflections as may call us back to our duty, and be like a counterpoife to that byafs which carries us toward fenfible objects. Let us often think that we are mortal, that we have a foul, and that there is another life after this. Let us confider what all our worldly cares terminate in. and what judgment we shall make of them upon our death-beds. These reflections will put us upon wife and moderate courfes, and fo we shall avoid innumerable diforders and miferies which men fall into, by their too great application to temporal bufinefs.

# CAUSE IX.

#### Men's particular Callings.

HO' we have feen already that corruption has its fource in the T abufe of worldly bufinefs, yet it may be proper to infift a little information of the state of the state of the state of the state of worldly bufinefs, we mean chiefly those things, about which the greateft part of life is spent. Now those occupations mult needs be fuitable to the particular kind of life which a man follows. And so every man's kind of life, may be a fource, or at leaft an accidental caufe of corruption.

As the world is conftituted, it is neceffary that there fhould be different profefions among men, that fome fhould cultivate the earth, that others fhould apply themfelves to arts and trades, and that others fhould exercife magiftracy or traffick. The difference of fex, age, condition, and other circumftances, creates a great variety in relation to particular callings. Now this diverfity of employs and conditions, is innocent in it felf; the world fubfifts, and fociety is preferv'd by it. But yet it cannot be denied, but that a great part of the diforders, which happen in the world, proceeds from the kind of life which men chufe, and from the particular thate they are in; and that becaufe they abufe it, and do not demean themfelves in it, with caution and prudence. The proof of this fhall conclude the firft part of this treatile. But here we are to use fome diffunction. There are callings which are bad in themselves, and others which are lawful and innocent; they are not all therefore equally dangerous, and fome produce corruption, more neceffarily than others.

- All professions, or callings are not lawful, some are unlawful and criminal. The world is full of people, who make fin it felf their ordinary calling and profession. There are infinite numbers, who instead of following an honeft employment, fubfift only by the fins which they commit themfelves, or which they make others commit. This might eafily be proved by abundance of inftances. How many are there, whole trade is a conftant practice of obfcenity, lewdnefs and debauchery, of artifice and intrigue, lying and knavery? How many are there, who are profeffed extortioners and cheats, who are always employed in acts of injuffice, cruelty and violence ? nay, there are focieties form'd for that purpole; the trade of robbing, of punishing the innocent, and that by committing rapine by fea and land, is erected into an honourable and lawful employment. Many perfons are fuffered at this day among Chriftians, whole profession was formerly counted infamous ; many are tolerated, who are only ministers of voluptuousness, and whose only bufinefs it is to introduce licentiousnefs of manners, to corrupt the youth by training them up to the love of pleasure ; and to a luxurious and effeminate life; and to furnish those who are inclined to debauchery, fenfuality, idlenefs, or gaming; with the means to gratify their inclinations. Now all these professions are not only inseparable from fin, but they likewhe make way for all kinds of vice among Chriftians.

We ought to pafs almost the fame judgment upon the way of living of those, who without making a publick profession of vice, propose no other end to themfelves in this world, but the pleafing of their appetites. Some have no other view, than to enjoy the pleafures of life, and they level their whole conduct at that mark. Others defiring to grow rich, or to raife themfelves to honours, make no fcruple of using all the means, which intereft, ambition and injustice, have established in the world. They make use of fraud, violence and oppression; it is their maxim and their study to diffemble their fentiments, and to do mischief to those who stand in their way. In a word, they betake themfelves to every thing that may further the fuccess of their defigns. Such a method of life, is manifessly contrary to the spirit of Christianity, and it must needs be highly finful, fince both the end of it, and the means used to obtain that end, are so.

There are other kinds of life, which do not feem altogether fo bad, and yet are not much better. This may particularly be fail of idlenefs. The profefion of many, is to have none at all, and to be as little employed as they can. They think it the happieft of all conditions to have nothing to do, and to live at reft and free from action. But yet it is unworthy of a man, and much more of a Chriftian, to be ufelefs in the world. And if this idlenefs is fhameful and culpable in it felf, it is much more fo in its effects and confequences. It betrays men into frivolous or dangerous paftimes. For a man cannot be perfectly idle. The want of ufeful bufinefs muft be fupplied with amufements; and thofe amufements are generally finful. Thus we fee multitudes of people, who who excepting the time which they muft needs befrow upon the neceffities of nature, and upon fome external and indifpenfable acts of religion, confume the beft part of their lives at play, or in diverfions, in unprofitable reading and converfations, in meeting companies, in receiving or returning vifits, or in other fuch things, which the' they are thought innocent, yet they enervate the mind, they devour time, they enflave a man to the opinions and modes of the world, and they make him moft frequently tranfgrefs the laws of religion. It would not be difficult to apply this to *profeffed* gamefters, to thofe who fpend their time in trifling difcourfes and impertinent vifits, and to many other perfons. I might eafly fhew, if it was neceffary, that fuch a life has little of Chriftianity in it, and that it is a great deal more to blame, than is commonly believed.

Thus men follow divers kinds of life, which are effentially bad, and wherein by confequence, purity of heart, and innocency of life, cannot be preferv'd.

Ås to those kinds of life and occupations which are lawful, I might observe in the first place, that for the most part men are too much wedded to them, and that they commonly abuse them. But I will not prefs this confideration, having shewn already in the foregoing chapter, that too great application to temporal affairs, robs men both of the time, and of that inclination and freedom which are necessary to mind spiritual things, and that it makes them dull, earthly-minded, sense particular callings, I shall observe these two general faults.

1. It is a great mifchief that men embrace profeffions, which are not fit for them. Every profeffion require fome particular qualifications and talents; and fince all men have not those qualifications, it follows that all men are not fit for all employments, and that diffinction and choice are to be us'd in pitching upon a profeffion. The welfare of focieties and of particular perfons, does in a great measure depend upon that. choice. If no care is taken of this, employments must be ill difcharged, and from thence a great many diforders will arise both in church and ftate.

Now if we take a furvey of the different callings which men are engaged in, we will find that they are often deftitute of those qualifications which are neceffary for the right difcharging of them. And the worft of it is that this happens in the most confiderable employments, and in those which might contribute most to the preferving of order, and the encouraging of virtue in the world. As to professions of leffer importance, the choice is much eafier; every body almost is capable of them, and the faults which may be committed there are not of great confequence. If a hufband-man does not well understand his bufinels, or a mechanick his trade, no great inconveniency will enfue from thence in relation to fociety. But when publick employments are in the hands of men who are not qualified for them, it is hard to tell how much mifchief is occasioned by it. Is it not for instance a lamentable thing, that fo many perfons thould dedicate themfelves to the church, who want the talents requifite for fo high a function ; and that fo many who might do great fervice in that profession do not embrace it? By this it happens that fome of those who are placed at the helm in several churches, want both

# Caufes of the prefent

PART I.

both learning and probity, and that religion is very ill administed, fo that the people being without instruction or conduct, live in ignorance and diforder. The fame may be faid of the office of magistrates, when it is entrusted to those who are not proper for it.

2. Lawful callings may prove great occafions of corruption and diforder, both in refpect of thole who embrace them, and of the publick, when they are ill exercised, when the duties annexed to them are neglected; when men do not watch against the temptations which are particular to them, and when they look upon them only as means to gratify their inclinations, to get money, to have a rank, to gain credit, or to humour fome other passion. I might enter here upon many particulars, but because this would lead me too far, I shall confine my felf to a few inflances.

It would be very proper to fpeak here of the profeffion of church-men, and of the office of princes, magiftrates and judges, and to fhew how permicious both thefe kinds of life prove often, not only to those who are raifed to them, but likewife to church and ftate. But thefe two articles are of too great moment, to be touched upon only by the by. They are two general caufes of corruption, which deferve to be purpofely handled, and which are to have a place in the fecond part of this book.

The profession of military men, is a kind of life which corrupts vaft multitudes. I do not condemn the profession in general.... It is lawful, a man may live in it like a Chriftian, and there are perfons in military employments, of a folid virtue and an exemplary piety. But it must be confefs'd, that the number of those perfons is not great ; and that for the generality, the maxims and deportment of the men of that profession, agree very little with the rules of Christianity. Those who follow the employments of war, are for the most part men of loofe and vicious rrinciples. Every body knows, that if on the one hand fome good men are found to embrace this profession, on the other hand it is the ordinary receptacle, and the last shift, of idle and debauched people; and of those who are over-whelmed with poverty and milery. Befides, how do men live in that profeffion? faving fome few diforders which military difcipline does not allow of, every thing is lawful there; I fpeak of what is commonly observed. To spend their life in idleness and gaming, is the leaft fault of foldiers. Lewdness is a thing about which no great feruple is made among them. The fame might alfo be faid of injuffice ; it is well known that commonly officers do not thrive but the foldiers pay for it. I fay nothing of unjust wars, nor of the cruelty and inhumanity which often attend that kind of life, because I will not enlarge upon this fubject. But it is most certain, and every confidering perfon will own, that after the rate that military men live almost every where; war is the fchool of vice, and that the prodigious number of those, who follow that employment, is one of the principal caufes of corruption and debauchery.

Commerce is one of the moft lawful and neceflary profeffions of life. Not only fociety, but religion it felf may reap great advantages from it. But yet this calling has its dangers and temptations, and it is exercifed by many in a way which is contrary to good confeience. As the only end of traffick is gain, and as the opportunities of getting by unlawful methods, which may be practifed with impunity, offer themfelves every day;

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#### CAUSE IX.

day; fo it is evident, that if a merchant has not a ftrict and well-informed conficience, and virtue enough to refift the perpetual temptations to which his calling exposes him, he will forfeit his innocence, and violate every minute the rules of justice and equity, of charity, truth and honefty.

There are few callings more innocent and more fuitable to the order which God did eftablifh at firft, than the employments of thofe who exercife mechanick trades, and get their livelihood by bodily labour. And yet this kind of life proves to a great many an occafion to vice, becaufe they do not arm thenfelves againft the temptations and fins which are ordinary in thofe callings. It is almost the general character of this order of men, to mind nothing but the world, to labour only for their bodies, and to do nothing for their fouls. Hence it is, that they are ignorant, that they know their religion very little, that they are groß, fenfual, given to intemperance, and feveral other excelfes. They are apt befides, to be unjuft and falfe. They make no confcience of doing their work ill, of lying, and detaining what is not theirs. There is a thousand petty frauds and little knavifh tricks, ufed in every trade, which are thought innocent and lawful ways of gain. Now it is plain, that all this does not contribute a little towards corruption.

What I have faid of the employments of life, may be applied to the different flates men are in, with relation to age, condition, and their way of living. All these are so many occasions and circumstances, which may divert them from their duty.

Thus youth has its particular temptations. Young people are vain, prefumptuous, fenfual, given to pleafure, violent and bold in their paffions. They are likewife imprudent and fickle, becaufe they want knowledge and experience. Being thus difpofed at that age, they will almoft infallibly, unlefs prevented by a good education, corrupt themfelves, and contract ill habits, which will flick by them, as long as they live. Daily experience fhews us, that youth ill ipent is the fource of the corruption of a great many for the reft of their whole life.

Old people are commonly covetous, morofe, fufpicious, wedded to the opinions they have once embraced, and moft deeply engaged in their vicious cuftoms. Their paffions are not fo boifterous, but they are more lafting and harder to be cured, than thofe of young people. And from this we may judge, that if reafon and religion do not correct thofe faults of old people; that age, which ought chiefly to be employed in preparing for death, will prove an obftacle to piety and falvation.

The rich as St. *Paul* obferves,\* are proud and high-minded; they are apt befides to be flothful, they love to fatisfie their paffions, are full of felf-love, minding themfelves in every thing, and being little affected with the miferies of others. So that riches may eafily fpoil those who poffers them, and do actually fpoil many.

The poor are almost all of them vicious, because they are ignorant, forfaken from their infancy, and grown up in want and idleness, and among bad company. They have little religion, they will live without working, they are given to stealing and dishonesty. Envy fills their

\* Tim. vi. 17.

hearts, and they only keep within the bounds of duty, when they can do no mifchief.

Those who live un-confined and much in the world, have for the most part little of a Christian character. They lie open to abundance of temptations, and what is most dangerous in that kind of life, is, that a man has no fooner embraced it, but he thinks it honourable, lawful and neceffary; he hearkens no longer to the rules of religion, he is afhamed of them, and governs himfelf only by the maxims of the world. Others lead a retired life, they avoid great companies, and they feldom appear in publick. That ftate may have its advantages, but it has its dangers too. Those who live thus retired, are apt to think themfelves much better than other men, because their conduct feems regular and free from fcandal; and this infpires them with a fecret pride, a great opinion of themfelves; an auftere and imperious humour, which makes them apt to fpeak ill and to judge rafhly of other people, and this drives charity, gentlenes, and the judge rafhly of other people, and this drives

I think I have faid enough to fhew, that men's various kinds of life, have a general influence upon the irregularities of their deportment. But to make this truth yet more evident, I shall add two reflections to all that has been faid.

The first is, that of all the temptations which are apt to feduce men; none are more dangerous than those, which are, I. Neceffary and unavoidable. 2. Ordinary and frequent. 3. Hidden and imperceptible. Now the temptations arifing from men's particular callings have thefe three characters. 1. They are neceffary and unavoidable, we may withfand them, but we cannot avoid altogether being exposed to them. 2. They are frequent and conftant, those employments in which the greatest part of our lives is spent, offering them to us perpetually. 3. They are hidden and imperceptible; for befides that men reflect little upon what is ordinary and happens every day; those temptations are varnished with the fpecious pretences of example and cuftom, and even of the lawfulnefs of the calling and of neceffity. Thus a trades-man, is neceffarily exposed to the danger of wronging his neighbour, and of transgreffing the rules of juffice, equity or fincerity: the opportunity of doing this returns every minute, and as often as he buys or fells; this temptation is imperceptible, and except he has a niceness of confcience, he will not be fenfible of it, by reason that his profession is innocent, that he is allowed to get, and that most of the unlawful ways of gain, are authorized by cuftom.

2. The fecond reflection is, that the greateft and the most infuperable obftacles to piety, proceed, for the most part, from a man's calling. It is that which obstructs more than any thing elfe, the effect of the gospel, and men's conversion. We preach, we exhort to repentance. But to whom do we speak? We speak to men engaged in professions, which, considering how they behave themfelves in them, divert them from piety, and furnish them with a thousand opportunities of finning. We speak to people who have chosen already the course of their whole life; who refolved to continue in the state they are in, and to alter nothing in it; and who have formed to themselves, that scheme of employments, which they they intend to follow at any rate. We preach to people who are no fooner out of the church, but they meet at home and in their ordinary bufinefs, with perpetual hindrances to holinefs, and with temptations, which it is certain they will not withftand. Such hearers may be preached to long enough, before they reap any fruit from what they hear. Sermons are prefently gone; but the temptations arifing from the profeffions which men chufe, are continual, and laft as long as their lives. They accompany a man every where, he is not jealous of them, he feeks them, he gives up himfelf to them, and he fancies he may lawfully do fo. This is the vifible occafion of the gofpels having fo little efficacy upon men's minds.

I fhall conclude this chapter with two remarks which may ferve for a remedy against this fource of corruption. I. Every one ought to examine the ftate and kind of life he is in ; that if this ftate has fomething in it that is evil or contrary to the duty of a Christian, he must alter and correct it. If the profession is bad in it felf, nothing elfe can be done, but to quit it. If it is lawful, we must take care not to render it dangerous or finful, either by neglecting the duties to which it obliges us, or by not avoiding the fnares and temptations that attend it, or by making it an occasion and pretence, to fatisfie our inordinate affections. I confeis we may meet here with difficulties. It is hard for a man to leave off a profession. to go out of his ordinary road of life, and to renounce fome engagements when they are once formed. And yet this ought and may be done, if those engagements are not lawful. It is better we should offer some violence to our felves, by breaking them off, or by correcting what is amifs in them, than to run our felves into infinite miferies. But the beft way is to obviate the evil in its beginning.

Therefore, I fay, 2dly. That fince people use to refolve upon a profefion while they are young; that choice requires a great deal of prudence and caution; for no lefs than temporal and eternal happiness or milery depends upon it. But it is a fad thing to fee, how rafhly and inconfiderately this matter is gone about. Interest, chance, passion, the humour of parents or of young people, are the things which determine fo important a choice. It is not much confidered whether a calling is lawful, or proper for him that embraces it; little or no care is taken to form the inclinations of young perfons; they are given up to their own conduct, and to all the temptations of that profession to which they are deflined. And thus we need no longer wonder, why employments are ill discharged, why most people lose their innocence in them, and why there is a general corruption to be observed, in all states and conditions. This is the ordinary effect and confequence of men's particular callings.

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# TREATISE

CONCERNING THE

# C A U S E S

OF THE

PRESENT CORRUPTION

# CHRISTIANS,

OF

# AND THE REMEDIES THEREOF.

### PREFACE;

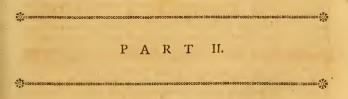
LTHOUGH it cannot be contefted, but that the Corrup-A tion of Chriftians proceeds from those Causes, which have been observed in the First Part of this Work; yet those Causes are not the only springs from which Corruption flows: there are others befides, which we are to discover now, and which deferve our most ferious attention.

Hitherto we have found the Caufes of Corruption, in the ill difpolition of moft Chriftians. But those which will be the fubject matter of this Second Part, are of another nature. They are more general and of a greater influence, and they may be looked upon as the occasions of the CAUSE I.

the others. For if it be afked, Why men are ignorant, full of prejudices, poffeffed with falle maxims, or negligent in the concerns of their falvation; we may eafily fee that this proceeds chiefly, from the want of Order and Difcipline, from the defects of Paffors and Mågiftrates, from Education, and from thole other Caufes, which I defign to enquire into, at prefent. Things are upon fuch a foot among Chriftians in relalation to thefe heads, that it is almoft impoffible but that the Corruption of men muft be very great; and we muft not hope to flem the tide of it, ualefs we remove thole publick, and general Caufes of Corruption.

In the next place their Caufes are lefs known, and lefs obferved than the others. I cannot tell whether it is becaufe they are not thought of, or becaufe no remedy is hoped for; but men do not appear very folicitous to remove them, nor do they feem to know them. Great endcavours are ufed in Books and pulpits, to inftruct men and to bring them to a more Chriftian life : matters of religion and morality are carefully explained, but this does not heal the general diforders. The main Caufes of remifners do ftill fubfift, and hinder the effects of inftructions and exhortations. It were therefore to be wifhed, that thofe who are concerned for the reftoring of Chriftianity, had larger views, and did more diligently labour to take away the general Caufes of Corruption.

Indeed it feems more difficult to remedy thefe I am now to mention, than the firft General Abufes are hardly reformed, efpecially when they are confirmed by a long cuftom; and to attempt it may be thought a fruitlefs labour. But all this ought not to difcourage us. Truths fo important as thefe are, ought not to be fupprefiled; they may produce their fruit in their feafon, it is ftill a great matter to have fet them in the beft light we can : and this is what I thall endeavour to do at prefent.



# CAUSE I.

# The present State of the Church, and of Religion in general.

P poffible, to those who are well inclined. But yet we must configure poffible, to those who are well inclined. But yet we must configure fields, that the various circumftances of time, place, and of the frate of religion, contribute much to to the progress of piety or of corruption in the world. There are fome happy circumftances, and fome times very favourable to piety; as on the other hand there are unhappy Vot. VI. O circum-

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circumftances and times in which it is like a ftranger upon earth, the means to promote it being then neither fo effectual nor fo frequent. The defign of this work, obliges me to confider, what may be thought in this refpect of the time we live in, and whether this Corruption which diffhonours Chriftianity, does not proceed from the unhappinefs of the times, and from the prefent ftate of the Church and religion.

But we cannot fucceed in this enquiry, nor pass a found judgment upon the prefent flate of religion, without running back to its first origin and nature, and without taking a view of those ages which are elapfed, fince its first effablishment. The knowledge of the feripture and of history are here of great use. The feripture informs us what the flate of religion should be, and history shows us the different flates thro' which it has passed. When we examine religion by these two rules, we perceive that it neither has been, nor will be, always in the flate it is now in.

It is fit in the first place to feek the true notion of the Christian Church and religion in fcripture. There it is that Christianity fill fubfifts in all its beauty, for neither the ages which are paft, nor the changes which have happen'd, have been able to tarnish in the least, the brightness of those native and lively colours, in which our Saviour's religion is fet forth in holy writings. We may take notice of four principal characters in the idea which the fcripture gives us of the Christian Church and religion; and these are, truth, holines, union and order.

1. The first and the chief character of this Church and religion, is the knowledge and the profession of the truth; this is what diffinguishes Christianity from false religions. The Church is the Church of Christ no longer, than while the retains the purity of faith and of evangelical doctrine. It would be needless to prove this.

2. The facred writers reprefent the Church as a fociety altogether holy. They name her \* The fpoufe of Chrift, a glorious fpoufe, having neither fpot nor wrinkle nor any fuch thing, but being boly and without blemift. They call her + The boufe of the living God, a boly nation, and the affembly of the first born which are written in heaven. They give to Chriftians, the glorious titles of kings, priests, faints, elect, children of God, and new men; they fpeak of them, as a people feparated from the world and its vices, dedicated to God and good works, and living in the practice of piety, temperance, juffice, charity, and all other virtues.

3. Union and Love is the third character of the Church and of the true Difciples of Chrift. The fcripture does not fpeak to us of many Churches but of one, of which all the faithful are members, in what place foever they may be. St. Paul fays that there is but one faith, one baptifm, and one God; the Apofles enjoyn above all things, Union and Charity, and they give many precepts to maintain thefe, and to make them flourifh among Chriftians.

4. As Holinefs and Union cannot be preferved, where there is no order; fo the Church was to be a well regulated fociety in which every thing might be done in a convenient and orderly manner. And in fact, there are in the facred writings many laws to this purpofe. We find there feveral regulations, concerning the way in which the Church ought

\* Eph. v. 27. Pet. ii.

+ Heb. xii.

ought to be governed, and concerning the calling of Bifhops and paftors, and the principal functions of their office. The fcripture does befides appoint the exercife of difcipline, the manner of proceeding in relation to fcandalous finners, and the administration of publick alms. It prefcribes the chief acts of religion and divine worfhip, prayers, fafting, facraments, preaching, and fome other heads. All thefe laws are defigned to effablish order and piety in the Church, and to banish confusion and fcandals out of it. And this order cannot be a thing indifferent, fince the Apoftles have given us laws about it.

It is not difficult to fhew that most Christian focieties are hardly to be known by these marks. But before we come to that, it is necessary to observe the different states through which the Church has passed from her infancy to this time.

II. If we confider the Church in her infancy, we must acknowledge, that the first ages of Christianity were very pure, in comparison of the following. But yet we must take heed, when we speak of the purity of the primitive Church, that we do not form to our felves too advantageous an idea of it, as if Christianity had been then in its utmost purity and perfection. The Church in her beginnings did confist of Jews and Heathens. These men embracing Christianity, did not so entirely strip themfelves of their prejudices and cuftoms, but that they brought with them into the Church, fome of the notions of Judaisim, and even of Gentilifm. It is well known that this was the first occasion of those herefies which did ftain the purity of the Chriftian doctrines, and morals, and the caufe of feveral diforders, which happened in the very times of the Apoftles. Befides, the Apoftles and the first ministers of the Christian religion, were not able, by reason of the persecution and of the obstacles they met with, to regulate all things as they would have done, if the Church had been in peace. We need not therefore wonder if we find imperfections and defects apparent enough, in the ftate of the primitive Church. And it is of fome importance, to obferve this, not only that we may have true apprehenfions concerning this matter, but that we may befides obviate an unhappy confequence, which might be drawn in favour of the prefent corruption, from what has been known in the first ages of Christianity. No doubt but there were diforders and fcandals at that time; but we are to remember, that the Church was then made up of men, who for the most part were born, and had lived in Paganifm, and whole life had been fpent in the thickeft darknels of ignorance and vice.

Yet for all that the Church was then more holy and pure than fhe has been fince, or is at this day in moft places. This is matter of fact which cannot reafonably be contefted; for befides that it may be verified, from the teftimony which the facred, and fome of the heathen authors bear to the innocency of the primitive Chriftians, and that it is probable, that men were kept in awe while the Apoftles were alive in the time of miracles, befides all this I fay, there are two confiderations which prove, that corruption could not be then fo great or fo general, as it is now.

These confiderations are founded upon two undeniable facts. r. That the Church was then perfecuted. And 2. That difcipline was then exercised  $O_2$  cited

cifed in it. These were two powerful means to remove vices and scandals from the Church. We may eafily imagine, that men who loved the world and their fins, would not have embraced Chriftianity at a time, when whofoever became a Chriftian, did by that very thing expose himfelf to perfecution, torments and death. This did fright away the greateft numbers of wicked and impious perfons. But if any of thefe entred into the Church, difcipline for the most part drove them out, when they made themfelves notorious by a fcandalous life. It is eafy to judge, that in fuch circumftances there was more piety at that time, than we obferve now in the Church. The first Christians were fincere in their profeffion. Being inftructed by the Apoftles, and apoftolical men, they placed the Chriftian religion chiefly in a good life, to which they did folemnly engage themfelves by baptifm. They were united among themfelves; they governed themfelves in matters of order and difcipline by the prefcripts of the Apoftles, as much as the perfecution gave them leave; and they did with courage lay down their lives for the truth. Such was the Christianity of the first ages.

But the Church did not continue long in that flate before this zeal of thofe primitive Chriftians began to cool. On the one hand perfecution ceas'd, and on the other, the ancient difcipline was flackned. Thefe two fences being pluckt up, and the emperors turning Chriftians, the corruption of the world broke in upon the Church. Divers abufes crept into doctrine, difcipline, worfhip and manners, till the Church fell at laft, into fuch a difinal darknefs of ignorance, fuperflition and vice, that Chriftianity feem'd almoft quite extinct and deftroyed. All thofe who had any true fenfe of religion, did lament this; they complained openly of it, and they longed for a good reformation. This was the flate which the Church and Religion were in, for fome centuries.

It did not pleafe God that those times of ignorance fhould laft for ever; that darkness began to be difpers'd in the laft century. Then it was that learning and languages revived, and that the holy Scripture, which had been for a great while, a book unknown to the people, was rescu'd out of that obscurity, in which the barbarifm of former ages had buried it. Men did perceive that divers errors had been introduced into religion; they discovered feveral abules, they went about to redress them, and they fucceeded to far, that in this respect, Christianity was reflored to its purity. But that great work could not be finished; so that at this day the Church and religion, are not yet brought to that flate of perfection which they might be in.

III. For to come now to the prefent flate of religion, it is certain, Firft that many Chriftian Churches are ftill very near in the fame darknefs, men were in fome ages ago. I fhall fay nothing of the finking of Chriftianity in Afia and Africa; there is more knowledge in Europe; but yet in many places we may obferve almoft all those diforders, which prevailed in the times of the groffeft ignorance. Nay, our age is more unhappy than the precedent, in that those abufes have been confirmed and authorized by laws, and are now fupported by force. How many countries and Churches are there, where the people know almoft nothing of the Gofpel, where religion is reduced to childifh and fuperflitious devotions and practices, where the most ridiculous things are believed.

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CAUSE I.

lieved, and the most shameful errors received; where the loofeness of manners may almost be parallel'd with Heathenism, where the most execrable crimes are committed ? In a word, where the ignorance both of the people and clergy are general, excepting only fome few underftanding men who are fenfible of thefe diforders, but are reftrain'd by fear from difcovering their fentiments. From those places Corruption fpreads to others, and it would not be difficult to fhew by feveral inftances that the caufe of impiety, ignorance and vice, is to be found in those places which fhould be the fountains of piety and religion.

What I have now faid, is not to be applied to all Churches; for fome there are where religion is not fo corrupted, and where a purer Chriftianity is profeffed. But yet let us enquire in the fecond place, whether there are any Christian focieties, where nothing is wanting or to be defired in the flate of the Church and religion, and where it would not be neceffary to make fome alterations and conftitutions, in order to come nearer to perfection? This deferves to be examined with care, and without prepoficifion. We ought here to lay afide the fpirit of a party, and ingenuoufly to acknowledge defects where they are. For elfe if every one is wedded to the fociety of which he is a member, nothing can ever be remedied. For supposing that there are defects, what remedy can be used, if we are all possessed with this prejudice, That all is perfect in our fociety? Is not this the way to canonize abufes, and to prevent the reftoring of order?

And first, we ought not to wonder, if there should still be imperfections in the pureft focieties. It would be a kind of miracle, if there were none remaining. God does not always think fit to finish his work all at once; unless he had made use of inspired men, such as the Prophets or the Apoftles were. It was impossible fo to attain perfection, and to provide for every thing at first dash, that nothing more should be defired. Belides, circumstances are so much altered that it seems necessary, to change feveral things that were left in the laft age. It is further to be confidered, that the' Christians did long for a good reformation, yet great difficulties were to be overcome to bring it about. Mens minds were not much enlighten'd, they were just creeping out of darkness, and a long cuftom had almost obliterated the true ideas of religion. Almost all those who were in civil or ecclesiaftical authority, did obstinately defend the abufes which all good men thought it neceffary to redrefs. Extream feverity was used towards those who defired this reformation of the Church. All this did terrify a great many well-meaning perfons, and was the caufe, that in feveral places, those who had courage enough to condemn the abufes openly, were not able for want of means, to do all that the intereft of religion required. They were fain in those places to yield fomething to the iniquity of the times, and to fettle things as well as they could till a more favourable opportunity. Some Churches came nearer to perfection than others. But howfoever, if we would pass a right judgment upon the prefent state of the Church and religion, we ought to examine the thing in it felf, and without partiality. Upon this I shall offer here some general confiderations, and refer to the following chapter fome heads, which will require an exact and particular difcuffion. I will first refume the four characters, which the Scripture gives

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PART II.

r. All Chriftian focieties boaft that they profefs the Truth; and that very thing is enough to fhew that many of them are in error, fince they do not agree among themfelves about the articles to be believed. I will not enlarge on this head, becaufe it would lead me into many particulars, and in fome refpect, into controverfy. I fhall only fay, that if we did judge of what is to be believed in religion, by that which ought to be the principle and rule of faith among Chriftians, I mean, the holy Scripture, we would foon perceive on which fide the truth lies. We might obferve in that fociety which vaunts it felf to be the pureft of all and even which pretends to be infallible, and the only true Church exclufive of all other, abfurd tenets and monftrous doctrines, equally repugnant to Scripture and reafon, and we fhould be convinced, that the doctrine of thofe Churches which did feparate from that fociety, is much more confonant to the Gofpel.

2. We mußt have a very mean notion of Chriftianity, if we can believe that Holinefs, which is the fecond character of the Church, is to be found among Chriftians at this time. The complaint of the laft ages was, That religion wanted to be reformed in doctrine, worthip, difcipline and manners. It was reformed in part by the rejecting of thole errors and abufes, which were crept into doctrine, worthip and difcipline; but the reformation of manners is ftill behind. The people have not as yet been reformed in this regard, except perhaps in thole times and places where they have been perfecuted. As for the reft, they have fearce changed any thing befides their belief and worthip; this alone proves that the flate of the Church is yet imperfect. Holinefs is the teope of religion, it is the chief character of Chriftianity; fo that where holinets and purity of manners is not, religion muft be very detective.

III. Union, Peace and Charity, as was faid before, are one of the effential marks of the Difciples and Church of Chrift. But where is this character to be found ? The Church at this day is rent into factions and parties. We cannot fay, that there is but one Church; we must tay, that there are many religions and Churches. Christians divide not only upon lawful grounds, which make feparation neceffary, but about things of fmall confequence. Upon the leaft diverfity of opinions, they pronounce anathema against one another, form different fects and communions. Even those Churches which might have a common belief and interest are not united. Those men who by their office should be the ministers of peace, are but too often the firebrands of division. defire no other proof of this, but that zeal which most divines express about the difputes of religion, and that little difpofition which is found among them, to facrifice fome opinions, or expressions, to the peace of the Church.

l do not condemn all difputes without diffinction, for fome are neceffary. The Apoftles command the rulers of the Church, to eftablish with care, pure doctrine, and to confute those who endeavour to corrupt it. They did themselves on many occasions dispute against false teachers. To defert the truth when attacked, were to make but little account of it: this would be a betraying the intereft of piety, fince piety is always founded upon truth. Difputes become neceffary, when effential truths are to be defended. Neither would I reduce all profitable or lawful difputes, to those only which concern fundamentals. There are errors, which tho' not mortal, yet are dangerous, and fo it is needful to oppose them : and there are truths, which tho' not fundamental, are yet of great use in religion, and may ferve to confirm the principles of Chriftianity. It is fit that fuch truths should be discuffed, provided this be done with moderation and honefty.

I only blame ufelefs difputes, or thefe, which tho' they may have their ufe, yet are accompanied with thofe paffions and diforders, which blind zeal infpires. Such controverfies which are but too common, are extreamly fatal to religion. We are not able to exprefs what mifchiefs they occafion in the Church, and how prejudicial they are to the progrefs of Chriftianity in general, and of piety in particular. It may feem at firft, that becaufe the people do not take cognizance of thefe contefts, they fhould prove hurtful only to thofe learned men by whom alone they are managed ; but yet the whole Church feels the ill effects of them.

1. By reafon of these diffuets, the people are defitute of edification, or at least they or not receive all the edification which is neceffary. Church-men being only full of these, study and meditate upon nothing else; in their sermons they speak only of these matters, which take them up, and which seem capital to them. They have neither leisure nor inclination to mind things of another nature, and to set about the reforming the manners of Christians; or they do it but faintly and careless. Whilst a minister is very busy in his study or pulpit, about confuting an adversary whom he never saw, or an error which is unknown to his whole slock, his sheep are loss, his hearers remain possible with mortal errors concerning morality, and ingaged in the most vicious habits. This is the fruit of most disputes, they occasion the ruin, rather than the edification of the hearers.

2. Difputes keep up among Chriftians falle zeal, hypocrify and licentioufnefs. The people learn by the example of their teachers, to place their zeal, not in oppofing vice, but in underftanding controverfy, in adhering to certain opinions, and in bearing a ftrong hatred to thofe who diffent from them. They judge that what makes the ordinary employment of divines, what they intift most upon, what kindles their zeal, and excites in them the most violent paffions, muft needs be the most important thing in religion.

3. Sometimes the people take part in the quarrels of their teachers, from whence proceed unavoidable animofities and divifions, which extinguifh love, and the fpirit of Christianity, and which create infuperable obfacles to the peace of the Church, and the re-union of Christians. Of this we have but too many inflances.

4. Laftly, the little union which is in the Church, is one of the great caufes of the fmall progrefs of Chriftianity, Chriftians inflead of making their religion appear lovely and venerable, to *Jews* and Infleds, expose it to their contempt. Inflead of endeavouring to propagate the Chriftian faith, and to deftroy idolatry, they turn their own wea-

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pens againft themfelves; they mind nothing but the promoting the intereft of their peculiar fects, and they neglect that of Chriftianity in general. On the other hand, unbelievers, feeing that Chriftians are not agreed among themfelves, take occafion from thence to queftion every thing, and they judge that there can be nothing but uncertainty and obfcurity in a religion, where there is nothing but controverfy and different opinions.

The want of Union is then, a most confiderable imperfection in the prefent flate of the Church. It were to be wilhed, that fome remedy might be applied to fo great an evil, and that those controversies which produce and cherist it, might be turned out of doors. The way to compass this, would be to endeavour in good earnes, the reforming of manners, and the reftoring of order. This great and noble defign will no fooner be pursued, but men will be assumed of all these contentions, they will look upon them as trifling amussements, and find no reliss as are conceited with vain learning, and narrow-fpirited men, who are not capable of larger and higher views.

IV. If we examine the prefent flate of the Church with relation to order there we muft ingenuoufly confels, that great defects are to be found. In matters of order and difcipline, Chriftians ought to regulate themfelves, firft by the laws which Chrift and his apofles have fet them; and then by the examples of the primitive Church and of the purefl antiquity. It being evident, that what has been practifed in the firft ages of Chriftianity, and does befides agree with the rules and the fpirit of the Gofpel, fhould have a great regard paid to it, by all Chriftians. Now it cannot be denied, but that moft Churches have confiderably departed from that ancient order.

To prove this by fome inftances, it is certain in fact, that the ecclefiaftical order and government, which obtains in many places, is not fuch as it ought to be. None can be ignorant of this, but those who are altogether unacquainted with antiquity, or who being full of prejudices find what they pleafe in Scripture, and Church-hiftory. Can it be faid, that the elections of bifhops or paftors, are Canonical, as they are managed in many places, and that the practice and order, established by the apostles and the primitive Christians, are observed every where? It is certain likewife, that all Churches are not furnished with a fufficient number of perfons to perform divine-fervice, and to inftruct and edify the people. When we look back upon the primitive Church, we find, that tho' it was poor and perfecuted, yet it had its bifhops, its priefts, its catechifts and its widows. At this time we fee yet in feveral places, that one fingle town maintains a great number of Church-men, who indeed, for the most part, are very infignificant; but elfewhere it is quite otherwife, one fingle man does often perform all the ecclefiaftical functions; nay, fometimes many Churches have but one paftor. This diforder as well as many others, proceeds partly from the want of neceffary means and funds, to fupply the occafions of all Churches. Here it might be proper to fpeak of the paftoral functions, and of the administration of difcipline; but these two heads being important, I referve what I have to fay about them, for the two next chapters.

#### CAUSE I.

We ought here not to omit the want of union and correfpondence among Churches. If they had more communication and intercourfe one with another, great advantages would follow from thence. Right meafures might be taken for the edification of the people, and for the redreffing of abufes and fcandals; that uniformity which is fo neceffary, both in worfhip, and in Church-government, and difcipline, might be eftablifhed; and that would contribute much to the honour and fatety of religion in general. The Church would appear then like a well-ordered fociety, and like one body, of which all the parts fhould maintain a relation to, and a frict dependance upon one another. On the other hand, it is a great unhappinefs, when Churches have little or no intercourfe or communication one with another, to that every one orders its matters and cuftoms, the form of its worfhip and government, within it felf.

Thus in many refpects, it would be eafy to fhew, that things are not altogether regulated in the Church, as they ought to be, with relation to order. Men are not femible of thefe defects, becaufe they are apt to judge of religious matters, by the practice of the prefent time, and by the cultoms of their refpective countries; befides, that antiquity is but little known. And yet thefe defects contribute more than is commonly imagined, to the decay of piety and zeal. The want of order in any fociety, does moft certainly bring confusion and licentioufnets into it.

V. The worfhip of God being the end and the effence of religion, we cannot but inquire whether all things are well regulated with relation To fpeak here only of the publick worfhip, it would be very to that. neceffary, that it fhould be performed every where in fuch a manner that the people might understand, the most effential parts of religion and divine worship, to be adoration, praife, and the invocation of God; and that the difcharging of these duties is the end of publick affemblies. I remark this particularly, becaufe in many places, devotion is placed only in the hearing of fermons. Churches are properly nothing elfe but auditories. People fancy that fermons are the chief thing they meet for, and that preaching is the principal function to be exercised by ministers in the Church. The prayers and the pfalms, are looked upon only as preliminaries or circumftances to a fermon. This is a dangerous notion. because on the one hand it makes Chriftians neglect divine fervice, and on the other it renders religion contemptible, when fermons are not fo edifying as they fhould be, which happens but too often. And therefore it would not perhaps be amifs, if as it is practifed in feveral Churches, divine fervice was diffinguished from fermons by some circumstances of times or perfons; fo that it might be one thing to celebrate divine fervice, and another, to hear fermous.

Several reflections might be offered here concerning the principal things relating to publick worfhip, fuch as forms of prayers, liturgies, the manner of praifing God, and facred hymns. It would be a quetion worth the examining, whether we ought in Chriftian Churches, to ufe only Pfalms and Canticles, out of the old Teftament, among which tho' fome are most edifying and full of excellent expressions of piety; yet there are many which relate altogether to fome particular passages of those times; or if they speak of Chrift, it is only in a prophetical ftyle, very obscure to the people. One would think that Christian hymns, which fhould

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fhould be fung to the honour of God and Jefus Chrift, chiefly to celebrate the wonders of our redemption, might be extraordinary ufeful, to nourifh piety and to ftir up devotion, as well as more agreeable to that, which the apoftles prefcribe, and which the primitive Chriftians practifed in their affemblies. Would it not likewife be neceffary to agree about giving the holy Sacrament to fick and dying perfons ; and to reftore the more frequent use of the eucharist, according to the practice of the apostles and of the primitive Church? Fafting being enjoined by our Saviour, and eftablished by the example of the apostles, and by the universal practice of the first Christians, and of all the Churches in the world for feveral ages; there is reafon to wonder that in fome places this duty fhould be almost out of date. For as to folemn fasts, which are celebrated from time to time, and feldom enough; those are not properly the fasts of which the Gofpel fpeaks, and which were observed by the ancients: they are acts of publick humiliation, defigned for times of calamity, or of extraordinary devotion, and the use of these ought not to be too frequent, because custom is apt to lesten their effect. But I mean those fasts which are helps to devotion and holinefs, and means to mortify the body, and to dispose men to humiliation and repentance.

Uniformity in divine worfhip would be another very neceffary eftablifhment. It would fhew the unity of faith, it would render religion venerable, and prevent those diforders and confusions, which are inevitable, when rites and practices quite different, nay, sometimes contrary to one another, are observed in feveral Churches.

Laftly, Care should be taken, that divine service might be performed every where, in an orderly grave and decent manner. The exterior of religion, has a greater influence than we imagine, upon the effence of it : befides that we have en express law, \* which tays, That all things should be done decently and in order. Indeed, pageantry and pomp, the great number of ceremonies, and whatever favours of fuperstition, ought to be avoided, as well as every thing which is contrary to the effence of evangelical worfhip: and it were better to fall into an excess of fimplicity, than to clog religion with too many ceremonies. But yet under pretence of funplicity, we are not to run into confusion, and to neglect the externals of religion and divine fervice. If we fhould examine by this rule what is done in fome Churches, with relation for inftance, to the laws and forms of publick affemblies, to the celebration of divine worfhip and the facraments, and to the perfons who receive the communion, and who officiate; we might find there feveral things to be rectified. And it would be very ufeful to take this into confideration, for the want of gravity and decency, and a dry and carelefs performing of publick worthip, render religion defpicable, and make the people, who commonly judge of things by their outfides, to entertain a mean notion of divine fervice; which produces the contempt of religion, and by confequence ill manners.

VI. This contempt of religion is another fault, which ought not to be paffed over in filence. It has been always the general fenfe of mankind, that religion is to be honoured and refpected. The Heathen religions, as falle as they were, did attract the veneration of the people; and the fame may be feen at this day, among the feveral nations of infidels. Certainly

\* 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

#### CAUSE I.

#### Corruption of Christians.

tainly then the Christian religion deferves all the veneration and respect, which men are capable of. But it must be confessed, that in many places, it is falling of late, into a very great outward meannefs. Men are accuftoming themfelves, to look with indifference, with haughtinefs and fcorn upon every thing which has any relation to the Church or to religion. This appears especially in the contempt, which is expressed towards the Clergy. Tho' the Scripture represents their office, as a most excellent and honourable imployment; tho' it enjoyns Christians, to \* honour, love and reverence those, who have the rule over them ; yet the ecclefiaftical order is generally but little honoured : and what is more furprizing, it is most depressed and abased, in those Churches which otherwife profess a purer doctrine and worfhip, than other Christian focieties. I do not fpeak of all Churches in general; but whoever fees what is practifed in many places, would be apt to think, that it was a part of the reformation of the Church, to ftrip the Clergy of all ecclefiastical authority, and of every thing that might render them venerable to the people, and to fet them upon a low and contemptible foot. Their character is become abject, if not odious, and it becomes fo more and more every day. That which makes it more defpicable, is the poverty which many of them are forced to live in.

It is not difficult to find out the grounds of this contempt. It may be juffly charged upon the Clergy themfelves, their character is become vile, becaule they expofe it; but it does not follow that men have a right to defpife them; all that is to be done, is to endeavour the reclaiming of them. If under pretence of perfons being unworthy, or of fome abufe in offices, it was lawful to defpife the professions themfelves, would not even magistracy be often the vilest of all imployments? May we not fay alfo, That Church-men do not well maintain their character, becaufe they are defpifed? An office which is flighted will never be well difcharged; it is feldom that great worth is to be found in a post which is little honoured, or rather much defpifed.

The chief caufe of this contempt was the manner in which things were ordered in the laft Century. Perfecution, poverty and the oppolition of the higher powers, were at first great obstacles to the establishing of good order. Princes and great men did posses to the establishing of the church. Nothing was left to Church-men, but the care of making fermons, and of administring the facraments. They were turned into bare preachers; a character which for the most part is not very fit to create respect. I fay nothing here of the discipline and government of the Church, because I am to speak of these more largely by and by.

This abalement of religion and of the ministry, is a vifible caufe of corruption. As foon as facred things are difregarded, impiety muft needs prevail; efpecially if the ministers of religion are defpifed, then religion can have no great force upon men's minds. The mafter cannot be honoured, when his fervants are flighted. Men, who are without authority, cannot keep the people in their duty. Whatfoever comes from an abject perfon, who is neither beloved nor efteemed, can never be received with fubmiffion. The contempt of paftors, draws of necef.

• Heb. xiii. 17. 1 Theff. v. 13.

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fity after it the contempt of divine fervice, of preaching, and of other facred functions.

The poverty of Church-men, is not much lefs fatal to the Church, than the immense and excessive riches which did formerly corrupt the Clergy. For befides, that in those times and places in which the Chriftian religion is predominant, and profeffed by perfons of quality. Poverty makes the ministers of religion contemptible to the people, and even to great men, it being certain that in those circumstances, it is neceffary that ministers should live with some credit; besides this I fay, that poverty difables them from exercifing hospitality, from minding their function as they ought, and from difcharging the duties of it with authority and zeal: it forces them to have recourfe to feveral mean or unlawful methods to fupply their neceffities, and those of their families, and to do many things which do not comport with their imployment. From thence proceeds likewife the want of able ministers. A great many perfons who might have the neceffary talents, qualifications and means, to be very ufeful in the Church, take a difguft at that profession, by the fear of contempt or poverty. As long as things are in this ftate, religion will be defpifed, and corruption will ftill be in vogue.

It is not fo eafy to remove this caufe of corruption as it is to detect it. The re-eftablishing of order, feems to be a thing extreamly difficult. To this end it would be requilite, that Princes and Church-men should act in conjunction. But there are few Christian princes who lay this to heart, and divines have quite other things in their thoughts; their great bufinefs is to maintain what is effablished, and to dispute with those who find fault with it. On the other hand, knowledge or refolution is wanting, and there is not enough of honefty or greatness of foul, to confess the truth. Few writers have the courage to fpeak fo impartially, as the famous author of the hiftory of the reformation in England has done, in the preface to his fecond volume. It is thought by many perfons, that all would be ruined if the leaft alteration was made. Some of those defects which have been mentioned in this chapter, are now become inviolable cuftoms and laws. Every body fancies true and pure Chriftianity to be that which obtains in his country, or in the fociety he lives in ; and it is not fo much as put to the queftion, whether or not fome things fhould be altered. As long as Chriftians are pofiefied with these prejudices, we must not expect to fee Christianity reftored to an entire purity.

But yet it is to be hoped from the grace of God, and the force of truth, that Christians will open their eyes at laft, and that divines will grow fentible of the neceffity of minding thefe things. The main point here is to fhake off all prejudice, and to confider things in their nature and original. Our Saviour has left us an excellent rule, when fpeaking of the abufes which had been to long received among the Jews, in reference to marriage, he tells us, \* That from the beginning it was not fo. This maxim is of great ufe, and a lover of truth and virtue, fhould always have it before his eyes. It were to be wilhed, that we fhould fill appeal to it, and that inftead of governing our felves by the cuftom of the prefent time, we fhould run up to the ancient conflicution, and compare what is done at this day, with that which has been, and ought to be done.

\* Matth. xix.

CAUSE II.

done. This would be the true way to reform abufes, and to draw near to perfection, and to bring things back into the natural and primitive channel.

# CAUSE II.

# The want of Discipline.

T is not my defign in this chapter to fpeak of Church difcipline in general. I fhall only infift upon that part of it, the end of which is to regulate the manners of Chriftians. And this is an important matter. The want of difcipline is one of the greateft imperfections which have been obferved in the prefent flate of the Church, and one of the most evident and general caufes of the corruption of Chriftians. But becaufe fome men have pretended, that difcipline, fuch as I fuppofe it in this chapter, was a humane and arbitrary inflitution, the obfervation of which was not abfolutely neceffary, and might be dangerous; I think it proper to fay fomething here, concerning the original and the neceffity of the difcipline of the Church.

I. It is certain in the first place, that all focieties and bodies have a right to establish an order to regulate themselves by, and to provide for their fecurity and prefervation. When feveral men or people, unite to form a body, they have power to make laws and regulations, to which all the members of that body, may be tyed; and to exclude those from their communion, who will not fubmit to them. But these laws ought not to clash with other laws already established, nor with just and acknowledged rights. I think, this power which is granted to the meaneft of focieties, cannot be denied to the Church; and this proves already that the Church had a right to appoint a difcipline to which, all her members should be subject, provided, that discipline did not on the one hand prejudice publick tranquility, and the authority of the magistrates; nor any ways contradict on the other hand, the laws of the Gofpel. Now as difcipline is not liable to either of these inconveniences, but does rather perfectly agree with the welfare of civil fociety, and the fpirit of the Chriftian religion, as will be proved hereafter; fo the eftablishing of it, feems to be equally lawful and neceffary.

II. But further, difcipline is an order, which has God for its author. We find the inftitution of it in holy Scripture, and in the laws of Chrift, and of his apoftles; I fhall recite the chief of thefe.

1. In St. Matthew's Gospel, chap. xviii. 15, 16, 17. we read these words, If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him of his fault between thee and him alone : if he shall bear thee thou hast gained thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall negled to hear them, tell it to the Church; but if he negled to hear the Church let him be unto thee as a Heathen man and a publican. For the right understanding derftanding of these words, we must know that our Saviour does not enact here a new law, and that an order like that which is here prescribed, was already observed among the *Jews*. But here, as upon many occafions, our Saviour did comply with the cuftom and practice of that nation, because he judged that those cuftoms were good, and fit for his views and purposes. The first Christians did the fame in matter of order and government, they did form the Christian Church upon the model of the *Jewijh* affemblies, and upon the method which was there observed.

This is the key of the place I have now quoted. Our Saviour approves the Jewish practice and enjoyns his disciples to observe the fame order amongst them. It cannot be doubted but that this was his meaning. For he fpeaks to his difciples, and it appears by all the circumstances of this paffage, and by the fequel of his difcourfe, that he is giving here a law, which concerns the Christian Church. It is true indeed. that he properly speaks of private difference, but what he fays ought to be applied to all those diforders, which may happen in the Church, and particularly to fcandals. And furely it is evident, that if we may proceed in the methods here enjoyned, when the cafe is only concerning fome differences between private men, we have much more right to do fo with relation to publick fins, fince they are cafes which concern the whole Church, and that directly, and which do yet more properly belong to her cognifance, than the quarrels of private men. The meaning of Chrift is then, that there must be an order in his Church for the removing of fcandals. He supposes that the Church has a right to interpose upon those occasions, and he commands that those who shall refuse to hear the Church, be looked upon as if they were her members no longer, and that communication with them fhould be avoided : this is the import of these words. Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and publican.

2. The V. chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, ver. 2, 3, 4, decides this matter. St. Paul having been informed, that there was a man among the Corinthians, who lived in inceft, he writes about it to that Church ; and first he reproves them, for not having cut off from their communion, the perfon who had committed fo infamous an action. In the next place he does himfelf excommunicate that man and deliver him up to fatan. I know that perhaps this power of delivering up to fatan belonged only to the apofiles, and it is likely, that this was one of those extraordinary punifhments, which they had a power to inflict upon prophane and rebellious perfons. But as for excommunication, it is the common and ordinary right of the Church. This right, or rather this duty of the Church, is clearly afferted by the centure which the apoftle address to the Corinthians, because they had not taken that incestuous perfon from among them, and becaufe they had not obferved the order he had given them before, not to fuffer fornicators; \* I wrote unto you already not to company with fornicators. He repeats this order in these words, which contain an express and general law against all scandalous finners. + I write it unto you again, not to keep company ; if any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with fuch an one, no not to eat. This is politive : and what the apostle adds, Do not ye judge them that are within? Is a confirmation that the

\* Ver. 9.

+ Ver. 11.

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the Church has a right to do fo, with relation to her members. Laftly he concludes with these words, \* Therefore put away from among your selves that wicked perfon; for thus this verfe is to be rendred, as the drift of the whole chapter, of which this is the conclusion, shews it evidently. I defire the force of this proof may be confidered. It is not one fingle paffage which I here produce, it is a whole chapter, it is a thread of arguments, and of express and reiterated injunctions. St. Paul defcribes those whom the Church ought not to fuffer in her bosom, he appoints what is to be done in reference to them; which is, that they ought to be cut off from the body of Christians, and that their company is to be avoided. There cannot be a clear and express law, if this is not fo.

3. There are fome other places which have no ambiguity in them. 2. Theff. iii. 6. We command you in the name of our Lord Fefus Chrift, this preface is remarkable; here is a law in due form, which the apoftle is going to deliver, he propofes it by way of command, and he interpofes the authority of our Lord Jefus Chrift, We command you in the name of our Lord Jefus Chrift, that ye withdraw your felves from every brother that walketh diforderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. This law is repeated, v. 14. If any man obey not our word by this epifile, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

4. The 1st epistle to Timothy, affords us proofs unanswerable. The defign of St. Paul in this epiftle is to establish order and discipline in the Church. To this purpose he gives feveral precepts to Timothy; he inftructs him exactly how paftors ought to proceed about information, cenfures, and the principal offices of Church-government. + Rebuke not an elder but instruct him as a father, and the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers, the younger as fifters, with all purity. ‡ Against an elder (or a prieft) receive not an acculation but before two or three witneffes : them that fin rebuke before all, that others also may fear, I charge thee before God and the Lord Jefus Christ, and the cleft angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. I might add other places out of this epiftle and the following, and out of that to Titus. || Here is then again, a whole thread of discourse, prescribing the order according to which the Church is to be governed. Here are particular rules ; and St. Paul uses an adjuration to oblige Timothy to obferve them. These laws do not concern Timothy in particular, but St. Paul speaks here of the episcopal function, and of the duty of the pastors of the Church in general. We need but read the epiftles to Timothy, and the beginning of that which he writes to Titus, to be fatisfied that he intends that this order fhould be fettled in all the churches.

Either there is nothing plain in Scripture, or it appears from all thefe places, that discipline is instituted of God; that the exercise of it is committed to paftors; that fcandalous finners are not to be tolerated in the Church; that private men ought to avoid their company; and that the governours of the Church are bound to proceed against them, by private and publick cenfures, and even by excommunication. If the paffages I have cited do not prove all this, we may wrangle about every thing,

† Chap. v.

1 1 Tim, v. 1, 2, 19, 20, 21. || Tit. iii. 10.

" Ver. 13.

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thing, and all arguments from the facred Writings may be eluded. The inflitution of the facraments is not more express or positive.

III. But tho' these places were not fo positive and fo clear as they are, yet we may be affured that this is their true meaning, becaufe this is the fenfe in which the whole primitive Church underftood them. The practice of the first ages, in conjunction with the laws of Christ and of his apofiles amounts to a demonstration, which cannot be withstood; befides that we are to prefume, that what has been practifed from the foundation of the Church, and in the time of her purity, was fettled by the apoftles themfelves, or by apoftolical men, fo that we ought as much as poffibly to conform our felves to it. Now we know that difcipline was observed in the primitive Church, notwithstanding the unhappiness of the times, and the perfecution. This is unqueftionable matter of fact, and therefore I shall take it for granted; and only fay in short, that then all those who embraced Christianity were engaged by a folemn vow to renounce the vices of the age, and to lead a holy life ; that those who were baptized were not fuffered to live diforderly; that vicious perfons were debarred the holy mysteries ; that those who fell into great fins were excommunicated, as well as those who were contumacious and incorrigible; that fuch were not reftor'd to the peace of the Church, but after various degrees of penance, and a publick acknowledgment of their faults ; and that as to those who relapsed, they were received only at the hour of death. Very clear monuments of this practice are still extant, in the writings of the ancient doctors of the Church, as well as in the old canons and decrees of councils. This difcipline muft needs have been very feverely observed, fince St. Ambrofe was not afraid to put it in practice against the emperor Theodofius.

I am not ignorant, that the primitive Church has varied about certain circumflances, that the penitents were treated fometimes with more and fometimes with lefs feverity, and that the time of their penance was longer or fhorter: but as to the main or the effence of difcipline, it did always obtain in the primitive Church. And it was as little queffion'd then, whether difcipline ought to be obferved, as whether Chriftians fhould be baptized. This ufage among the first Chriftians is at least a frong prefumption in favour of difcipline; but it being confonant befides to what we read in the New Teffament, I do not fee how there can remain any doubt about this matter.

IV. In the laft place, the nature of difcipline it felf, proves the ufefulnefs and neceffity of it. All those who are not blinded with prejudice, muft own, that difcipline confidered in it felf, is altogether agreeable to the fpirit of Chriftianity. 1. The honour of religion, and the promoting of Chrift's kingdom, require order in the Church. Who does not fee but that if the Church did tolerate fcandalous perfons and take them into her bofom, and make no difference between them and the faithful; fhe might juftly be charged with all the diforders and fcandals which are obferved in the lives of bad Chriftians, and be looked upon by infidels, as a prophane fociety, where vice is permitted. But the exercise of difcipline is an authentick difowning of vice, whereby the Church declares publickly that fhe does not allow of it.

2. Discipline is a most efficacious means to procure the conversion of finners.

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finners. A man muß be very much hardened, when the being removed from the communion of Chriftians, does not reclaim him. But when a fcandalous perion is fuffered to live in the fociety of the faithful, when he is admitted to the fame priviledges with other members of the Church, this gives him an occafion to harden himfelf in fin, and to think that he is as good a Chriftian, and that he bas as much right to falvation as others, which is a most dangerous, but withal a most common imagination.

3. Difcipline is ufeful to the Church in general. Many who may otherwife have ill inclinations, are reftrained by example, or fhame, or fear, or even by conficience: good men are thereby doubly edified; fince on the one hand this rigour confirms them in their duty, and that on the other hand, it makes reparation for the feandal which other men's fins give them.

From all this, I conclude, that difcipline is a facred, neceffary and inviolable order. It cannot be faid, that it is a humane, or arbitrary establishment, which may be altered, or which was only to continue for a time. An order which has its original in the express laws of Chrift and his apoftles; and which is appointed in Scripture as a general law ; an order which has been observed in the primitive and apostolical Church; an order which is founded upon the very nature of the Church and religion, and which perfectly agrees with the fpirit of the gofpel; fuch an order certainly ought to be followed, as being of a neceffary and indifpenfable obligation. I fay it again, there is nothing more politive than this in the inftitution of the facraments, discipline as well as the facraments, is founded upon divine inftitution, and confirmed by the practice of the primitive Church; but in difcipline there is one thing more than in the facraments; for whereas the facraments confidered in themfelves. and without respect to the divine institutions, are things indifferent and of no use; discipline in it felf is just and useful, agreeable to the principles of Chriftianity as well as to plain reafon and fenfe.

I have perhaps been too large upon this fubject, but it was to be proved in the first place that discipline is necessary and infituted by God, fince that is the ground I go upon in this whole Chapter.

II. This facred order which had been fettled in the beginning of Chriftianity was altered in process of time; and in this as in many other things Chriftians grew remifs. This was done by degrees; for good laws are not commonly abolifhed all at once, but through infenfible changes. We learn from ecclefiaftical hiftory, that the flackning of discipline, is chiefly to be imputed to the taking away fome publick penances. Those penances were converted into private confessions and penances. At first this alteration was only concerning fome fins, which were not thought to deferve the utmost rigor of discipline; for as to great fins, fuch as murder and adultery, the ancient order was ftill in force. But at last, about the end of the IV Century, publick penances were abolished, first in the eastern, and some time after, in the western Churches. Inftead of penances, private fatisfactions were appointed, and then men unhappily began to be more concerned about the exterior of penance, than about what is fpiritual in it, and fit to reclaim finners. This was done at first by a kind of relaxation or indulgence; but that

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which at the beginning was no more than an exception to the law, fucceeded in the room of the law it felf; and from thence forang indugences, fatisfactions, penance, auricular confeffion, and many other practices, which are but corruptions of the ancient difcipline. The Bithops on the other hand being diffracted by temporal cares, after the convertion of the emperors to the Chriftian religion, began to neglect the effential parts of their function, and the conduct of their flocks.' They were for humouring great men, who thought it hard to fubmit to the publick order. This is a fhort account, how the purity of the Chriftian religion was confiderably adulterated in the point of difcipline.

III. We are now to examine what the prefent flate of the Church and religion is, with relation to difcipline. All the abufes which came up in the room of the ancient difcipline, do ftill fubfift in moft places, both in the Greek and in the Latin Church. The Canons and laws of the Church in the firft Centuries have been abrogated by contrary laws and Canons. This is acknowledged by all men of learning and fincerity.

Let us fee then whether this difcipline is to be found any where elfe. There are many Churches in the laft age, which did redrefs those abufes I now mentioned. But they ought to have gone further; as these abufes had fucceeded in the room of apoftolical difcipline, fo that too fhould have been reftored, when these were taken away. But this was not done as it might have been wifhed. The diforder was removed, but order was not re-established; and it is not hard to apprehend how this came to pass.

It is no wonder that those abuses should be taken away; they were grown too intolerable; and they could not hold out against the learning of an age more knowing than the former were. Things were gone fo far, that a turn and a revolution were neceffary. It is very probable befides, that interest, pride, or ambition, did move great numbers of perfons, who after all had not much piety, to fet themfelves against those many and great diforders, and to fhake off a yoke under which the Chriftian world then groaned. But the fame principles hindred them to fubmit to the voke of Chrift, and to bind themfelves to the observation. of evangelical difcipline. We are to confider further, that the rules of difcipline and penance had been difused for feveral hundred years, fo that it was not eafy to bring the world to fubmit to an order, of which the notion was loft. Policy had perhaps a large fhare likewife in this revolution. Princes and great men were eafily determined, to pull down the exceffive and usurped authority of the Clergy, but they did not all express the fame zeal to reftore to the Church, her lawful authority. In fine, among divines themfelves, there were many who could not endure that difcipline fhould be named, and who difputed and writ again thofe, who were for excluding fcandalous perfons from the holy facrament, and for making use of excommunication and publick penances. In fuch circumstances the reftoring of discipline was a hard task. It will not be improper to relate here concerning this matter, the opinions and the very words of those who were then imployed about the reformation of the Church.

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They looked upon difcipline as a capital point to reftore religion to its purity. They wrote \* That difcipline was the beft, nay the ONLY MEAN to keep the people in obedience; that the Church would never fland upon a firm and folid foundation, till difcipline and excommunication were ufed to purge it, to give a flop to licentioufnefs, to banif wice, and to mend manners, and that whofoever did reject the lawful and moderate ufe of excommunication, shewed himfelf by that to be none of Chrift's sheep.

But we do likewife obferve in their writings, that they had the ill fortune, of not being able to fucceed in their defign, they fay openly, that they met on all hands with infuperable obffacles. *That there was a* company of minifters, who preached a Goffel without difcipline, and who even queffined, whether the ufe of difcipline was to be brought back into the Church: That fome introduced licentionfrefs inflead of Chriftian liberty, and thought that to reject the Pope was enough in order to be truly evangelical: That others obforving the daily decay of Chriftianity, wifhed that the authority of the miniftry might be refored, but that either they did not fee the true way of bringing this about, or that if they faw it they defpaired of fuccefs: That those usfurged the liberty of the Church: That the people had fhaken off all reftrain, and were accufomed to licentionfrefs; as if by taking away the Pope's authority, the miniftry had been diffryed, and the word of God and the facraments had loff their efficacy. They have faid, that the want of difcipline did produce corruption. ‡ That becaufe there were neither cenfures, nor corrections, nor penances,

\* Calvini epist. & responsa. pag. 337. Disciplinam jure vocare possiumus optimum, atque adeò unicum retinendæ obedientiæ vinculum. Et Paulò post. Itaque ecclefias nostras tum demùm ritë fussilarabor, ubi isto nervo colligatæ suerint. Et pag. 336. Cæterum non aliter confiste ecclesiæ incolumitas, quam si ad eam purgandam, frænandas libidines, tollenda slagitia, corrigendos perversos mores, vigeat excommunicatio, cujus moderatum usum quisquis recusat, præsertim admoinitus, se ex Christi ovibus non esse esse perverso.

+ Capito in Calv. epift. p. 7. Peritiores rerum ecclesiaficarum, cernunt in causa (ejectionis veltre) fuifie totam cohortem miniftrouum, evangelium docentium fine difciplinâ, imò ne fcientium an difciplina fit in eccleiann revocanda. Otiofam enim functionem quidam tueri malunt, quam fructuofam : quidam licentiam pro Chrifti libertate induxerunt, quafi ab evangelio ftent, qui jugum pontificium abjecerint. Aliqui verò id elt, plerique omnes, animadvertentes rem Chrifti indies abire in pejus optarent quidem reflitutàm auctoritatem minifitorium, fed aut veram ejus reparandæ rationem ignorant, aut eam videntes defperant profus. Et Paulo pol: auditis enim tyranni effe voluifitis in liberam ecclesiam voluifis novum pontificatum revocare, atque id genus contumeliarum, Gc. Et Paulo pol: nam frenum profus excussit multitudo, quæ affueta eft & educata propemodum ad licentiam, quasi authoritatem pentificiorum frangendo, vim verbi, facramentorum, & totius evangelii evacuaremus, Gc.

t Bucerus de animarum cura, p. 171. Et quis negare poteft, cum omnum peccatorum, quam atrocia etiam illa fint, adeo nulla increpatio, caftigatio aut penitentia eff in ecclefia, hinc fieri ut juventus & plebs eo leviores reddantur ad omne malumi...Pador & dedecus abeunt, homines efferuntur, redduntur (ut Paulus conqueritur) omnino imponitentes; dedunt fe libidini.

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penances, nor excommunications in the Church, even for the greatest crimes, the people and youth, did commit all manner of fins: That no perfor was restrained by shame, and that men became proud and altogether impenitent: That if the more odious fins, were expirated by penance and a reasonable severity, as St. Paul enjoyns, and as it was anciently practified, there would be less corruption and more zeal in the Church.

Thefe were the fentiments of many doctors in the laft age; they faw that the want of order and difcipline, was going to bring libertinifin into the Church. But yet their endeavours were not altogether ufelefs. Some Churches drew confiderably nearer to the apoftolical infitution, and there are fome where difcipline is not yet quite abolifhed : they ftill make ufe of fome part of those means preferibed by the Gospel for the correction of manners : they do not admit all perfons indifferently to the facrament : they retain the ufe of publick penances, and even, in fome places, of excommunication. But yet there are ftill many things wanting in the order and government of those Churches, as will appear by comparing their prefent practice with that of the primitive Church, and with the Canons of the ancient difcipline. I do not pretend that in this matter the practice of the first Christians ought to be copied in every thing, but certainly in many points we ought to conform to it.

If we examine in what manner discipline is administred now a-days, we may observe feveral defects in it which are very confiderable. For instance, we shall find Churches where excommunication is us'd about matters of no great importance; where that which is called excommunication, is rather a civil fentence or punifhment, than an ecclefiaftical cenfure, and where, not the paftors of the Church, but civil judges excommunicate. Another common fault is, that discipline is exercised only upon two or three forts of finners; fornicators and notorious blafphemers are indeed feverely proceeded againft, but a great many perfons are fuffered in the Church, who have nothing of Chriftianity in their dcportment; fuch as drunkards, idle people, and feveral other finners; whom the divine laws fubject as much to the rigour of difcipline, as adulterers. It would be altogether neceffary to use discipline against those who enter into marriage only to conceal their fhame, and yet in most Churches no fatisfaction is demanded of fuch people : this is a matter of very great moment. There is no fufficient care taken, to be fatisfy'd about the fincerity of finners repentance, when they are to be reftored to the peace of the Church. The apoftolical precept about avoiding all familiar intercourfe with fcandalous finners, is out of ufe. By all this we may fee, that few Churches can boaft of a pure discipline. But supposing that true discipline might be found in some places, yet how, many

libidini, omnique vanitati; denique vita ista petulanti atque perdita fatiari nullo modo possunt.

Idem. p. 189. Si crassiora delicta severiore ponitentia compensarentur, ut fanctus docet Apostolus, utque in fancto atque salutari usu fuit in ecclessi veteribus bene constitutis: major inde apud omnes Dei Filios peccatorum suga & detestatio, majorque vitæ Christian Zelus existeret, quam proh dolor! hodie apud nos deprehendimus. Vide & Buceri epistolam ad Calvinum, in epistola Calvini. pag. 370 & 371. many defects do creep into the best constituted Churches, either through the flubbornnels of finners, the opposition of corrupt magistrates, or through the fault and carelefnefs of paftors ? The best laws are good for nothing when they are not observed, fo that whether those, who ought to exercise discipline for the giving a flop to scandals, do it not, or whether they have not the power to do it, it is ftill true that corruption proceeds from the want of discipline.

What must we fay then of those Churches, where discipline is wholly unknown? where neither Church nor paftors have any authority to govern or infpect ; where ministers dare not exclude any one from the facrament, but admit all perfons indifferently to the holy communion; which abufe would have been thought an unheard of profanation in the primitive Church; and where all publick penances are out of doors? I fay nothing of excommunication; if any man should propose the restoring of it, his defign would be look'd upon in many places as an unpardonable crime; and the ftrangeft thing of all, is, that this want of discipline, is to be found in Churches, which acknowledge the Scripture for the rule of religion; and that there are divines, who inftead of promoting the re-establishment of discipline, oppose it, and maintain that none are to be debarred from the facrament ; who cannot endure the very name of excommunication, and who pretend that where the magistrate punishes vice, there is no need of any other discipline. Those divines have not the greater number on their fide, but their opinion prevails, because it favours policy and licentioufnefs.

We are to impute to this fatal remifnefs, the loofenefs and irregularity of the manners of Christians. I need not infift more upon this, forevery one is fenfible of it. Good order keeps men in duty, but where there is no order, vice must of necessity bear fway. What should reftrain people ? Excepting fome general admonitions which are delivered in fermons, every perfon is left to himfelf, and lives as he thinks fit. Private men are not bound to give an account of their conduct to any body. Those who lead the most unchristian life, fwearers, covetous, profane, lewd and intemperate perfons, all forts of people, live peaceably in the Church; they are reputed members of it, they are mingled among true Chriftians, they enjoy with them the fame fpiritual privileges, at least in all outward appearance, and they are admitted to the fame facraments. As long as things are in this flate ; we must not hope to fee any abatement of corruption.

But that nothing may be omitted which may contribute to the clearing of this matter, it is neceffary to answer some objections, and that which is alledged to excufe, or even to juftify the taking away of the ancient discipline.

1. Against the restoring of discipline, some fay, (which was objected in the last age) That it is sufficient for the edification of the Church, that the Gofpel should be preached in it; fince that is the ordinary means which God has appointed to procure the conversion and the falvation of men. The Gospel no doubt, is fufficient to teach us, all that is neceffary to be known in religion, but it is not true, that God makes use only of the preaching of the Gospel, for the falvation of men : for he uses other means besides, as for inftance, the facraments; and those means, among which difei-P 3

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pline is to be reckoned, are prefcribed by the Gofpel it felf; fo that whofoever fubmits to the Gofpel, muft likewife fubmit to that order we fpeak of. But further, the Gofpel barely preached and known is not fufficient to falvation; nothing but the practice of the Gofpel can fave a man, and it is to little purpofe to preach it, if the manners of Chriftians are not regulated, and if difcipline is not ufed to that end, as a mean appointed of God. As to preaching it will be fhewn in the next Chapter, That men afcribe more efficacy to it than it has, and that there is a miftake in the opinion which they commonly entertain of it.

2. Those who are for mystical devotion and piety will certainly fay, That discipline is not effential to religion, that it is a matter of external order, and that external things are useful only to carnal and imperfect Christians. But I defire those who have fuch opinions, to speak more reverently of an order of which God is the author, and which the Apoftles have fo expresly recommended. It cannot be thought that the Apostles, who did abolish the Mosaical ceremonies, would at the same time have burdened the Church with needless laws, or that they would have interposed Chrift's authority, for the observation of an order, which had not been neceffary. They are defired to confider befides, That men have bodies as well as fouls; that among a great multitude, there are many perfons of a grofs understanding, who cannot be reftrained but by external laws; and that it is absurd to pretend, that men can be fo spiritualized, as to need no longer outward aids to piety. But it is a groß error to look upon difcipline, as an order purely external : for properly speaking it is an order altogether spiritual. Discipline does not touch either mon's bodies or their effates, it ules only fpiritual means, and it is efficacious no farther, than as it operates upon the beart and confcience.

3. But others will caft the objection I have now confuted into this form; they will (ay; *That in external things, among which difcipline is to be* ranked, Churches are at liberty to regulate thimfelves as they think goad. I grant that Churches have that liberty in indifferent things, which are not appointed by a divine authority, but this cannot be applied to the matter in hand. An eftablifhment of divine inflitution cannot be reckoned among things indifferent. Do we look upon the factaments as indifferent ceremonies, which we are not bound to obferve, under, pretence that they are but external rites and ordinances? Churches indeed have a liberty where there is no law, tho' ftill that liberty is to be wifely and different cy for fear of confusion; but when God has fettled an order, Churches are not at liberty to chufe another, to make new laws and to fet up a new form of government. Such a liberty would be meer unrulinefs, and a criminal and facrilegious prefumption. This would be the way to multiply fects and religions infinitely.

4. The fame answer may ferve to refute fuch, who to juftify the practice of those Churches, which do not observe the form of discipline used in the primitive Church, make a distinction between discipline and and the manner of exercising it. They own That discipline is necessary, and that there ought to be order in the Church, but they think that the way of exercising discribine may vary, according to time, place, and other circumliances. This diffication may be received, when the case is only about fome indifferent circumfrances, but it is alledged without reason, when the

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the queftion is concerning the fubftance or the effence of the thing it felf. The diforder we complain of, is, That what is effential in difcipline has been taken away, to fubftitute in lieu of it, another order, and to fet up a new discipline of which the Apostles did not speak a word. Now that which is most effential in discipline, and which is not observed in most Churches, is this, That fcandalous finners are not to be fuffered in the Church ; and yet they are fuffered : that they are to be warned and reproved in private, and even in publick; this is feldom done, and in fome places it is never done : that Christians ought to separate themselves from those who live diforderly; and this is not observed : that upon certain occasions, they are to be cut off from the body of the faithful; but pastors date not fo much as mention this : that the administration of difcipline belongs to paftors; that they ought to prefide, proceed and judge in all emergent cafes ; the Scripture gives them that right, and afcribes to them those offices ; but they have been divested of them, new political bodies have been erected, in which there is but one Church-man, or two for form's fake, who often have neither vote nor authority in them. It is of divine right that finners fhould give real proofs of their repentance, as for inftance, by making reflitution, by reconciliations, by acknowledging their fault; but this is not now required of them; nay, in fome Churches it is not fo much as enquired into. It is againft all the laws of difcipline, That none fhould be excluded from the holy communion, and yet in most places this is not regarded. Lastly, it is an apoftolical order and practice, That finners fhould be received to the peace of the Church, but 'tis after they have fitted themfelves for it, by a fincere, and if the cafe requires, by a publick repentance; but now a-days those ancient rules of discipline are abolished.

After all this, can it be faid that no alteration has happen'd in the effence of difcipline, but only in the manner of it ? Cenfures, fufpenfions, excommunication and the authority of paffors are taken away; the government appointed by the Scripture is overturned, another and quite different form is brought into the room of it; and yet people will fay, that the quefition is not about the thing it felf, but the manner ! It is not fufficient to have any kind of order; the order which God has preferibed, and no other, ought to be obferved. Some circumftances may be varied according to the neceffities of Churches, but the fubftance of the thing it felf is unalterable.

5. Many are of opinion, That the authority of the magiftrate fupplies the want of difcipline, and that this way is by much preferrable to the other. I confefs, that the punifhments inflicted by the magiftrate upon feandalous livers are of great ufe; that magiftrates who ufe their authority to fupprefs vice are very commendable, and that difcipline is of much greater force, when it is fupported by the authority of civil powers. But fill the divine inflictution is to be preferved intire; it does neither belong to the magiftrate, nor to any power to alter that which God has commanded, and to deprive the Church of her right. After all, the difcipline of the magiftrate is not the difcipline of the Church; thefe are two diffinct things and of a quite different nature. The magiftrate ufes external and corporal punifhments; fines, impriforments, banifhments, force, &c. Thefe methods are certainly ufeful, they may ter.

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rify finners, and in fome refpects keep them in awe and duty: but befides this, it is neceffary to work upon the heart, and to bind the confeience by thole methods which difcipline ufes, or elfe it is to be feared, that we fhall only make hypocrites, and that men will abftain from evil more out of the fear of punifhment, and upon temporal confiderations than from motives of confeience.

Nay there are people, who if they had nothing to fear but a fine, or fome days imprifonment, would gladly purchafe at that rate the liberty of finning, and fancy that provided, fatisfaction be made to the magiffrate, there is no more to be done for the clearing of their conficience. Befides, what a diforderly thing is it, that an offender who is profecuted, fined, and imprifoned by the magiftrate, fhould ftill be treated like a member of the Church, and admitted to the holy facrament? The magiffrate's authority is therefore a very efficacious mean to promote the glory of God, when it is joined with ecclefiaftical difcipline; But to think that civil laws are fufficient to regulate manners and to reclaim finners, is a conceit almoft as unreafonable, as it would be ridiculous, to proceed againft robbers, or the other diffurbers of the publick peace, only by fpiritual punifhments. Let no man then confound thofe things which God has fet afunder.

6. It is farther faid, That these rules of discipline were only for a time, and that the times are altered. But how can it be proved, that the laws of difcipline were only made for a time? Is there any ground for this either in the Scripture, or in the nature of those laws? Are the laws of difcipline like those of Moses, which do no longer bind us? Did the apostles inake this distinction? Did St. Paul fay upon this fubject, as he did in another cafe, \* I only give my judgement; I have no commandment of the Lord? Does he not fpeak politively of the order according to which the Church is to be governed ? Does he not command in the name of Jefus Chrift? Does he not eftablish general laws and maxims for all the Churches? The apoftles indeed appointed fome rules, the obfervation of which is not neceffary at this day, because those regulations were visibly founded upon particular reasons, which do no longer sublist, and therefore they are not proposed as general laws. But the reasons upon which difcipline is founded, and which are taken from order and edification, from the honour of the Church, from the conversion of finners, and from the nature of the Chriftian religion, those reasons do still subfift; and confequently the rules of difcipline are facred and inviolable, efpecially being delivered by way of command, and repeated in fo many places. The Christian Church is to be diffused all the world over, fometimes fhe is perfecuted, and fometimes fhe enjoys a calm; but whatever ftate the may be in, her nature does not alter. As there is but one God, one Church, one faith, one baptism; fo there is to be but one order, at least as to effential things, and that order ought to be conformable to the laws of the apoffies. Or elfe there will be, as in fact we fee there are, as many different cuftoms and disciplines, as there are kingdoms, flates, provinces, nay towns and churches.

7. It is commonly objected, That the zeal of the primitive Christians is extinct, that men are now very corrupt, and that it would be impossible to bring

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them to a fubmifion to the difcipline of the Church. But that very thing that men are corrupt, proves the neceffity of difcipline. Order is never more neceffary than when all is in confution. \*St. Paul fays, That the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawlefs and diffunction. Difcipline feems more neceffary now, than it was in the first centuries; becaufe then perfecution kept corruption out of the Church, but when the Church is in peace, vices and fcandals do infallibly multiply; and then it is, that good difcipline is of excellent ufe.

But then it is faid, That it would be impossible to restore it, considering the disposition men are now in. I confess this defign would meet with oppofition. Those who go about to reftore order and suppress licentiousness, must still encounter difficulties; but yet this might be compassed, if princes and magistrates did not oppose it. If all the pastors did fet about it, with a zeal accompanied with prudence and gentlenefs; if they did carefully inftruct the people concerning the neceffity of difcipline; and if they did apply themfelves to the civil powers with equal vigour and refpect; they would carry the point at laft. After all, the people are not in a worfe difpolition than the Heathens were in, before the apoftles preached the Gospel to them; and there are Christian princes and magistrates who have piety and zeal. If then the Heathens of old could be brought under the discipline of Christ, in the sight of Heathen magistrates, should we despair of subjecting Christians to it ? The instance of those Churches where discipline is observed, at least in part, and where excommunication and publick penances are in use, shews that there is no impoffibility to fucceed in this defign. If the thing was impoffible, God would never have commanded it.

8. In the laft place, here is an objection which is commonly urged with great force, and which feems to have much weight in it. It is faid, That we have reafon to fear that difcipline would bring tyranny into the Church, and that thefe who govern it, would then affume too much authority. Let us fee whether this fear be well grounded.

And first, if we suppose this principle, That discipline is instituted of God, and that the apoftles did commit it to the Church and her governours, which I think has been fully demonstrated, will it not be a kind of blasphemy, to fay, That discipline is not to be suffered, left pastors fhould become tyrants? Would not this reflect upon our Saviour and his apoftles, as if they had established a dangerous order, which is apt to introduce tyranny? At this rate the apoftles and the primitive Chriftians, did incroach upon the liberty of the people, and the authority of princes. Every Christian will abhor this confequence, and yet it refults naturally from the opinion of those who reject discipline for fear of tyranny. Befides, fuppofing that Chrift has inftituted the order we speak of, can we thus argue against it, without shaking off his yoke? But men do not confider this. They fancy that every thing that is granted to the Church is granted to her governours, whereas they fhould remember that it is paid or yielded to Chrift, whose right it is, and who cannot be despoiled of it without facrilege. Here we might retort the charge upon those who bring it. They talk of tyranny, and is it not an intolerable piece of tyranny,

tyranny, to oppose a divine law, and to debar the Church and her k = 1 nours of the enjoyment of those rights, which Cod had given them?

But to come clofer to the objection. Nothing can be feared, but one of these two inconveniences; either an empire over confciences, or forme prejudice to the publick tranquility, and to the authority of civil powers.

As to the first of these two inconveniences, there is no great reason to fear it; fince the apoftles, who fo expresly recommend discipline to paftors, forbid them at the fame time to allume a dominion over confciences. Provided discipline is used only in those cases, and in that manner which the Scripture appoints, and as it was practifed by the first Christians \*. nothing like this is to be feared from it. The difcipline we fpeak of, does not meddle with points of faith, and fo fear in this refpect is groundlefs. As to those cases which concern manners, injustice can hardly be committed about them. The Church does not judge of fecret and unknown facts. She only proceeds against notoriously scandalous and impenitent finners, and the receives them, as foon as they express their repentance; And is there any thing of tyranny or danger in this? It is proper to observe here especially with reference to excommunication, which is thought the feverest part of discipline, That when the Church proceeds to that extremity, fhe does not, properly fpeaking, act by way of authority, as if the had an absolute power to punish a finner, and to cut him off from her body; but that finner has already by his life cut himfelf off from the communion of Chrift, he is no longer a member of the Church; fo that the Church only declares that, which is done and determined already, tho' fhe fhould not declare it.

Neither is there any caufe to fear that the publick peace fhould be diffurbed by the exercise of difcipline. On the contrary, fociety will be the better regulated for it. For difcipline does not touch civil matters. Excommunication it felf, does not hinder a man from being full a member of the common-wealth, nor that all the duties of juffice and humanity fhould be difcharged towards him.

As for the authority of civil powers, it is no ways injured by this, as evidently appears from the first Christians exercifing difcipline openly in the fight of the Heathen magistrates, without any opposition from them. Chrift did not come into the world to erect a temporal kingdom, nor to draw men off from their fubmiffion to the authority of kings and magistrates. It is the principle of a true Christian, ‡ To render unto Cafar the things which are Cafar's, and to God the things which are God's. This principle will not deceive a man, and as long as we adhere to it, all things will be in order, Religion is fo far from having any just umbrage to princes, that on the contrary it ftrengthens their authority. Submiffion to the higher powers is recommended by the apoftles in the most earnest manner. The Chriftians of the first ages, who were very strict obfervers of discipline, distinguished themselves by their loyalty to princes. Nay it is observable, that their discipline which was so fevere against finners, was as ftrict against those who were wanting in the fidelity and respect due to superiours; witness that Canon, + which enjoyns the depolition

• 1 Pet. v. 2. 2 Cor. i. 24. 1 Mat. xxii. 21.

+ Can. Apoft. 84.

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pofition of those bishops and clergy-men, who should offer an affront to the prince or his officers.

Whofoever will take the pains to weigh this matter, will acknowledge that difcipline is a diftinct thing from the civil power. Each of thefe has its bounds and limits. The Church does not touch the body nor civil matters, and it is not the magiftrate's bufinefs, to regulate things relating to confeience and falvation. Indeed if magiftrates imagine, that they have a right to govern the Church as they think fit, and that they hold the fame rank in it, which they hold in the civil fociety, fo that the minifters of religion are but their officers; difcipline may feem to them to leffen their authority: but let thofe who entertain fuch thoughts, fee how they can reconcile them with the Gofpel, and with the nature of the Chriftian religion.

Notwithstanding all this it will be faid, that Church-men have been known to usurp a dominion over conficiences and over kings. It is true, Church-men have abufed their authority, but becaufe a thing has been abufed, is it therefore to be abolifhed ? Wife men will rather fay, that things ought to be reftored to their natural flate and to their lawful ufe. Elfe the whole authority of kings and magistrates might be pulled down, and we might argue thus. Monarchical government is liable to great inconveniences, kings have been tyrants and ulurpers, therefore there must be no more kings. Magistrates and judges have been unjust, covetous, cruel, and therefore no magistrates are to be endured. Would not this argument be extravagant and impious? And yet the like argument is used against discipline. In Church as well as in state government, there will be always fome inconveniency to be feared; this evil is almost unavoidable, there being no form of government which the malice of men may not abufe : but those abufes are without comparison, a less evil than anarchy, which is the moft dangerous ftate of all.

But let us clear the matter of fact, upon which the objection I am now confuting, is founded: it is fuppofed, that difcipline did introduce tyranny; but on the contrary, it was upon the ruins of difcipline, that tyranny was erected. This is known to all thofe, who have any knowledge of antiquity. When did Bifhops and Clergy-men ufurp that exceffive authority, over men's effates, perfons and confciences? It was when the obfervation of the ancient difcipline was flackned, when difcipline began to wear out of ufe, when finners, and efpecially great men, were exempted for money; when that which fhould have been tranfacted by the whole Church, was referred only to the Clergy, and when publick confeffion was changed into a private one. It was by thefe means, and not by the due exercife of difcipline, that Church-men made themfelves mafters of all.

What we ought to do then is this, firft, to enquire what is of divine inflitution in dicipline, and to refore that; in the next place to confider what the falvation of finners and the honour of the Church require, and what was good and edifying in the practice of the primitive Church, in order to conform to it; and laftly, to provide by good laws, that no man may exceed the bounds of his calling; particularly, that in reftoring to the Clergy their lawful authority, all juft meafures may be taken, to prevent their abufung it. If Chriftian princes are bound to preferve the u rights

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rights of the Church, they ought likewife to take care that nothing be done againft their own authority, and to punifh those who oppose it, or who difturb the civil fociety, whether ecclesiafticks or lay-men. This we are to treat of in another place.

Befides, when we fpeak for the re-eftabliffment of difcipline, we mean that paffors should be fubjected to it as well as their flocks, and that if there is an order in the Church to regulate the manners of Christians, there should be one alfo to regulate the Clergy, and to lay frict obligations on them to difcharge their duty in all its parts; and that according to the ancient practice, difcipline ought to be more fevere, agains the ecclession of the control of the want of difcipline, with relation to the Church in general, fo we are going to shew in the next, that this want is neither lefs obfervable, nor lefs fatal, in those things, which concern the governours of the Church.

I conclude with faying, that in order to remedy the corruption of manners among Chriftians, it is abfolutely neceffary to reftore the ufe of difcipline. This is what has been and is ftill heartily wifhed for, by many perfons of eminent learning and piety, and it is that which I defire all those who have a zeal for the glory of God, to take into their ferious confiderations.

### CAUSE III.

# The Defects of the Clergy.

I enquire, Whether corruption does not proceed from the paftors and governours of the Church? Paftors are appointed to oppofe the progrefs of vice, and to be publick fountains of infruction, edification and good example; fo that in truth their miniftry is of moft excellent ufe, when duly exercifed. But when vice reigns, when fcandals multiply; that general corruption is, if not a certain proof, at leaft a frong prefumption, that there is fome fault in paftors.

If we would be fatisfied about this matter, we need but reflect upon the nature of their office, and upon their way of difcharging it. This is what I defign to enquire into in this chapter: in order to which, I fhall confider, I. What functions and duties are annexed to the office of paffors. And, 2. What qualifications are requifite in them to difcharge it worthily.

I. There are two principal functions incumbent on paftors: Inftruction and the government of the Church.

I. It would be needlefs to prove that the office of paftors obliges them to infruct the people and to preach the Gofpel, for this is beyond all queffion. It will be fitter to oblerve, that the fruit of publick infructions deliver'd in fermons, depends upon two things; the matters treated of, and

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and the way of propoling them; to that the faults committed in fermons are either in the things themfelves, or in the manner of handling them.

The matters handled in fermons, are either of doctrine or morality. What has been faid in the first chapter of this treatife, may ferve to difcover to us the defects in preaching, with relation to these two heads. Those who preach the Gospel do not fufficiently inftruct the people, neither in the fundamental doctrines, nor in the duties of religion: and as catechifing is properly defigned for the explication of these truths and duties; I think ignorance and corruption chiefly proceed from this, That in most Churches, things are not well ordered, with reference to catechifing. They are neither frequent enough, nor fo proper for inftruction as they should be. Befides, catechifing is almost every where neglected, if not defpifed. The common notion is, that catechifins are only for children and for the meaner fort of people. The function of a catechift, which was anciently fo confiderable in the Church, is look'd upon now as a function of no great importance, and it is usually committed to perfons of the least knowledge and experience.

Thefe faults might eafily be remedied. One of the moft ufeful eftabliftments in Churches, would be to encreafe the number of catechifms, and to appoint them inflead of the fermon. But to render them more ufeful and more frequented, it would be neceffary to eftablift two forts of them. In those of the firft forts the elements of religion fhould be explained in an eafy and familiar manner, for the benefit of children and of the lefs-knowing part of Chriftians. The other fhould be for those who have attained a higher degree of knowledge, and in these, matters that had been proposed but generally before, fhould be more fully and exactly handled. But if it be thought that an eftabliftment of this nature, and that the multiplying of catechifms, might meet with difficulty and obfructions, it would be neceffary at leaft, for the inftruction of great numbers of perfons, who never affilt at those exercises, that ministers fhould be obliged to preach upon the fame fubjects, which are commonly treated in catechifms.

As for fermons, the church would reap more benefit from them, if preachers did always fhew true judgment in the choice of the matters they handle. We must not think that all forts of fubjects are instructive alike, and that in order to preach the Gospel, it is enough to speak of God in a fermon, and to take a text out of Scripture. Every fubject ought to be proposed and preffed according to its importance. To infift upon matters of leffer moment, whilft those which it most concerns Chriftians to be informed about are neglected, is to fwerve from the true intendment of preaching. But because all preachers have not the capacity to make this choice, it would be fitting, that part of the matter of their difcourfes fhould be appointed and prefcribed to them by a law. For when they are tyed to no rule, when they are at liberty to preach upon any fubject, which they think fit to chufe, it happens that many inftead of handling the most important things in religion, and of confulting the prefent ftate and neceffities of their flocks, apply themfelves to various fubjects which are of no great edification.

Preachers for the moft part, confult only their own inclination in the choice of their matter; and when they pitch upon a fubject, it is rather a because

becaufe it pleafes them, and becaufe they apprehend a facility in treating it, than out of regard to the neceffities of their congregations. Those who are fond of myfleries and allegories, apply their time and fludies to the expounding of the prophecies, and to the unfolding of the types of the old Teffament. Those who are given to disputing, fill their fermons with nothing elfe but controvers. And the fame may be faid of fpeculative divines, who are conversion in the fathers and history, they entertain the people with those things which are the ordinary subject of their meditations and fludies. I do not mean, that such things ought never to be spoken of; they may fometimes be touched upon, provided, this be done judiciously: but they have a forry notion of religion and preaching, who make those matters their main business, and fancy they have entirely fulfilled all the parts of the Gospel ministry, when they have preached upon types, or controvers.

What I have now faid, may be applied to the choice of texts. \* All Scripture indeed, as St. Paul fays, is profitable for instruction : that divine book contains nothing but what is useful; but yet the various usefulness of the feveral parts of Scripture, is to be diffinguished, and it must be owned that fome places are more useful and inftructive than others. Some difference is to be made between those books and chapters, which explain the doctrine of redemption, the defign of Chrift's coming into the world, or the duties of a Christian life; and those which ferve only to acquaint us with the order of times, and to confirm the certainty of hiftory. These last have their use, fince the truth of history is one of the main proofs of the truth of religion; but those places are more useful which treat of what we are to believe or to do in order to falvation. It is of another fort of importance, to explain the Gofpel, than to preach upon the book of Jo/hua or Ruth, or upon fome places of the prophets. I am not ignorant that fome have thought, that the Scripture is equally rich every where; that all doctrines may be drawn from all texts; that those chapters and verses which seem the most barren, and where there appears nothing extraordinary, contain mysteries and treasures which might exhaust even the meditations of angels; but this conceit is fo abfurd and repugnant to fense, that I do not think it worth my while to confute it.

Morals being fo effential a part of religion, fhould be very particularly infifted upon by preachers, and yet few do it; fo that morality, of all things is that which is the moff fuperficially handled in the greateft part of fermons. This fault in preachers proceeds from feveral caufes. Some have a prejudice againft morality, and think it ought not to be infifted on.

Others who are conceited with vain learning, imagine that to preach morals, argues but an ordinary meafure of parts, and little fkill in divinity, and that it becomes them better to foar after high fpeculations, and to dive into the myfteries of faith and of the moff fublime theology. This cuftom of infifting more upon doctrine than morals, proceeds alfo from another caufe, which is, that in this laft age divines were fain to be continually explaining and difputing; and fo the fame method has been followed ever fince.

I am apt to think befides, that many divines neglect morality, becaufe

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the treating of it is more difficult, than the explaining doctrinal matters.<sup>1</sup> Let thole fupercilious and fpeculative divines fay what they will, the right handling of morality is the hardeft thing in preaching. It is eafle to explain a text, or a point of doctrine; and a man muft be very meanly gifted, if with the help of a commentary or a common-place, he is not able to do the feat, and to furnifh out his hour. But to preach morals is quite another thing. I confels that there is a way of preaching morality which requires no great pains. If men content themfelves with delivering moral fayings concerning vice and virtue, this may done without much labour. But when a preacher purfues true morality, when he is to mafter the hearts of men, to reform the manners of a whole congregation, to encounter the inclinations of his hearers, and to make them renounce their paffions and prejudices; then it is that he meets with many and great difficulties; this is an inexhauftible foring of labour and meditation, and a tafk which few preachers care to take upon them.

In religion, doctrine fhould never be feparated from morality, nor one of thefe preferred before the other. But yet it is neceffary to infift more upon morality than upon doctrine, not only becaufe the defign of our whole religion is to make us good men, but alfo becaufe morality cannot effectually be taught without being much dwelt upon. It is only by enlarging on matters, and entering into many particulars, that the two ends of morality are to be attained, which are influcting men in their duty, and perfuading them to the practice of it.

Morality is of a vaft extent, as may appear by confidering how many duties are comprifed under thefe three heads of Chriftian morals, piety, juffice and temperance. Befides thefe duties which are common to all men, there are fome particular ones relating to the different conditions, callings, ages, and ftates which men are in. And how many things are there to be confidered upon all thefe heads? This is not all, for thefe duties vary infinitely, by reafon of the diverfity of circumftances. There are almoft as many different difpositions as there are perfons among a great multitude of men who are addicated to the fame vice; there are hurdly two who are vicious in the fame degree and manner. It is therefore requifite that preachers fhould defcend into particulars, and that they fhould fo characterize duties, virtues and vices, that every one may know himfelf in the defcription.

And yet this relates only to bear inftruction. Now if in the next place we intend to engage men to the practice of these duties, there new difficulties will arile, and no good fuccels can be expected but from affiduous care and conftant labour. There are in man's heart, fo many different dispositions and motions, fo many illusions and prejudices, fo many windings and artifices, that a very particular application is required for us to infinuate our felves into it. When the truths and doctrines of religion are to be taught, things need not be fo minutely handled, and there is no occasion to use fuch mighty endeavours; nay, the being very particular may be a fault. He that would inftruct, fo he is clear, should rather be fhort than prolix. The hearers do eafly apprehend the truths which are proposed to them, and the most corrupt men are able to difcern truth from error; a libertine will find who is in the right or in the wrong, in a difpute. But it is not fo eafie a thing to touch the heart, or

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PART II.

to conquer inveterate habits. What Tully fays in his dialogue of the orator, deferves to be inferted here, it is this, \* Palfons are not to be excited in a moment, as a proof does prefently perfuvade fo foon as it is propoled. A proof is confirmed by reafons, and reafons clearly fet out, make an imprejfion immediately; but when we intend to raife the palfons, the fuccefs does not fo much depend upon the conviction, as upon the perturbation of the mind; Oratory cannot have its effects then, without prolixity, variety, copioufnefs and vehemence of difcourfe. Those therefore who fpeak briefly and calmly, are fit to inftruct, but not to move.

From thefe reflections it appears, that the method of thofe preachers, who are large upon the explication of doctrines, and fuccinct upon morals is, directly contrary to the true way of preaching, and that thofe do very ill underfland what morality is, who either defpife it, or look upon it, as the eafieft thing in preaching.

We may likewife apprehend from what has been faid, what are the most ordinary faults of preachers when they treat of morals. I fhall obferve three of them. Their morality is too general, it is defective, and it is fometimes falle.

1. Many preachers are too general in handling morality. This is the ad which is the molt flightly touched upon. They fpend the greater head which is the most flightly touched upon. part of their fermons in explaining the fense of a text, they fift all the words, and examine all the circumftances of it with the utmost nicety. In a word, they drain the fubject. But when they come to the application, they content themfelves with two or three general uses; they addrefs to their auditory fome loofe exhortations to a good life; even when they are to fpeak upon a moral fubject, they confine themfelves for the most part to general confiderations : nothing is particularized, or treated with the neceffary exactness. Now generalities are of no great use in matters of morality. To fay in general terms, that men ought to be good, and to declaim against fenfuality, or covetoufnefs, is that which will convince no man. It is not bawling or fending finners to hell, that is likely to win upon them. It fhould be diffinctly fhewn, what it is to be a good man; virtues and vices fhould be characterized, and their various kinds and degrees observed ; particular rules ought to be giver to the hearers, they ought to be furnished with necessary motives and directions; we are to confute their miftakes, and to obviate their objections and excuses. Till we come to this, preaching will be attended with little success.

2. The moral difcourfes of preachers are often defelive; for befides that they handle morallity in a fuperficial manner, there are fome effential articles which they feldom or never fpeak of, among which we may reckon

Cietro de orat. lib. 2. non enim ficut argumentum, fimul atque pofitum eft, arripitur, alteromque & tertium poficitur; ita mifericordiam aut invidiam, aut iracundiam fimulatque intuleris, poffis conmovere. Argumentum, enim ipfa ratione confirmat, quæ fimul atque eniffa cft adhærefcit. Illud autem genus orationis, non cognitionem judicis, fed perturbationem requirit, quam confequi nifi multa, & varia, & copiofa, & fimili contentione orationis nemo poteft. Quare qui aut breviter, aut fummiffe dicunt, docere judicem poffunt, commovere non poffant. reckon reflitution. The moralities of preachers turn almost together upon four or five heads, tack only fome of the großer fins, fuch as blafphemies, uncleannels, and fuch other vices. But this is to confine themfelves, to the first elements of piety and morality. True morality goes a great deal further. Piety does not only banish the more heinous fins; it does befides fill the heart with a fincere love of virtue; it fostens and rectifies the inclinations, it produces in a man, gentlenels, humility, patience, refignation to the will of God, divine love, tranquility under all events, charity towards other men, and a zeal for juffice and goodnels. This is the main of piety, this is what fhould be inceflantly laid before Christians, to make them apprehend the extent and perfection of the morals of the gospel.

3. The moral difcourses of preachers are falle. 1. When they are too remifs; 2. When they are too fevere, and 3. When they are contradictory. Their morality is too remifs, when it does not propofe all the duties of holinefs in their full latitude, when it flatters finners, or does not fufficiently awaken their confciences. It is over-fevere, when it raifes groundless fcruples in men's minds; when it represents as a fin, that which is not really fo; or when it makes a neceffary duty of any thing, which may be omitted without danger. Preachers likewife over-do things, in the pictures they draw for virtues and vices. If they are to speak of covetousness or forbidden pleasure, they strive to make of these the most hideous pictures they can; they paint out a covetous or a voluptuous man as a monfter, they affect the most lively descriptions and figures, and their fermons are loaded with every thing that their collections afford upon the fubject. But all this is only noife, and fo much breath fpent in vain. Such morality does not hinder the voluptuous or covetous man, from purfuing his ordinary courfe, it is rather apt to harden him in it; becaule as he does not lee himfelf in the difinal picture which is made of these vices, so he thinks himself free from them, or at least not very guilty of them. Lastly, preachers do fometimes deliver contradictory morals. Having not fufficiently meditated upon the principles of religion and morality, they run themfelves into contradictions; they fay one thing in one place, and the contrary in another; they lay down principles which deftroy the confequences they will draw from them, or they draw confequences which over-turn the principles they have laid down.

II. The faults I have hitherto obferved, relate to the matter of preaching; those which are committed in the manner are not indeed to effential, but yet they are important enough to deferve fome fome notice here.

It is to no purpose to preach pure doctrine and good morality, if this is not done in a proper way to instruct and to perfuade. The most important truths lose their force in the mouth of a man, who either cannot speak of them in a fuitable manner, or expresses them obscurely. And so likewise the way of exhorting and censuring, is often the reason why exhortations and censures prove ineffectual. Either they are not accurate or convincing enough, or they are cold and languid, or they are not feasoned with prudence and mildness; but are a kind of fire, which has more of anger and indiferetion, than of true zeal in it, and which offends more, than it affects or perfuades the hearers.

VOL. VI.

Divers

## Caufes of the prefent

Divers confiderations might be here infifted upon concerning the way of preaching; but I think what is most material to be faid on this fubject, may be reduced to this one thing; that the manner of preaching is not fimple and natural enough. The way of preaching fhould correspond with the defign of religion and fermons, which is to inform the understanding, and to move the heart. This end is attained by those, who think and fpeak clearly and naturally, when every thing, in reafoning, method, stile, and exterior, is regulated by nature and true fense. But it has been observed long ago, that preachers are particularly apt to fail in this respect. False and confused ideas, un-accurate reasonings, ftrained or impertinent reflections, forced and unnatural expreffions, are almost become the property of that order of men. One would think that most preachers take pains not to follow nature; as if a man was no fooner in the pulpit, but he must speak no longer like the rest of mankind, as if the part of a preacher was fomething like that of a prophet among the Jews. Nay this is paffed into a proverb; fo that odd ways and injudicious reflections, are called ways and reflections of preachers.

I. If nature was confulted, and if men did confider the end of preaching, they would fee in the firft place, that the method which is followed by many, in the explaining of Scripture and the composing of fermons, had need be reformed in fome refpects, and that it does not agree to well as it fhould, with the fimplicity of the Gofpel. For infrance, why fhould time be wafted in exordiums and preliminaries? Why fhould a preacher dwell upon the explaining of words and phrafes which every body underftands, or upon prefing the leaft circumftances of a text? What fignify those needlefs digreffions, those objections which no body thinks of, those citations and fories, which in fome countries fill up fermons, and fo many other fmall niceties, which clog thefe kind of difcourfes. All this might be let alone, without prejudice to publick edification.

2. It is for want of confulting nature, that preachers are obfcure. Sometimes the obfcurity of their fermons arifes from the things they ipeak of, when they are obfcure in themfelves. But at other times this obfcurity proceeds, from their not having diffinct ideas of the fubjects they treat. Their file and language do alfo contribute much to make them dark. Some use fcholaftical words and terms of art, which are arabick to the people; others delight in figurative and improper expreffions, which prefent falle ideas to the mind. Now they might avoid all these faults, if they did not forfake nature and fimplicity. But fome preachers affect the faying new and fingular things, and they would be forry if they had made use of fimple and common ideas, reasonings and expressions, which yet are the cleareft and the best.

3. Falfe eloquence proceeds from the fame fource. Preachers commonly aim at eloquence; and it is to compafs this end, that they take fuch pains in the composing and delivery of their fermons, and that they affect a ftyle, a pronunciation and gestures, which become a ftage-player or a prophane orator, much better than a minister of Jesus Christ. I might remark here, that this affectation of eloquence, is not very fuitable to the fpirit of piety, which should animate a Clergy-man. But not to moralize upon this, I shall observe that these preachers miss their mark, by making formuch work, and by using fuch mighty endeavours

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to hit it. True eloquence, the force of a difcourfe, an elevated and fublime style, confists in following nature. Nothing admits of greater vehemence and loftiness than the fubjects which religion affords. Let a preacher be well acquainted with thefe, let him go about them in an eafy and natural way, but especially let him feel and be thoroughly affected with them; and he needs not trouble himfelf about any other helps; he will defpife all the falfe fparkling, and the vain ornaments of infipid and boyifh eloquence, and he will not be capable of fpeaking like a grammar fcholar, or a declaimer. All that which cofts preachers fo much labour, flights of wit, refined thoughts, ingenious defcriptions, polite language, all that I fay, is very mean. By fuch things they may raife at most a vain admiration, but they will never instruct nor convert a finner. One dram of good fense is worth more than all that.

4. Some preachers run into another extreme, their way of preaching is neglected and course; they think to justify themselves, by faying, that they are fimple and popular, that they fpeak naturally and without art. But they fwerve as much from nature as the others, and as it is a fault to be affected, it is another to be flat, homely and barbarous : it is as much against nature, to use ridiculous and offensive gestures, tones and ways, or to ftand without motion or action in the pulpit, as it is to play the declaimer there.

I might add other confiderations about the manner in which the Gofpel ought to be preached, but I fhould engage too far in this fubject. We may judge now whether ignorance and corruption, do not proceed from the defects of those who preach the Gospel. The people have scarce any notion of religion, but what they gather from fermons. If fermons then are not instructive and edifying, either because all the truths and duties of Chriftianity are not propofed in them, or becaufe they are ill propoled, the people must of necessity be very much in the dark.

I shall fay one word more concerning the instruction which pastors owe their flocks. Publick inftruction, how useful foever they may be, The edification of the Church requires, that upon are not fufficient. certain occasions, pastors should likewife instruct in private. This neceffity of private inftructions, may be proved by the following argu-I. If there be none but publick inftructions, and exhortations, ments. what infruction can a great many perfons receive, who either do not frequent, or do not hearken to fermons? What will become of those who hear, but do not understand what they hear, or who understand it, but forget it prefently, and fo do not practife it? 2. All things cannot be faid in fermons, how particular foever they may be; yet still many things temain untouched. Nay, there are matters which a preacher cannot bring into the pulpit. Can he enumerate all the cafes in which injuffice may be committed, or reftitution is to be made? Can he fpecify those infinite frauds which are practifed in mens feveral callings and trades? can all cafes of confcience, about which the hearers want inftruction, be decided in a fermon? Dare we infift in the pulpit upon the head of impurity? And may not this be one of the reafons why that fin is fo common? If Christians then have no opportunity to be instructed in private about these articles, they will be ignorant with relation to them as long as they 3. In order to good inftruction it is necellary, that the teacher and live. thofe

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thofe who are taught, fhould communicate their thoughts to one another. For the hearers may have their doubts; they may fometimes be at a fland, by reafon of fomething which they do not know, or of fome difficulty which flarts up in their minds. Some have been hearing fermons for thefe twenty or thirty years, who yet entertain feruples and doubts concerning the fundamentals of religion. If fuch perfons receive no other information, they will not be moved by any thing, that is faid in publick, but they will retain their feruples to their dying day.

All this fhews that private inftruction is a part of the paftoral care: and the practice of it would certainly be very ulcful, not only for the edification of the people, but alfo to keep the Clergy from growing amifs, and to make them more diligent in the difcharge of their office. For when they have nothing to do but to preach fermons, it is much to be feared; confidering mens propenfion to lazinefs, that they will become negligent. It is therefore an unhappinefs, that private inftructions fhould be almoft out of ufe, and that there fhould be fo little communication about religious matters, between the people and their minifters. We have no inftruction remaining, but what is delivered from the pulpit; and that would not be fufficient, even tho' fermons were fuch as they ought to be. But when private inftructions are wanting, and when fermons are defective befides, it is impoffible but that the great of Chriftians, being deftitute of neceflary informations and aids, mult live in corruption.

II. The fecond function of paftors, which fhould perhaps be named in the first place, is the conduct and government of the Church. upon this I observe. First, That those do not understand the nature of the pastoral office, who confine it to preaching. There was a time when preaching was quite laid afide, and when Church-men did only perform divine fervice. But now a-days in many Churches, the whole ministry is placed in the bufinefs of fermons, and the ecclefiafticks are looked upon, not as paftors, but preachers; as men whole office it is upon certain days and hours, to fpeak in the Church. Preaching is without difpute, a part of the office of pastors. But it is a great mistake to think, that God has appointed them only to preach; for they are entrusted befides with the government of the Church, and this part of their employment is at leaft, as effential as preaching. It is remarkable, that the fcripture fpeaks of paftors in divers places, and that the titles it gives them, and the functions It afcribes to them, relate chiefly to the government of the Church. This is implyed in the name of bifhops, priefts or elders, guides and paffors. St. Paul has writ concerning the duties of the ministry, if we examine what he fays of the functions of that charge, and of the qualifications of those who are to be admitted into it; we shall find that he is much larger upon the government of the Church, than upon preaching. To this purpose, the epifiles to Timothy and Titus may be confulted.

But further, all Church-men are not called to preaching. The apoftles diffinguish their functions; they tell us, \* That all are not doctors, that all do not interpret, that all do not adminisser the word, that all do not teach and exhort; that fome are appointed to instruct, to exhort, and to expound the for instruct, others

\* See 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5, 6, 28, 29, 30. Acts vi. 2, &c. Rom. xii. 6, 7, 8. 1 Tim. v. 17. others to govern, and others to do works of charity. Tho' we fhould fuppofe that there is nothing in this, which relates to the extraordinary gifts conferred upon the first ministers of the Gospel, and to the order which was then observed; yet it is plain that these places are to be understood, of the gifts and functions of ordinary pastors.

This is confirmed by the practice of the primitive Church. The principal and the most general function of pastors then, was the inspection and governing of the Church. Preaching was not neglected, but all Church-men were not preachers, this province was committed to those who were fit for it. Would to God this diffinction was ftill observed! The Church would be better governed, and the Gofpel better preached than it is. There are talents requifite to preach the Gofpel, which every body has not, and others are neceffary for the conduct of the Church; and all these gifts feldom meet in one person. If then no regard is had to different gifts and functions if without diftinction every thing is committed to one perfon, it is visible that the Church will be ill edified. Befides that I have fhewed in the first chapter of this fecond part, that it is a dangerous notion, which reftrains the ministry to preaching. But to remove this inconveniency it would be neceffary, that a competent number of ecclefiafticks fhould be had in every Church.

1. To express my thoughts more particularly concerning the office of paftors, with relation to the government of the Church; I observe, first, That discipline is worn out of use, as I have shewn at large in a chapter upon that fubject. It is true, that this defect is not wholly to be imputed to paftors. If they do not govern the Church by a good difcipline, it is because they have been deprived of their authority. Many of them are fenfible of this diforder and lament it: but what can they do when they exercife their ministry in places where their hands are tyed up, where they dare not refuse the facrament to an adulterer, and where they fhould bring themfelves into great troubles, and perhaps be depofed, if they took upon them, to observe the apostolical discipline? They are forced then to confine themselves to preaching, which when it is not backed with discipline, can never have that effect which it would produce in conjunction with it. There was nothing left to paftors but what could not be taken from them without abolifhing the whole ministry: all that remains is only preaching and administring the facraments. And yet for all that, a great part of the Clergy, may justly be charged with that fault we complain of, and with that corruption of the people which is a confequence of it: (fince there are those among them, who oppose the reftoration of discipline, and look upon it as an indifferent order; and others who are placed in Churches, where fome form of difcipline is left, render the exercise of it ineffectual, either through imprudence and exceffive feverity, or through a fhameful remifnefs, and a cowardly indulgence.

2. Befides the publick, there is a private difcipline, which confift in infpecting the lives of private perfons, in vifiting families, in exhortations, warnings, reconciliations, and in all those other cares, which a paftor ought to take of those over whom he is conflituted. For neither general exhortations, nor publick difcipline can answer all the occasions of the Church There are certain diforders, which paftors neither can, nor ought to redrefs openly, and which yet ought to be remedied by them. In fuch cafes

cafes private admonitions are to be ufed. The concern of mens falvation requires this, and it becomes the paftoral carefulnefs, to feek the ftraying fheep, and not to let the wicked perifh for want of warning. But thefe are cares to which fome paftors do not fo much as think themfelves obliged; they content themfelves with admonifhing finners from the pulpit. There is very little intercourfe between paftors and those who are committed to their charge. Private performs live without being accountable for their conduct to any body; and except they commit the greateft enormities, they fancy no man has a right to enquire into their actions. Nothing reaches them but fermons, and these they mind as much, and as little as they pleafe; this muft needs produce licentiousfiels.

The vifiting of fick and dying perfons, is one of the most important functions of the office of paftors; but when it is not performed with exactness and zeal, it contributes as much as can be imagined to the keeping up of fecurity. Every one must needs fee, of what confequence this part of the ministry is, if he confiders that it is at the end of life that we are to be judged, and that our eternal state depends upon the condition we dye in: and if we reflect at the fame time upon what the foripture tells us, \* that we fhall receive in the world to come, according to the good or evil we have done in this; we will eafily apprehend, what ministers ought to do, when they vifit fick and dying perfons. Their chief bufinefs thould be, to discover what state those perfons are in, that they may fuit their exhortations to it. Then is it that they ought to fpeak to the confcience of finners, and to perfuade them by all poffible means, to examine their lives, and the difpolition they are in, in reference to their falvation. And when a minister meets, as it happens too frequently, with fick perfons, who are engaged and hardned in vitious habits, or whofe repentance may juftly be queftioned; it is then that he had need use all his skill and prudence, all his zeal and endeavours, to fave fouls which are in fo great danger. Upon fuch occasions both the minister and the fick person, have need of time, leifure and freedom, and a hafty difcourfe of prayer fignifies. nothing.

And now we may judge whether a man discharges the office of a pattor, who only in general exhorts dying perfons to acknowledge themfelves miferable finners, and backs those exhortations with affurances of the divine mercy through Jefus Chrift, or who only reads fome forms of exhortations and prayers, as the cuftom is in fome places. This method is fitter to lay afleep than to awaken a guilty confcience; and this way of exercifing the ministry, overturns the doctrine of a future judgment, and most of the principles of religion. A minister speaks to a fick person of the pardon of his fins, he exhorts him to leave the world with joy, he difcourfes to him of the happiness of another life, and fills him with the most comfortable hopes; and perhaps this fick person is a man loaded with guilt, a wretch who has lived like an Atheift, who has committed divers fins for which he has made no fatisfaction, who has not practifed reflitution, who never knew his religion, and who is actually impenitent. Such a man ought to tremble, and yet fuch confolations from the mouth of his paftor, make him think that he dies in a flate of grace.

But if this way of vifiting and comforting the fick, betrays them into

\* 2 Cor. v. 10;

fecurity, it has the fame effect upon the ftanders by, who when they hear the confolations which are administered to perfons, whom every body knows not to have led very Christian lives; make a tacit inference, that the fame things will be faid to them, and that their death will be happy, whatfoever their paft life may have been.

Befides the want of ability and zeal, there are two things which hinder paftors from difcharging towards dying people, the important duties to which their office obliges them : The one is, that commonly paftors vifit the fick only in cafes of extremity; and the other is, that they have too little communication with their flocks, and no fufficient knowledge of the lives and conduct of private perfons; fo that being ignorant of the flate and occafions of the fick, they cannot at the approach of death, administer to them wholefom counfels and exhortations.

These I think are the most effential defects of pastors, both in the inftruction, and in the government of the Church.

Having thus far treated of the duties of the paftoral charge; I come now to confider those qualifications, with which pastors ought to be endued. And thefe are of two forts: first, The endowments of the mind, by which I mean those abilities and talents, which are necessary for the instruction and conduct of the Church; and fecondly, the qualifications of the heart, by which I mean probity and integrity of life.

1. No man questions but that abilities and talents are requisite in those who exercise the office of ministers in the Church. First, Some are neceffary for preaching the Gofpel, and for the right expounding of fcripture. Preaching requires a greater extent of knowledge, than is commonly imagined. To preach well, a man fhould be well skilled in languages, hiftory, divinity and morality. He fhould be accquainted with man's heart, he should be of a fagacious and difcerning spirit, and above all things he fhould have a true and exact judgment; to fay nothing of fome other qualifications, which are neceffary to every man who speaks in publick.

Neither are these endowments sufficient; particular talents are requisite for the conduct of the Church. To guide a flock and to be accountable for the falvation of a great number of fouls, is no fmall charge, nor an employment which every body is fit for. A man to whom the government of a Church is committed, in whole hands the exercise of difcipline is lodged, whole duty it is both to exhort and reprove both in publick and in private, and who ought to fupply all the occafions of a flock, and to be provided for all emergencies; fuch a man has need of a great deal of knowledge, zeal and firmnefs, as well as of much wildom and prudence, moderation and charity. That all these qualifications are requisite in a pastor, is evident from the nature of his office; and St. Paul teaches it, when he appoints that none shall be admitted to this employment, but those in whom they are to be found.

What effect then can the ministry have, when it is exercised by men who want these qualifications, or perhaps have the quite contrary; who are ignorant, who know nothing in matters of difcipline and morality, who can give no account of a great many things contained in Scripture, and whole whole learning is confined to a Commentary; who can neither reason true, nor speak clearly; who are either indifereet, negligent or

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or remifs in the exercise of their office ? But I do not wonder that these qualifications are wanting in most Clergy-men. Vast numbers who were not cut out for this employment, afpire to it. And besides these, abilities are not to be acquired without labour and application. Now many Church-men are fhamefully idle ; they look upon their profession as a mean to live eafy, fo that declining the duties of their place, they content themfelves with the incomes of it. Those who are to preach are more employed; but their fermons are almost their whole business : their work confifts for the most part in copying fome Commentaries, and as foon as they have acquired a little habit and facility of fpeaking in publick, almost all of them give over study and labour. We may almost make the fame judgment of those ecclesiasticks, who they they ftudy hard, yet do not direct their studies to the edification of the Church. The learning and the fludies of divines, I fpeak of those chiefly who have cure of fouls, is often vain, and of no ufe for the edifying of their flocks. They apply themfelves to things fuitable to their inclinations, and their fludies are but their amusement, or their diversion. Now he who neglects the duties of his calling, and purfues other employments, differs very little from him who does nothing at all.

II. Probity is, not lefs neceffary to paftors, than knowledge and ability; and this probity ought to have three degrees.

1. The first is, That pastors give no ill example, and that their life be blamelefs. This is the first qualification which St. Paul requires in those who aspire to this holy office. \* Let a Bishop, fays he, be blamelefs; that is, his manners ought to be fuch that he may not justly be charged with any vice, or give any fcandal. Then the Apostle specifies the faults from which a pastor ought to be free; not given to wine, no firster, not greedy of fithy lucre, but patient; not a brawler, not covetous, one that ruleth well his own house, baving his children in fubjection with all gravity, and who is not lifted up with pride and self-conceit.

Every body knows how much might be faid, if the conduct of Clergy-men was to be examined upon all these heads. Are not many of them fcandalous by the irregularity of their manners? How grofs and shameful soever the fin of drunkenness may be, yet do they never commit it, and is not this vice very common among them in fome Countries ? Are not fome of them furious and paffionate in their actions and words? Do we never observe in them a fordid covetousness, and an exceffive fludy of felf-intcreft? Are their families always well ordered ? Are not politivenels and pride very remarkable in fome perfons of that profession? Is there not often just cause to complain, that they are implacable in their hatred, that they have little charity; and that there is lefs prepoffeffion, and more of gentlenefs and true zeal to be found among lay-men, than among divines? I fay nothing of fome other faults which are not lefs fcandalous in Church-men; as when they are given to fwearing, when they are diffolute and undecently free in their words, when they are wedded to divertifements and pleafures, worldlyminded, lazy, crafty, unjust and cenforious.

When fuch vices appear in the lives of Clergy-men it is the greateft of fcandals; from that minute the Gofpel becomes of no effect in their

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\* I Timgili. Tit. i.

## CAUSE III.

mouths, the laws of God are trampled upon, the moft facred things are no longer respected, divine worship and the facraments are profaned, the ministry grows vile, religion in general falls under contempt, and the people being no longer curb'd by the reverence due to it, give up themfelves to an entire licentioufnefs. I confess that Chriftians ought to follow the doctrine rather than the example of their guides, and that it is poffible to profit by the inftructions of a man, who does not practife what he teaches. But every body has not difcretion and firmnefs enough, to feparate thus the doctrine from the example, and not to be fhaken by the fcandal occafioned by Church-men, when their life and their preaching contradict each other. Men are very much taken with outfides, and govern themfelves more by imitation than reafon. A great many perfons want nothing but pretexts and excufes, to juffifie them in ill things: and there is no pretence more fpecious, than that which the ill lives of the minifters of religion affords. When the people fee men who are inceffantly speaking of God and recommending piety, and yet do not practife themfelves what they preach, they reject all that comes from them, they fancy that the Gospel is preached only for form's-fake, and that the maxims of religion may be fafely violated.

2. Bat St. Paul requires fomewhat more in paftors, than not to be fcandalous; this is but the first and the lowest degree of probity. He would have them befides to be adorned with all manner of virtues. \* Tobe vigilant, prudent, grave, modest and given to hospitality, gentle, charitable, lovers of good men, wife, just, holy and chaste, shewing themselves in all things patterns of good works, of purity, gravity, and integrity. And indeed paftors are not only appointed to inftruct and govern their flocks, but they are obliged befides to fet them a good example, and to be their patterns; and they do not edifie lefs by their good examples, than by their exhortations. The purity of their manners, and the regularity of their conduct, give a great weight, to all the functions of their ministry, these make their perfons venerable, and engage a great many to imitate them. Now whether these qualifications are to be found in pastors, every body may judge. I except those who ought to be excepted, but for the generality, Wherein do Church-men differ from other men? Do they diffinguish themselves by a regular and exemplary life ? Their exterior indeed is fomething different, they live more retired, they preferve a little decorum, tho' even this is not done by all; but as for the reft, are they not as much addicted to the world, and taken up with earthly things, have they not as many humane and fecular views, are they not as much wedded to intereft and other paffions as the bulk of Chriftians are ?

3. This fecond degree of probity is not fufficient. The life of an hypocrite may be blamelefs and even edifying; by composing his exterior he may pafs for a faint. There is therefore a third degree, and that is the rectitude of the heart, a good confeience, a great measure of true piety, devotion, humility and zeal. Paftors ought to be in private, inwardly and in the fight of God, what they appear to other men. And certainly none can have greater inducements to piety, than a man whofe ardinary bufinefs it is to meditate upon religion, to fpeak of it to others,

\* Tim. iii, Gc. Tit. i. and ii.

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to reprove hypocrific and vice; to perform divine fervice, to administer the facraments, to vifit afflicted and dying people; and to give an account to God of a great number of fouls. I do not know whether there is a higher degree of impiety and hypocrifie, than when a man who is in these circumfances is not a good man. Such a man makes but fport with the most facred things in religion, he does properly play the part of a Comedian, and of an hypocrite all his life. No profession damns more certainly, than that of a Church-man, when it is thus exercifed.

It may perhaps be faid, that all thefe moralities are nothing to my purpofe; that this third degree of probity, is neceffary only for the falvation of paftors in particular, and that as the people are unacquainted with the inward difpolitions of their teachers, and are not able to diffinguifh true from counterfeit piety, it is enough for their edification, that the exterior fhould be well regulated. But those who think this, are very much miltaken. This want of piety and devotion is capital, and here we find the main Caufe of the remifness of paftors, and of the Corruption of the people. From whence do those faults proceed which we have observed in Clergy-men? How comes it to pafs that fome of them are ignorant and lazy, that others apply themselves to unprofitable fubjects and fludies, that others preach only out of vanity, and that their difcourses are languid and jejune ? All this, is because their hearts are void of devotion and piety.

There are fome preaching matters, and those too the most edifying, which can never be well managed, but by a man animated with fincere piety. Those preachers who describe the beauty of virtue, or the happy ftate of a good confcience, the hopes of another life, or the neceffity of working out one's falvation, and who are not affected and pierced thorough with what they fay, do but ftammer about these things, and they will hardly excite those motions in other men's hearts, which they never felt in their own. We cannot preach with fuccefs without knowing the heart of man, and this knowledge ought to be the chief fludy of those who preach the Gospel. But the furest and most compendious way to know man's heart aright, is to confult our own, to reflect upon our felves, and to have a fpotlefs confcience : without this a man is still a novice and a bungler in preaching. And fo in the exercise of discipline ; in private exhortations, in the vifiting of the fick, in prayers, and in all other pastoral functions, there is still fomething defective, when a man does not perform them, out of a principle of charity, but only to difcharge the outward obligations which his office lays upon him.

Pious and good Church-men, who are not on the other hand defitute of gifts, fulfill much better the duties of their miniftry. A paffor who loves his profeffion, who lays the functions of it to heart, who is thoroughly convinced of the truths of religion, and who practifes the rules of it; who in private humbles himfelf before God, and ardently implores his bleffing; who is ever intent upon feeking means to edify the Church; who turns all his meditation that way; who thinks day and night of the neceffities of his flock; muft needs be fuccefsful, he has in himfelf the principle of all benedictions and happy fuccefs. When he is fpeaking or exhorting, it is his heart that fpeaks, and the language of the

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the heart, has a kind of eloquence and perfwafiveners in it, which is foon difcerned by the hearers, and which always raifes a pious and a zealous preacher, above a mercenary and hypocritical one. The want of piety in paftors, is therefore the principal fource of the faults they commit, and of the mischiefs which proceed from their remisnes.

Whofoever will ferioufly and without prejudice confider all that I have now faid, must own, that the Cause of the Corruption of Christians is chiefly to be found in the Clergy. I do not mean to fpeak here of all Church-men indifferently. We must do right to fome, who distinguish themfelves by their talents, their zeal and the holinefs of their lives. But the number of these is not confiderable enough to ftop the course of those diforders which are occasioned in the Church by the vast multitudes of remifs and corrupt paftors. These pull down, what the others endeavour to build up. Some perhaps, will afk, Whence do all thefe faults of the Clergy proceed? In answer to this question, I have three things to fay.

I. It ought not to be thought ftrange, that paftors fhould not fulfill all the obligations of their office. As things are conftituted almost every where with relation to difcipline, to the infpection and authority over private perfons, to the vifiting of the fick, and to fome other parts of their employment, they cannot if they would discharge their duties. Neither the magiftrates nor the people would fuffer it. On the other hand, the defects of pastors, are the confequences of the contempt and abafement which their office is brought under, as well as of the poverty they live in. This contempt and poverty difcourage a great many, who might otherwife confiderably edify the Church; and they are the caufe why multitudes, who have neither education, nor talents, nor effates, dedicate themfelves to the ministry of the Gospel. It is commonly imagined, that all forts of perfons are good enough for the Church; and whereas the Jews did offer their most excellent things to God, among Chriftians, what is leaft valued is confecrated to God and the Church. Some are devoted to the holieft and the most exalted of all professions, who would not be thought capable of an employment of any confideration in the Common-wealth. If then we intend to remedy the faults of the Clergy, we fhould begin with redreffing what is defective in the flate of the Church and religion in general.

2. Many ecclefiafticks fail in the duties of their calling, becaufe they do not know what it obliges them to; and this they do not know, becaufe it was never taught them. There are indeed fchools, academies and univerfities, which are defigned to inftruct those young men, who afpire to this profession; but I cannot tell whether schools and academies, as they are ordered almost every where, do not do more hurt than good. For first, as to manners, young people live there licentiously, and are left to their own conduct. The care of masters and professors, does not extend to the regulating of the manners of their disciples. And this diforder is fo great, that in feveral universities of Europe, the scholars and ftudents make publick profession of diffoluteness. They not only live there irregularly, but they have priviledges, which gives them a right to commit with impunity, all manner of infolencies, brutalities and fcandals, and which exempt them from the magistrates jurifdiction. It is

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is a fhame to Chriftianity, that princes and Church-men fhould not have yet abolifhed those customs and establishments, which smell for rank of the ignorance and barbarism of the Heathens. And yet these universities are the nurferies out of which passes, doctors and protessors are taken. Those scholars who neither have birth, nor fense of virtue or honour, and who have spent their youth in licentious and debauchery, spread themselves into all Churches, and become the depositaries, and in form measure the arbitrators of religion.

As to the fludies which are purfued at univerfities, I obferve in them thefe two faults. The first relates to the method of teaching. Divinity is treated there and the holy Scripture explained in a fcholastical and altogether speculative manner. Common places are read, which are full of fchool-terms, and of questions not very material. There young men learn to dispute upon every thing, and to refolve all religion into controversites. Now this method ruins them, it gives them intricate and false notions of divinity, and it begets in them dispositions directly opposite to those which are neceflary to find out truth.

The other fault is more effential: little or no care is taken in academies, to teach those who dedicate themfelves to the fervice of the Church, feveral things, the knowledge of which would be very neceffary to them. The fludy of hiftory and of Church antiquity, is neglected there.

Hence it is that most divines, may be compared with people, who having never travelled, know no other cuftoms or ways of living but those which obtain in their countries. As foon as you take these divines out of their common-places, they are in a maze, and every thing feems new and fingular to them. Morality is not taught in divinity-fchools, but in a fuperficial and fcholaftick manner; and in many academies it is not taught at all. They feldom speak there of discipline, they give few or no inftructions concerning the manner of exercifing the paftoral care, or of governing the Church. So that the greater part of those who are admitted into this office, enter into it without knowing wherein it confifts; all the notion they have of it, is, that it is a profession, which obliges them to preach, and to explain texts. It were therefore to be wifhed, that for the glory of God, and the good of the Church, fchools and universities should be reformed, and that the manners and studies of young people, fhould be better regulated in those places. This reformation would not be impoffible, if divines and profeffors would ufe their endeavours about it. But those kind of establishments are not easily altered. The ordinary method is continued, and things are done as they were of old, becaufe men are willing to keep their places, and the ftipends which are annexed to them.

3. The third and principal remedy would be to use greater caution, than is commonly done, when men are to be admitted into ecclefaftical offices. The first qualification to which, according to St. Paul, regard is to be had, is probity and integrity of life. The perfons therefore who offer themfelves, should in the first place be examined in relation to manners, and to all those moral dispositions, which St. Paul requires in them, and those should be excluded in whom they are not found. But this article is commonly flubbered over, and a young man must have been been very diffolute, if he is refufed upon the account of immorality. So that the moft facred of all characters, is conferred upon many perfons, who according to the divine laws, ought to be rejected.

The other part of the examination of Candidates, relates to their ability and talents. Now in order to judge of their capacity, it is not enough to enquire whether they know their common-place-book, or whether they can make a fermon; it would be neceffary befides to examine them about the fundamentals of religion, about hiftory, difcipline, the holy Scripture and morality. All thefe important matters, the knowledge of which is of daily use with reference to practice, and in the excife of the facred miniftry. But they are not infifted upon. The examination turns upon fome trials about preaching, and upon fome heads of divinity which are fcholaftically handled, by arguments and diffinctions: after which if the Candidate has fatisfied in fome measure, ordination follows.

Now when fuch infufficient perfons are once admitted the mifchief is done, and there is no remedy. These men are afterwards appointed paftors in Churches, where for 30 or 40 years, they deffroy more than they edify. How many Churches are there thus ill provided, where the people live in gross ignorance, where the youth are lost for want of inftruction, and where a thousand crimes are committed ? The cause of all this evil, is in the ordination of paftors.

It will no doubt be objected, That if none were to be admitted but thole, who have all the neceffary qualifications, there would not be a fufficient number of paftors, for all the Churches. To which I anfwer, That tho' this fhould happen, yet it were better to run into this inconvenience than to break the express laws of God, A fmall number of felect paftors, is to be preferred before a multitude of unworthy labourers. We are ftill to do what God commands, and to leave the event to Providence. But after all, this fcarcity of paftors is not fo much to be feared. Such a ftrictnefs will only difcourage thofe, who would never have been ufeful in the Church, and it is a thing highly commendable to difhearten fuch perfons: but this exactnefs will encourage thofe, who are able to do well, and the miniftry will be fo much the more effecmed and fought after.

## CAUSE IV.

# The Defects of Christian Princes and Magistrates.

F it had been poffible without an effential omiffion, not to have detected this Caufe of Corruption, I would have paffed it over that in filence. We ought not to fpeak of the higher powers, but with great differentian and refpect: and therefore it is not without fome kind of reluctancy, that I fuppofe in the title of this Chapter, that one of the Caufes of Corruption is to be found in Chriftian Princes and Magiftrates.

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giftrates. But if I had fuppreft this, I fhould have diffembled a moft important truth, and omitted one of the heads, which are the moft neceffary to be infifted upon in a work of this nature. By reafon of the rank which princes and magiftrates hold, they have always a great fhare in the good or ill manners of the people. And fo I cannot excute my felf from fhewing, that the Corruption of Chriftians, may partly be imputed to thole, who are ordained for the government of Civil Society. In order to this I fhall offer fome reflections upon the duty of princes and magiftrates, confidered I. As Civil, and 2. As Chriftian Magiftrates.

Although the inftitution of princes and magistrates does properly relate to civil matters; yet the manner of governing their people, has a great influence upon the things of religion. This cannot be queftioned, if we fuppofe this principle; That God who is the author of the religion, is also the author of civil fociety and magistracy. It is St. Paul's doctrine, \* That there is no power but of God, and that the powers that be are ordained of God. If God is the author of religion, and of civil fociety, he is also the author of those laws upon which both religion and civil fociety are founded. Now God being always confiftent with him-Telf, the laws which are derived from him, cannot contradict one another; and this fnews already, not only that there is no opposition between religion and civil fociety, but that these two things having befides, a neceffary relation to one another. This will yet more clearly appear, if we confider that religion does not cut off Christians from the fociety of other men, and that the Church does not conftitute a flate by it felf, to have nothing to do with civil fociety; but that those who are members of the Church, are likewife members of civil fociety, fo that the fame man 'is at the fame time both a Chriftian and a Citizen.

But it is chiefly neceffary to confider the nature of the Chriftian religion. 1. It was to be preached to all men, and to be received by all the world, without diffinction of nations, kingdoms, or flates. In order to this, two things were neceflary. First, that there should be nothing in religion, contrary to the natural conflitution of flates and of civil fociety. For elfe, God by ordering the Gofpel to be preached, would have destroyed his own work, Christianity could not have taken footing in the world, and the first Christians would have been justly looked upon, as feditious perfons. But it is not less neceffary on the other hand, that there should be nothing repugnant to the Christian religion, in the natural conftitution of flates and civil fociety; otherwife God by eftablishing fociety, would have put an infuperable obflacle to the planting of the Gofpel, unlefs the civil order and government had been altered. But our Saviour has affured us that there was to be no fuch thing, by declaring + That his kingdom was not of this world, and by commanding his followers, ‡ to render to Cafar the things which are Cæfars.

2. One of the chief precepts of the Chriftian religion is, || That all men should obey and be fubject to the higher powers. Now this precept could not

- \* Rom. xiii: 1.
- ‡ Mat. xxii.

† John xviii. || Rom. xiii. CAUSE IV.

not poffibly be obferved, if in the natural eftablifhment of civil fociety, there was fomething incompatible, with the profeffion of Chriftianity. \* No man can ferve two mafters, when they command contrary things. But St. Paul goes further, he tells us, That the prefervation of kings, and the fubmitting to their authority is a mean for Chriftians + to lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godlinefs and honefty.

3. It is remarkable, that whatever is good, and juft in the civil, is fo likewife in the religious fociety; and that whatever is prefcribed by religion is juft, and even beneficial to civil fociety. The law of nature, which is the foundation of civil laws, is confirmed by the Chriftian religion, and does perfectly agree with the principles and morals of the Gofpel. An evident proof of this, is, that when Chriftian emperours and law-givers did fet about the making of laws and conflictutions, they retained the effential parts of the laws and conflictutions received among the *Romans* and the *Greeks* in the time of Heathenifm. And to this day the old *Roman* law is followed among Chriftians, excepting fome laws which have been altered or abrogated, either becaufe they were contrary to natural juffice and equity, or becaufe they were not of a general and neceflary ufe.

4. It is certain, that religion and civil fociety, do mutually fupport one another, when both are well regulated. Religion contributes to the happinels of fociety, by rendring the authority of princes more facred and inviolable; and the good order of fociety, contributes to the welfare and the progrefs of religion. Let us fuppofe a magiftrate who loves piety and juffice; it is plain, that at the fame time that he promotes the intereft of religion, he firengthens the welfare of fociety, and that he cannot procure the good of fociety, without advancing the intereft of religion. If we fuppofe on the other hand, a magiftrate who does not act by the principles of religion and juffice; it is vifible, that by fuffering religion to be violated or defpifed, he fhakes the fureft foundation of his own authority, and of publick tranquility, and that by failing in the duties of his office, and in the exercise of juffice, he makes the people grow vicious and neglect the duties of piety.

From these confiderations it does manifestly appear, that princes and magistrates may either procure great advantages to religion, or do it a confiderable prejudice, and that they are in part the authors of the corruption which reigns in the world.

When civil-fociety is well governed, men are difpofed by that very thing to practice the duties of Chriftianity. In proportion as the people are well ordered, they are more tractable and fufceptible of the impreffions of piety. As they are ufed to be governed by the laws of the magiftrate, they do the more eafily fubmit to the holy difcipline of Chrift; yea, and by obeying civil-laws, they do already difcharge fome part of the duties of religion. But when princes and magiftrates, either thro' ignorance, or want of probity and virtue, give way to the violation of juffice and good order, it is impoffible but that religion muft fuffer by it. For betides, that the people cannot break the civil laws, without violating the principles of religion : How can they perform the duties of Chriftianity, when they do not difcharge thofe of nature? It is very

\* Mat. vi.

† Tim. ii. 2.

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hard to perfuade people to the obfervation of the precepts of the Gofpel, who do not fubmit to the laws of natural reafon and juffice. It is not to be expected that men who do not order their outward actions aright, fhould regulate their thoughts and refift their paffions; or that being ftrangers to the first elements of virtue, they fhould come up to the practice of the most fublime precepts of Christian morals.

Befides, the want of order in the adminifiration of juffice and government, draws after it all kinds of diforders with relation to manners, fuch as difhonefly, and what is most dangerous, a spirit of libertinifin and independance, which makes men untoward and refractory to good difcipline. We are to obferve here that the greatest part of men's lives are taken up with civil matters. All perfons are bound to obey the magiftrate, and few are altogether free from law-fuits and bufinefs; fo that when the people are not well governed with relation to civil things, they do fo accustom themfelves to live without rule or reftraint, that religion can no longer have any power over them. The neglect and remifnefs of princes and magistrates do occasion all this mifchief.

But if the bare carelefnels of magiftrates is fo fatal to fociety; how muft it be when they themfelves are vicious and unjuft, either in their own particular conduct, or in the exercise of their office? The greateft unhappinels that can befal any people, is, when those who are invested with the fupream authority, favour injuftice and vice. It may be faid then, that the publick fountains are poyfoned. The whole flate is ordered by the fovereigns; they are those from whom the laws receive their force, who appoint judges and magistrates, and who regulate the adminiflration of juffice. When inferior magistrates prevaricate, this may be remedied by the fovereign, but when the fovereign himfelf fails in his duty, no redrefs can be expected.

Not but that fubordinate officers and magiftrates, may likewife occafion a great deal of mifchief. If we fuppole in a province, or a town, magiftrates and judges who want integrity, who confult only their profit and intereft in the exercife of their offices, who are not proof againft bribes, who adminiter judice from a principle of covetoufnefs or paffion, who act by recommendation or favour, and who are full of artifice and diffimulation. This is enough to introduce and authorize wickednefs throughout their whole jurifdiction, to pervert right, to banifh judice and honefly from all courts, to make way for knavery and litigioufnefs, for the protracting of fuits, the abule and violation of oaths, and many other diforders. Then it is that vice is in fathion and repute, that virtue and innocency are opprefied, and that the people grow corrupt. Now all this being a direct undermining of religion and piety, let any body judge, whether I have not reafon to fay, that the corruption of the age may be imputed to princes or magiftrates.

But all these evils are yet more unavoidable, when the princes or magistrates who are the authors of them, profess the Christian religion. A heathen magistrate has not by much that influence upon religion and manners, that a Christian has. The Church was purer and more separated from the world, when the superior powers were contrary to it, but as soon as the emperors had embraced Christianity, piety and zeal did vifibly decay. Not but that religion may receive, and has actually received great great helps from Chriftian magiftrates; they have fometimes contributed very effectually to the promoting of piety, and those who do fo, deferve immortal honour. But it muft likewise be granted, that the vices and ill examples of Chriftian magistrates, corrupt the Church more, than if it were under heathen governors.

The duty of Chriftian princes and magistrates, as well as of all the members of the Church is double. They are bound, first, to ferve God, and to discharge the obligations which religion lays upon all men; and fecondly to take care, that God may be ferved and honoured by all those, who are subject to their authority.

r. Every Chriftian ought to ferve God and to live according to the precepts of the Gofpel. That very thing then, that a magifirate is chriftian, obliges him to be a lover of piety and virtue. It is a common notion efpecially among great men, that piety and devotion do not become thole who are exalted to dignities, and that publick perfons are not to be ruled by the maxims of religion. But wholoever maintains this opinion, muft deny the principles of religion, and be either an Atheift or a Deift. For fuppofing the truth of Chriftianity, it is beyond all doubt, that a Chriftian prince or magifirate, has as much need of piety as other men have. He is bound to be a good man by the fame duty and intereft, which engage private men to be fo; he has a foul to be faved as well as they; and as he is a publick perfon, he is to give an account of his conduct to that judge, with whom there is no acception of perfons, and before whom the greateft of monarches, is no more than the meaneft of flaves.

If the eminent flation of a magistrate makes some difference between him and Chriftians of a lower order, that difference obliges him to a higher degree of piety. The character he bears requires a great flock of virtue. No fmall measure of probity is requisite to acquit himself worthily in that calling; to do no injustice, not to feek in his dignities the means to gratify his interest, his vanity, his pride, or his other paffions. Without a firm and folid virtue, he cannot withstand those temptations which offer themfelves every minute, and which are the more dangerous and fubtil, because in those exalted posts, ill things, for the most part, may be done with fafety. If we add to all this, that an ill magiftrate is anfwerable for the greatest part of the diforders which happen, and of the crimes which are committed in fociety, it must be confessed that magistracy is a kind of life, wherein piety is extreamly necessary, and in which, great circumfpection and a fublime virtue, are the only prefervatives against a thousand opportunities, of transgreeting the duties of confcience, and violating the most facred laws of religion and justice.

I. It is the duty of Chriftian princes and magiftrates, to labour for the promoting of virtue and the fupprefling of vice among men. We have fhewn already that it is their intereft to do fo, fince religion is the fureft foundation of their authority, and of the fidelity of their people; but their duty does befides indifpenfably oblige them to this. It cannot be denied but that this obligation lies upon them, fince every Chriftian is bound to advance the kingdom of Chrift, and to edify his neighbours as much as he can in that flate and condition he is in. The duty here is anfwerable to the ability, fo that we may apply to this purpofe, that maxim of the Vol. VI. R Gofpel,

#### Caufes of the prefent

Golpel, \* that to whom foever much is given, of him much shall be required. Private men cannot do much towards promoting the glory of God; their zeal and good intentions are for the most part ufelefs; it is not in their power to hinder general diforders, this ought therefore, to be done by men of authority, and they may do it eafily. Befides, a Christian magifitrate is to confider that it was providence which raifed him to the poft he is' in, and that by confequence he is engaged in juffice and gratitude, to use his authority for the glory of God. Laftly, would it not be a ftrange thing, that Christian princes and magistrates should do no fervice to religion, when kings and princes who are not Christians, can do fo much hurt to it? Now they may advance the kingdom of God and banish corruptions, thefe two ways. I. By their example. 2. By their care.

1. By their example. This method is of great efficacy. Examples are very forcible, but their effect, depends for the most part upon the quality and character of the perfons they come from. It has been made appear in the foregoing chapter, how much benefit redounds to the Church, from the good lives and examples of the governours of it. But the example of kings, princes, and magiftrates is in fome refpects of greater weight. When a Church-man recommends virtue by an exemplary life, it is often faid that his profefion obliges him to live fo, and this confideration makes his example to be of little force upon worldlyminded men. But when princes and magiftrates are pious, thofe men have no fuch thing to fay. The fplendor and authority which furround greatnefs, gives much credit to every thing that comes from great men. They may fometimes do more good with one word, than a preacher can do by many fermons.

I have fhewed in the first part of this work that one of the greateft obfacles to piety, is a falle shame which restrains men from doing their duty, for fear of being observed and despifed; and I am to fhew hereafter, that cuttom has introduced among Christians a great many maxims and practices contrary to the spirit of the Gospel. These two things occafion corruption and till they are remedied, vice and impiety must fill reign. But the example of great men is fufficient to remove almost intirely, both these causes of corruption. They are the judges of honour and cuttom; it is in their power to make any thing which is reputed spinetule. So that how fearce and despifed foever piety may be, an idea of honour would be affixed to it, if it was favoured and protested by great men, and that would be respected in them which in others, is looked upon with indifference or contempt.

That which has hapned with relation to duels is a firong proof of what I fay. To decline fighting a duel, has been thought for a long time a difgrace and an infamy : a falle notion of honour did then bear down the firongeft principles of nature, reafon and Chriftianity; and drive men to that excels of brutality and madnels, that they would cut one anothers throat for a trifle. But in those places where Chriftian princes have abolished duels, people are now of another mind, and think it no fhame to refuse a challenge. And thus fivearing, drunkennels, and the greateft of other clamorous fins, might be fuppreffed, if great men pleafed. Is it not obferved befides, that when a prince is devout, devotion comes into fafhion? It may be that this devotion which proceeds from the example of princes, is not always fincere; but at leaft it regulates manners as to the exterior; and fuch an outward reformation, may be a ftep toward true devotion. However this fhews that the opinion and example of men in authority, has a great power. And furely if by their credit they can make vice it felf to be honoured, would it not be much eafier for them, to make other men honour virtue, fince it is honourable in its own nature?

I am not able to express of what confequence the example of great men is, either for good or evil. A prince who is vicious, cruel, diffolute, artificious or unjuft, is enough to infect a whole flate in a very little time, to banifh piety from it, and to bring into repute drunkennels, lewdnels, cheating, indevotion, and all the other vices which he allows himfelf in. This we find by daily experience. Such as the prince is, fo are those about him; and from these, the evil spreads upon the whole people, by reason of the credit and authority to which they were raifed, and of the influence they have upon publick and private affairs. What might not be faid here of the life which is led in the courts of princes? Excepting fome few courts where licentiousness is not suffered. That kind of life which is followed at court, for the generality, agrees little with the fpirit of Christianity. People live there altogether in a loofe and worldly manner, in luxury, idlenefs, pomp and pleafure. There, the ftrongeft and the most inticing temptations are to be met with, and the most criminal intrigues, adultery it felf, are rather a matter of railery, than reproach. It is almost impossible for a man to infinuate himfelf into the favour of princes, and to advance his fortune at court, unlefs he makes it his maxim to diffemble his fentiments, and to speak directly against his own thoughts. The worst of it is, that from thence corruption diffuses it felf almost every where ; fo that many diforders which are in vogue, would be unknown, or at least very rare in the world, if they had not been introduced by that licentioufnefs, which reigns in the courts of princes.

I come now to the endeavours, which Christian magistrates ought to use, for the edification of the Church and the reviving of piety; these endeavours relate either to civil matters, or to religion.

1. In civil matters, it is their duty to reftrain libertinifin and corruption, by regulating the manners of their fubjects, either by repealing the laws and cuftoms which do not agree with religion, and which engage the people into the violation of the precepts of the Gofpel, or by reforming the abufes which are introduced from time to time, particularly thofe which creep into the administration of juffice. In relation to all thefe things, there are feveral faults which the Church cannot provide againft, and which nothing can remedy but the magistrates authority.

2. The other care relates directly to religion. 1. Princes and kings profeffing Chriftianity, are bound to procure, as much as in them lies, the welfare of the Church. They ought to fet about the eftablifting of truth and peace, provided that in order to that, they use no means but fuch, as are fuitable to the Gospel. They ought by their authority to fee that the Church and religion want nothing of what is necessfary, for the maintaining of order and decency; that divine fervice be duly performed;  $R_2$  that

## Causes of the present

that there be both places for that purpofe and a fufficient number of perfons to take care of the edification of the Church; that thofe-perfons may fubfif honourably, that they do their duty and keep themfelves within the bounds of their calling. They muft not fuffer Church goods or revenues to be applied to ufes meerly civil; and when thefe revenues are not fufficient, it becomes their piety and juffice, to allot fome part of the publick revenues, for the neceffities of the Church. In fine, as to manners, I obferved before, that they may cafily give a ftop to vice and impiety, to luxury, fwearing, and other feandals which diffonour the Church. And if they can do this, they ought to do it, every Chriftian being bound to do all that is in his power, to promote the glory of God.

2. It is certain, that magistrates who are members of the Church, ought to protect it, to maintain the order which God has effablished in it, and not to fuffer any breach to be made there. So that tho' they may regulate many things which concern religion, and tho' the Church owes them a great regard, yet they cannot without ufurpation and injuffice, arrogate to themfelves the whole authority, with relation to the ecclefiaftical affairs: They are neither the princes nor the heads of the Church, as they are the princes and the heads of civil fociety. An authority fuperior to theirs, has inftituted, religion, paftors and difcipline. There is a law enacted by the KING of kings, and the head of the Church, which clearly determines the rights and duties, both of the Church and of the governor of it; all these are facred things, which earthly powers are not to meddle with. They are laws which princes and magistrates did fubmit to, when they became members of the Church ; with respect to these (I mean still effential things appointed by the word of God) they have acquired no right by embracing Chriftianity; fince he who becomes member of a fociety, cannot by that acquire a right to alter the natural form and constitution of it.

The inftance of the kings of Judah, fhews that a prince who professes true religion, may interpole in the affairs of it : but we must take care not to carry this inftance too far, as those do, who ascribe to the magiftrate, a fupreme authority in the Church; who allow him a right to order every thing there; not excepting difcipline, the calling of paftors, nor even the articles of faith. For befides that under the law, kings were by no means the judges of every thing, which concerned religion; we are not to argue altogether about the Chriftian religion, from what was done in the Jewish Church. Among the Jews the Church and the state were mixed together, and in fome measure undiftinguished from one another. That meerly fpiritual fociety which is called the Church, and which is confined to no flate, or people, or any particular form of civil government; was properly crected fince the coming of Chrift. God acted among the Jews as a civil magistrate. The laws of the Jewish religion were for the most part external laws, which might and ought to be maintained by force and authority. The rights of divine fervice, and the functions of priefts, were very different from the evangelical worfhip and from the office of Christian paftors. After all, if we should go by the practice of the Jewish Church, it would follow, that the ministers of religion are invefted with civil authority, and a very great authority too. 'The Jewish priefts held a confiderable rank in the ftate as well as in religion.

#### CAUSE IV.

gion. If upon fome occafions kings have deposed priefts; upon other occafions priefts have opposed kings and altered the government.

\* So that without preffing too much those inftances out of the old Teftament, the beft way is to confult the new, and to proceed according to the laws of the apoffles, and the nature of the Chriftian religion. And wholoever examines without prejudice those facred books, which have been writ fince the coming of our Saviour, will acknowledge, that things are now altered, and that magiftrates have but a limited authority in matters of religion. It is remarkable, that the foripture never mentions them, when it speaks of the Church and of the government of it.

3. And yet as the authority of princes and magiftrates, is derived from God, it ought fill to fubfift entire. and therefore they have an unqueftionable right, to take care that nothing be done in the Church, to the prejudice of their lawful authority, and of publick tranquility; and that the minifters of religion do not firetch their authority, beyond fpiritual things. The honour and the fafety of religion, require that this principal fhould be laid down; for religion, as was faid before, ought not, to diffurb fociety, and true religion will never diffurb it. If then any Chriftians or Church-men under pretence of religion, fhould break in upon the civil government and then they do not oppofe religion, but thofe only who abufe and diffuonour it.

After these confiderations, I think any man is able to judge, whether the decay of piety and religion, is not in part to be imputed to Chriftian princes and magiftrates. We need but enquire whether both in civil and religious matters, they observe the duties I have now described. I fay no more of this, because every body is able to make the application.

But I muft add, That if the want of zeal in magiftrates is enough to introduce confusion and vice into the Church; the milchief is much greater, when not only, they do not what they ought for the good of religion, but when they use their authority befides, to the prejudice of it. I cannot forbear mentioning here two great abules.

7. The first is, When princes and magistrates assume the whole authority to themfelves, fo that except preaching and administring the facraments, they will do every thing in the Church : when they prefume to determine articles of faith, to rule the confcience of their fubjects, and to force them to embrace one perfuafion rather than another; when they will by all means take upon them to call paftors, without regard to that right of the Church and Church-men, which is established in scripture, and confirmed by the practice of the first ages of Christianity; when they feize upon Church-estates, tho' there is no reason to fear that wealth fhould corrupt their Clergy, and tho' fuch revenues might be applied to feveral pious uses, and particularly to the relief of country-Churches, most of which are not fufficiently edified, for want of neceflary endowments and funds. A great deal might be faid about that which was done in the last century with relation to Church-revenues; and it were to be wished, that people had been a little more fcrupulous than they were, when they invaded the poffessions of the Church, and confounded them with the revenues of the ftate.

R3 sin .

\* See Chron. xxiii, and xxvi.

Befides

Befides this the magistrates authority is fatal to the Church, when he hinders the exercise of true discipline, and when he substitutes such regulations as he thinks fit, in the room of apostolical laws. This is one of the greatest obstructions to the restoring of apostolical discipline. The church and her patters should be willing to observe the ancient order, and to oppose corruption by those means which the Gospel enjoyns, yet this is not to be done, if those who have the authority in their hands will not give way to it. The Church is not in a condition to result, and to make head against the magistrate, when he uses force ; and the ought not to do it if the could.

The fecond abufe is, when the magiftrate makes it his bufinefs to abafe religion, in the perfons of its minifters, by defpoiling them as much as he can, of every thing that might procure them refpect and authority in the Church. This policy is as contrary to the intereft of religion, and to the promoting c: piety, as it is common now adays, in feveral Chriftian dominions. It is well done of the magiftrate to preferve his authority, and to keep the Clergy from exceeding the bounds of their calling; but from thence it does not follow, that he ought to trample them under foot, to bring them under a general contempt, and to vilify their character, which after all is facred and venerable. This is to facrifice religion to policy and pride, and this proceeding is a manifeft caufe of the contempt of religion, and of the corruption which neceffarily follows that contempt, fince commonly, nothing is more defpifed in the world, than that which great men defpife.

I declare it once more, by all that has been faid, I do not mean to detract any thing from the reipect due to civil powers, neither do I fpeak of all Chriftian princes and magiftrates, among whom there are fome who have piety and zeal, and who labour with fuccels for the good of religion. But the glory of God requires, that we fhould fpeak the truth, fo that I could not but take notice of this caufe of corruption. Upon the whole matter, it is to be hoped, that if Chriftian magiftrates would be pleafed to make ferious reflections upon all thefe things, we fhould foon fee an end of fome of thefe diforders; and that a happier time will come when they will ufe their authority, to advance the honour of God, and to reftore truth, piety and peace among Chriftians.

#### CAUSE V.

#### Education.

OTHING is more natural than to look for the original of corruption, in the time at which it begins; I mean in the first years of life. It is not only when men have attained to a ripenels of age, that they are inclined to vice, but that inclination difcovers it felf from their youth. The root of that ignorance, of those prejudices, and of the greatest part of the ill dispositions they are in may be found u

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in their tender years. We had need then look back upon the beginnings of life, and feek in youth, and in infancy it felf the fource of corruption.

When we enter upon this enquiry, and confider that men, if nothing restrains them, will run into vice from their youth, out of a propension which is common to all, we cannot but perceive at first fight, that there must be in them a certain principle of corruption, which makes them thus prone to ill things. But if we reflect upon this matter with any attention, we may likewife be fatisfied, that it would not be impoffible to rectifie at least in part, that vicious inclination, and to prevent the fatal confequences of it by the means of education; and that it is chiefly the wrong method of educating children, which feeds that difpolition to evil, and which encreases and ftrengthens it. This is what I intend to fhew in this chapter. I hope to make it clearly appear, that the corruption of men, is to be imputed to the education they had in their youth; and that confidering how children are brought up, it is impoffible, but that ignorance and vice, must generally prevail in the world. I shall begin with general reflections, upon the education of children, and in the next place I shall speak of their education, with a particular regard to religion and piety.

My first reflection is, That the world confists for the most part of people who have no education, and whose unhappines it is to have been wholly neglected in their youth. This may particularly be observed among perfons of mean birth. Every body knows that fuch kind of people, have no manner of education; that from their childhood they are abandoned to themfelves, without either inftruction, correction, or any other help, and that living with ignorant gross and vicious parents between worldly business and ill examples, they fpend their youth almost like brutes.

This first reflection, which may be applied to many thousand Christians, difcovers to us already a plain reafon of the extream corruption, which appears in their manners. We wonder fometimes that men are fo depraved, and that great multitudes of them have almost no fense at all, either of religion or confcience, or of reafon and humanity. We think it strange, that there should be among Christians, impious perfons, blafphemers of the name of God, thieves, poifoners, men who defile themfelves with the most infamous fins, and who make confcience of nothing. One would think human nature were not capable of fuch enormities; and yet they are committed by a great many. But we may eafily apprehend how this comes to pais, if we confider what education those perfons had. Instead of being brought up like Christians, they have not fo much as been educated like rational creatures. The light of nature has been extinguished in them from their very infancy, fo that having fcarce any notion of good or evil, they give up themfelves to vice without scruple or remorfe, almost in the fame manner as the Heathens did of old.

II. But as this total defect of education is not univerfal, fo we are to enquire in the fecond place, How children are bred up, and to obferve here the principal faults which are committed about their education.

I. The education of children is not begun foon enough, nothing is done to them in the first years of their lives. As foon as children begin to have fome kind of reafon, the first principles of virtue should be infill?d into them. For tho' the ideas and actions of young children are very confused, yet it is in infancy that passions and habits begin to foring up. At three or four years old, children give fome figns of what they are to be all their lives, and from that time it may be known, what their predominate inclinations will be. If that time was well improved, it would be an easie and compendious way to give children a good education. They may then without any great trouble be made to do those things, which they cannot be brought to without much time and difficulty, when they are once come to fourteen or fifteen; fome little care and gentle correction, may fliss a passion in its birth, it may cure anger and flubbornnefs in a child, it may fosten his inclinations, and make him obedient and towardly. A little caution used about his diet, may render him fober and temperate for his whole life. But that time which is fo precious, is that, wherein children are most neglected.

This delay of education, proceeds from two caufes. If. That men have not a true notion of the education of children, and of the end to be aimed at in it. It is commonly imagined, that the breeding up of children, is the teaching them latin, learning a trade, or fome other things, which are ufually taught them, in order to fit them for those callings to which they are defigned. And as children are not capable of applying themfelves to arts and fciences before a certain age, fo their education, is deferred till then. But if men did well underftand, that the chief defign of education, is to form the judgment and the temper of children, they would not ftay fo long before they took care of them. 2d.

The first years of children are neglected, and their conduct then is not much minded, because vice does not then shew it felf in all its deformity. All that they do is then look'd upon as innocent, and every thing in them appears pleafant, not excepting their very faults. If they are too lively, or of a refolute humour, if they happen to be in a paffion, to lye, to fpeak undecent and filthy words, to do little fly naughty tricks; all this for the most part, makes only people laugh, commend and applaud them. It is not confidered that those are the fore-runners of vice, and that these beginnings call for a speedy remedy. Young children are not capable of crimes : impiety, uncleannefs, cruelty and premeditated malice, are not to be found in them, but if we narrowly observe them we may fpy out the feeds and the buddings of those vices in their actions and manners. This is not much taken notice of; paffions and ill habits are fuffered to grow quietly during childhood, and they are quite formed and fettled before they are observed. At seven or eight years of age, innocency is already loft and the heart is corrupted. People begin to think of educating their children when the fitteft feafon for education is paft, and when they have already those principles of corruption in them, which they will never fhake off.

2. There is no care taken to form the mind and judgment of children. Reafon being the moft effential property of men, is that which ought to be chiefly cultivated in young people; and all that they are taught befides, is of little ufe, if they are not accuftomed to this. Great labour is ufed to learn them languages and fciences, their memory is exercifed, they are loaded with feyeral inftructions, their heads are filled with a multitude

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multitude of words and ideas; but it would be without comparison more important, to cultivate their judgment. Whatever they may be defign'd for, no greater good can be procur'd to them, than to make them able to pais a found judgment upon things, and to govern themselves by reason. True fense is necessary at all times, and it is of a general usefulnes in our whole life. It is therefore an unhappinels for children that in this respect they are so much neglected. Men have not the patience to reason with them, and to teach them to fpeak and to act wifely. They are fuffer'd to be among people who can neither fpeak nor reafon, they converfe for the most part, only with fervants or other children. By this means they accustom themselves to take up falle notions, to judge of things only by their appearances, to refolve rafhly and without confideration, and to be governed only by their fenses, passions, or prejudices: From thence proceed almost all the faults which they commit afterwards; but this is efpecially the caufe of that affection which men bear to fin and to the th ngs of this world. The first quality of a Christian, is to be a rational man, it being impossible that a man who cannot make use of his reafon, and who has no fenfe, fhould judge aright of fpiritual things. curb his paffions, renounce his prejudices, and conftantly follow the rules of his duty.

3. I shall not here enumerate all the particular faults which are fuffer'd in children; but there are two which I cannot but take notice of, becaufe I look upon them as the caufe of most of the paffions and vices, to which men are addicted. First there are no fufficient endeavours used to make children tractable, and to fubject them to the will of others. The ground-work of a good education is to keep them in awe and obedience; and not to let them grow independant, and obstinate in their own will and paffions; fo that when we command or forbid them a thing it is by all means neceffary to make them obey. When we observe in them too ftrong an inclination to any thing, tho' the thing were innocent, yet because they defire it too earnestly, they are not always to be indulg'd in it. But care is to be taken, that when we crofs their will, we do it with mildnefs, and in fuch a manner, as may give them to understand, that it is with reason, and for their good we oppose them, and not out of humour, or only to vex them. When children are thus dealt with, they may be turn'd which way foever we pleafe. It keeps them from flubbornnefs and felf-love, it teaches them to overcome their defires, to fubmit to corrections, and to follow the advice which is given them. In a word, tractableness in a child, is a disposition to every thing that is good, and the foundation of all virtues. But no good can be expected from a child who is not docile and obedient. If he is permitted while young to be independant, and to do what he lifts, he will be much more absolute when he comes to a riper age.

The other fault which it is very neceffary to prevent, is the love of the body and of the objects of fence. A carnal temper, is by the tertimony of Scripture it felf, the root of all vices. But the first rife of that irregular affection, which men bear to every thing that gratifies their body, is in their infancy. For befides, that children govern themfelves only by fence; that byas they have towards fentible things, is forfeited by the fenfual education, which is bestowed upon them. None but o grofs and material objects, are proposed to them; they are entertain'd only with those things which affect the fenfes, and no ideas but those of bodily pleafures or pains, are excited in them. The promifes and threats, the rewards and punifhments, which are used to gain upon them, relate only to corporeal things. And here it ought not to be omitted, that they are chiefly fpoiled, by being indulged in gluttony, and vanity of cloaths. These are the two first passions of children; the two inclinations by which they begin to grow corrupt and to love the world; nothing makes fo much impression upon them as that which affects their eyes or their palate.

If children were used to a fimplicity of diet and apparel, this would preferve them, from many dangerous vices and paffions; it would difpole them for those virtues which are the most necessary to a wife man and a Chriftian; it would inure them to fobriety, labour, prudence, humility, to the contempt of pleafure, and to firmnels and patience in calamities. This would make their conflitution ftronger, and prevent divers infirmities, which both afflict and fhorten their lives. But ill cuftom prevails against the maxims of reason and Christianity. Little caution is used in relation to their diet; they are fuffered to eat much beyond that which nature requires, and they are accuflomed to be liquorifh and dainty in their eating. As for cloaths and decking, fathers and more especially mothers, have that weakness, that they love to see their children fine and fpruce. Befides this, the way of breeding up children of the better fort, makes them foft, effeminate and lovers of pleafure. The fruit of fuch an education, is, that children become flaves to their bodies and to their fenfes; they are taken with nothing but bodily pleafures and worldly things. From thence fpring in process of time, intemperance, uncleanneis, pride, covetouineis, and most of the greater kind of fins. This is likewife the principal caufe of indevotion, and of the little relifh which men find in fpiritual things, particularly in religion and piety. fenfual education occafions all thefe evils.

4. It will not be improper to observe here, That frequently the education which is given to those children, who are deftined to fciences and confiderable employments, either in the Church or in civil fociety, does but corrupt their inclinations. They are fent to colleges and univerfities, where being trufted with themfelves, they live in independence and libertinifm; and they are fent thither at an age, in which without a kind of miracle, they cannot fail of being undone. They are as it were emancipated from the infpection of their parents; they are expos'd without defence to the most dangerous feductions, and that at the very time, when they are the most unfit to regulate their conduct, and the moft fufceptible of ill impreffions and vicious examples. Children would be much better educated with relation both to fciences and good manners, if their parents did not make fo much hafte, and if they did not fpur them on to fludy, till their judgment was a little formed, and efpecially if they took care to confirm them in the principles of religion and virtue, before they were fent from home. Some alteration fhould likewife be made in colleges. For the very fludies which youths purfue there, are inftrumental to debauch them. They learn Latin and obscenity together. Authors are put into their hands, the reading of whom raifes impure ideas

ideas in their minds; and as if there was a defign to flifle in them all fenfe of modefly, they are made to interpret and to rehearfe very undecent things. When all is well confidered, young people acquire but little of ufeful learning in colleges and academics, at the rate they live and fludy in those places; and there too they commonly leave their innocency.

5. The means of procuring to children a happy education, are not used as they should be. These means are instruction, encouragement, and correction.

Inftruction is very much neglected, as I fhall more particularly fnew, when I come to fpeak of the education of youth with reference to religion. Parents feldom give good directions to their children, to teach them how they ought to live. They do worfe, they train them up to ill things, and give them bad inftructions. By the difcourfe and the maxims they utter in the hearing of their children, they infufe fentiments and principles of covetoufnels, pride, fentuality and diffimulation into them ; they teach them to act upon the motives of interest and passion, or by the notions of a falfe honour. Nay, they do fometimes directly teach them vice, they encourage them to lye and cheat, to be revengeful and passionate. So that young people are not only defititue of good inftructions, but they are besides, infected from their infancy with feveral most pernicious principles. I need not fay, what the confequences of fuch an education are like to be.

If few children are formed to virtue by infruction, few are made virtuous by the good example of their parents. It is much when this example is not bad and dangerous. In moff families children fee nothing that favours of Chriftianity, except fome external acts of religion; they obferve that every one of the family is employed about temporal things; the difcourfes they hear, turn altogether upon intereft, or fome triffing fubject. They are witneffes of a great many diforders, of the heats and quarrels of their fathers and mothers, of their avarice, their fwearing, their lying, their intemperance, their impiety, and their want of refpect for religion. Thefe are the examples, which for the moft part, children have before their eyes, and which corrupt them more than any thing elfe. At that age almoft every thing is done by imitation and example; and no example makes more imprefifion upon them, than the example of their parents, becaufe it is always in fight; and they think befides they cannot do amifs, as long as they copy after it.

It is very uleful in educating children to encourage them. I mean not only that they fhould be exhorted and incited to their duty, and that, from the motives of honour and from the pleafure that attends the doing of it; but that likewife, we fhould express our fatisfaction, and our love and effeem of them, when they do as we would have them. A word of praife, a little reward, infpires new ardor into them. We may do what we pleafe with children, when we can prevail upon them with gentle methods, and win their love: they then accuftom themfelves betimes to do their duty, out of inclination, and from noble and generous views. But to ufe always feverity towards children, and to take no notice of their endeavours to do well, is the way to difcourage them, and to extinguifh in them the love of virtue. Yet feverity is neceffary, and upon fome occafions we ought not to forbear rigour and correction. Those indulgent parents, who being reftrained by a false tenderness, cannot find in their heart to chaftife their children, do infallibly ruin them. But if the want of correction and discipline makes children unruly; chaftifement ill dispensid produces the fame effect. There are commonly three faults committed in the correcting of children.

The first relates to the caufe for which they are chastifed. Correction fhould not be used but for those faults, which have fomething of vicein them; as when children are guilty of malice, of fome ill habit, or of great negligence; and even then we fhould not proceed to chaftifement, but after we have tried other ways to no purpofe. But this rule is little obferv'd. Children are punish'd for all forts of faults indifferently, and very often for finall ones. They will fometimes be feverely chaftifed becaufe they cannot fay their leffon without book, or for fome other little diforder they have done in the houfe through imprudence and without malice; and at the fame time faults against piety and good manners shall be paffed over. These corrections produce several ill effects, and especially this, That children form to themfelves false notions of their duty. They fancy that the faults for which they are punish'd are the most confiderable, and that there is more hurt in fpoiling their cloaths, or in miffing a word of their leffon, than in lying, or in praying without attention, which leffens in them the abhorrence of vice.

The fecond error, which relates to the nature of the correction inflicted upon children is, when no other chaftifements are us'd but those which make the body smart. Such corrections without doubt are useful and necessfary, because children are chiefly moved by those things which firike the fenses; but they are not the only ones to which recours is to be had. To beat children every time they do amiss, is to use them like beafts. There are other ways of punishing and mortifying them. The most profitable corrections are those, which excite in them forrow and shame for the ill they have done.

Laftly, There is an error in the chaftifing of children, when they are not corrected with difcretion and gentlenefs. Prudence and even juffice requires, that regard should be had to the nature of their fault, to the difpolition they are in, and to other circumstances; and it becomes that love which a father owes his children, to correct them with lenity and moderation, and to forbear exceffive feverities. Children fhould perceive the tenderness of their parents even in their corrections, and be made fenfible that it is with reluctancy, and only in order to their good, that they treat them with fome rigour. . If chaftifements were difpenfed with these cautions, they would at the same time that they cause pain, beget in childrens minds, a forrow for having done amils, and that would make them love their parents, even while they are punishing them. But for the most part, parents, or those who have an authority over children, chaftife them without difcretion, and with a rigour which borders upon cruelty: they punish them rather out of passion, spite or revenge, than upon wife and fober confideration. Such a proceeding difeourages and provokes children, and it makes them hate their duty. I confess this method may ftrike terror into them, and curb them a little, but they grow

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grow the more flout and incorrigible by it, and they will certainly run into licentioufnefs, as foon as they are no longer reftrain'd by the fear of punifhment.<sup>1</sup>

From what has been faid hitherto, it is plain, that men's corruption is a confequence of the education they had in their youth : but this will yet more evidently appear by the reflections I am now going to make, upon the way of bringing up children in religion and piety.

We are here to confider education, in reference to the two ends of it, which are the educating of youth, first in the knowledge, and then in the practice of religion.

I. The confiderations to be infifted on concerning the first head, relate either to the things which children are to be instructed in, or to the manner of instructing them.

1. As to the things themselves, there are two articles upon which the instruction of youth ought to depend; and those are the truths and the duties of religion.

The chief rule to be obferv'd with relation to the truths of religion; is to infift upon those which are the most neceffary, and to give a diffinct notion of them to children. And here two faults are committed; the first is, when they are not inftructed in all the truths which are to be known in order to be a Christian; the fecond is, when fuch inftructions are proposed to them as are unfuitable to their age, or even ufelefs.

To explain my meaning a little further; I fay firft, That there are fome effential things, which children are not at all, or but imperfectly taught. Among thefe we may reckon the knowledge of facred hiftory. Religion being founded upon hiftory and facts, it would be requiftee that infruction fhould begin at the hiftorical part of religion, and at the main events which are related both in the old and new Teftament: fo that children might know at leaft in general the principal ages of the world, and the most remarkable things, which did happen from the Creation to the coming of our Saviour; what the Flood was, what were the Egyptian and Babylonifh Captivities; what fort of people the Heathens and the Jews were, and what kind of life our Saviour led.

It must not be faid, that history is above the capacity of children; for on the contrary, it is that, which is to them the easiest part of religion. which they hearken to with the greatest pleasure, and which they remember beft. Nothing does more imoothly enter into their minds than hiftory; all the things I have now mention'd may be taught them in a week. And this knowledge is as neceffary as it is eafily acquired. A man can never understand his religion well, or be thoroughly convinced of its truth, if he does not know the facts which it supposes. We fee that it was by the means of hiftory that God chofe to inftruct mankind, and that matters of fact make up the most confiderable part of the facred writings. And therefore it is a ftrange thing, that in catechifms and other inftructions given to youth, hiftory fhould be fo little infifted upon. This is visibly one of the causes of that profound ignorance, which the greatest part of Christians live in : this is the reason why they understand almost nothing of what they read or hear in fermons, and why the doctrines which they are taught make fo little impreffion upon them.

Teaching

Teaching children biftory, gives them beforehand, fome notions of the aruths and doctrines of Chriftianity; but yet thefe truths and doctrines ought to be propofed to them feparately, that they may have a more diflinct apprehention of them. Above all things great care fhould be taken, to imprint upon the minds of thofe who are to be inftructed : the knowledge and the belief of the principles of Chriftianity. But this likewife is not done as it fhould be. In catechifms, as well as in fermons, particular truths are dwelt upon, and the general ones are touched only by the by. This is a fault I have obferv'd in the very beginning of this work.

Now at the fame time that children are fuffer'd to be ignorant about many important articles, they are perplex'd with divers ufeles, or not very neceffary inftructions. Inftead of limiting them to the effential parts of religion, their minds and memories are fill'd up with many things which they may fafely be ignorant of. Some would have them underftand the difputes of divines, concerning the most curious and abftruse queftiens, and they are made to get several things by heart, which they do not underftand, and which are of no great use. In the mean ime children learn thefe things and fay them without book, and being poffeffed with the conceit, that they are as many articles of faith, they rank among divine truths school-terms and doctrines, of which they neither apprehend the certainty nor the use. And thus having none but intricate ideas about religion : they do not perceive the beauty, the folidity, or the excellence of it, and they have neither true love nor respect

When children are once instructed in the truths of Christianity, it is particularly neceffary to acquaint them with the duties of it. There are two diffinct forts of duties in religion. First the duties concerning divine worship or fervice : and then the duties of morality. The first are adoration, the honour which is paid to God, prayer and thankfgiving : but as these duties may be perform'd either outwardly or inwardly, it is of very great moment to make children apprehend, That prayer and all other acts of divine worfhip, ought to proceed from the heart, that \* God will be ferved in spirit and in truth, and that without this the worfhip which is paid to him, either in private or in publick, does only provoke his difpleafure. It is not enough therefore, to tell children, That they must pray to God or go to Church, and to teach them some forms of prayer to be faid at certain times and hours : all this is but external, and if we go no farther, if we do not carefully inform them, that true worfhip is internal and fpiritual, we fhall make but hypocrites of them, by teaching them to pray and to perform religious acts. The faults then which are committed in this point, are of great moment, and we may eafily perceive, that hypocrify and indevotion are the confequences of this negligence. The religion of most Christians confists only in some external actions; they think they have fulfilled their duty when they have recited fome prayers, or been prefent at the publick worfhip of God, tho' in all they do of this kind, they have neither attention nor elevation of heart; but this error which is fo capital, and yet fo common, arifes chiefly chiefly from hence, that children are formed only to a meer outfide devotion and worfhip.

Young people are not much better inftructed in moral duties. I shall not enter here upon all the confiderations which the fubject might afford, becaufe I have treated of the want of inftruction concerning morals in feveral places of this treatile, and particularly in the I. Chapter of the first Part. Yet I must fay, that this defect proceeds from the instructions which are given to youth. Much greater care is taken to inform them about the doctrines than about the duties of Christianity. The articles of the Creed, the queftions concerning the facraments, and the other points of doctrine, are handled and examined largely enough in Catechifms, and controverfy is not forgot; but the Ten Commandments are explained in fo fuccinct and fuperficial a manner, that we do not find there fo much as the names of a great many vices, virtues and duties. Children who should be raifed up to Christian perfection, are only taught the Ten Commandments, and from the explication which is given of these, they gather that they flould not be idolaters, blasphemers or profane perfons, that they fhould neither commit murder nor adultery, that they should not steal or bear falle witness. But how many other duties are there of which they have no manner of notion ? They are not taught what it is to be gentle, humble, fincere, charita-ble, pure, fober and patient. Many perfons becaufe they were never instructed in these virtues which are the principal ornaments of a Chriftian, do not practife or fo much as know them. We are to impute to thefe flight and defective inftructions, that opinion which is commonly received, That whofoever is free from those fix or feven great fins forbidden in the decalogue, is a good man.

2. The fuccefs of infructions depends in the fecond place upon the method and way of teaching. The method of teaching, fhould on the one hand be clear and proportioned to the age and capacity of children, and on the other, it fhould be delightful, and fit to make them love religion. By this, two ends which ought to be aimed at, will be attained; the mind will be enlightned, and the heart moved. What is clear informeth the mind, and what is delightful wins the heart, and infpires into it a ftrong affection for religion and for the duties of it.

1. Perfpicuity is never more necessary, than it is in the instructing of youth. Children having no ideas as yet of most things, and not being ufed to the fignification of words, cannot understand what is faid to them, unless it be delivered with much clearness and fimplicity, and unlefs every thing be avoided, which may puzzle or feem obfcure to them. This peripicuity refults first, from the things that are taught. It is a certain truth, that whatfoever is effential in religion, is always clear and eafie to be understood; and that on the contrary, whatfoever is obfcure and difficult, is not very neceffary. So that provided inftruction goes no further than effectial doctrines and duties, it cannot be very hard for children, to apprehend what is faid to them. Secondly, Clear expreffions, and plain and popular ways of fpeaking, produce diffinct ideas in the minds of those who are instructed ; but a dark or too high a stile, figurative of learned phrafes, spoil the fruit of instructions. Lastly, order and method contribute mightily to clearnels. It is not fit that children dren fhould be loaded at firft, with many doctrines and precepts. General infructions, the principles of religion, and the fimpleft ideas, ought to go foremoft, and then particular infructions and more complex ideas, may be propoled; but fill with a due regard to the age, capacity, and progrefs, of children.

2. Inftruction is to be delivered in a delightful manner. This is the way to infinuate our felves into the minds of children. Nothing wins more upon them, than a fweet and pleafant way of fpeaking, and nothing gives them fo much difguft, as roughness and feverity. If religion was represented to them with an attractive aspect, they would certainly embrace it with eagerness. But for the most part those who teach or speak to them of religion, do it with an air of feverity, and a difinal tone, and with those circumstances, which make them averse to it. Commands, threatnings, and conftraint are ufed, to make them take their Catechifms or fay their prayers; if they fail to do this, their teachers are angry and beat them. When we exhort them to piety, inflead of going about this with fuch a gentlenefs as might make virtue amiable to them, we speak in a harfh and chiding manner. The effect of this is, that children feeing nothing in religion that is inticing, take up a prejudice againft it; they look upon that inftruction, to which they are compelled, as a hard piece of labour and drudgery. Religion is no fooner mentioned, but it damps their good humour, they do nothing but by conftraint and against their will; they free themfelves from that conftraint affoon as they can. and they bear during their whole life an averfion, or at leaft, an indifference to religion.

II. I have been difcourfing hitherto, of what relates to the knowledge of religion, and I hope I have clearly proved, that generally fpeaking, children are ill inftructed. I am now to confider education with relation to practice. For it would be to no purpofe, to infufe into young people, a perfect knowledge of the truths and duties of religion, if they were not taught to make a good use of that knowledge, and to direct it to its true end, which is the practice of virtue and piety. But it is feldom that the care of parents, and of those who have the inftructing of children, goes fo far. If they take fome care about their instruction, they generally neglect them as to, the practical part, and they little enquire whether they live according to the precepts of religion. Now inftructions thus dispensed, do not only prove useles, but they may likewife make children doubly wicked, and fill them with the most dangerous prejudices. When children observe that religion is proposed to them only, in an hiftorical and speculative manner, and that provided they remember what is told them, and are able to give an account of it, they are commended for being well skilled in religion; and that as for the reft, they are permitted to live as they pleafe, and that they are not chid, tho' they do not practife what they were taught; they conclude from all this, that religion confifts wholly, in the knowledge and profeffion of certain truths, and that it is not abfolutely neceffary to frame their lives according to the rules of the Gofpel. They accuftom themfelves belides to flight their knowledge, and to act against the principles of their own confciences. These pernicious fentiments are infused into children, children, when inftructions are not directed to practice. To prevent fo great an evil, thefe rules are to be obferved.

1. The defign of proposing the truths and doctrines of Christianity to children, fhould be to beget in them a love and a respect for them; and in order to that, we fhould let them fee, their certainty, their importance, and their ufe. It ought then to be carefully inculcated to them, that there is nothing more true and certain, nothing of greater importance, or that concerns us nearer than religion, and that in comparifon with it, all that we see in the world, is of very little or no confequence; and laftly, that it was revealed for no other end, but to make us good, and to conduct us to the highest bleffedness. By this method. inftruction will always terminate in practice. By teaching children to know God, we fhall excite in them a love and reverence towards that Supreme Being. By fpeaking to them of Providence, we fhall make them apprehend that God fees every thing, and what reafon we have to depend upon, and to fear him. By telling them the hiftory of the Bible, we shall make them observe in those various events, the effects of God's wildom, of his goodnefs power and juffice. In explaining to them the doctrine of the facraments, we fhall chiefly apply our felves to make them understand, what these facred ceremonies oblige Christians to, what an august and venerable thing baptifm is, and what purity is required in those who are baptized : and fo when we speak to children of Chrift and his fufferings, of the refurrection and a future judgment, of the punishments and rewards of another life, and of all the other truths, we fhould do it in fuch a manner, as may flir them up to piety and holinefs.

2. In the next place we ought to engage children to the practice and observation of the duties of Christianity, with relation both to worship and manners. And first it is altogether necessary, to teach them to render to God the worship that is due to him. There are few Christian families, where fomething is not done with this intention. Children are made to learn fome prayers, to fay them mornings and everings, and to be prefent at the publick and private exercises of piety. But the main should be, to bring them to fincerity in divine-fervice, left they fall into impiety and hypocrify. The greatest endeavour should be, to accuss them to pray with attention and reverence. This may at first feem difficult; we neither fee the heart of children, nor can regulate the motions of it. But yet J think, there are ways to fix their minds, which might be fuccessfully used : and I hope my readers will not think it amils if I dwell a little upon this head, confidering the importance of it.

r. I would not have children pray, before they have fome knowledge of what they are doing. There is a cuftom effablifhed every where,' which I look upon as the firft caufe of indevotion; and that is, to make little children recite prayers, and long ones too. I do not apprehend the ufe of this, nor where the inconvenience would be, if children did not pray at an age when they can hardly fpeak an articulate word. It would be time enough to make them pray, when they are capable of fome reflection. If we did wait till then they might pray with attention; and,' I make no doubt, but that they would do it with pleafure and reverence. Vot. VI. S Children

PART II.

Children think it an honour to do what is done by men; if therefore they were not permitted to pray till they came to a certain age, they would look upon praying as a particular priviledge. But when they are made to pray before they have any fenfe of what they do, it puts this notion into their heads, that praying is nothing elfe but reciting of prayers: and befides, that obligation which is laid upon them, to perform regularly a duty, of which they do not yet underfrand the neceffity or the ufe makes that they only obferve it out of cuftom.

2. I could wifh that when we begin to make children pray, we fhould teach them plain and fhort prayers, wherein they might fay nothing but what they underflood. Two or three fentences are enough in those beginnings, and as they grow in years, longer prayers may be prefcribed them. Brevity is to every body a help to devotion; but children being not capable of a long attention, it is certain that long prayers are not at all ft for them.

3. It would be very useful to difcourfe with them about the excellency and the neceffity of prayer, and to make them apprehend what an honour it is for us, to fpeak to God and to lay open our neceffities before him.

4. In order to accultom children, to look upon prayer with reverence, and to go about it with ferioufnefs; they fhould not be allowed to pray when they are ftrongly poffeffed with fome paffion, or object, or when they have committed a confiderable fault against piety.

5. It is particularly neceffary to regulate and obferve their behaviour and looks, while they are at prayers, and then likewife to exprefs a reverence our felves, and to fay or do nothing that may give them any diffraction. It is a cuftom as bad, as it is ordinary in families, to go to and fro, to be bufy and to talk all the while that children are faying their prayers. How is it poffible that amidft all that noife, which would even hinder older people to pray as they ought, children, whofe thoughts are for rambling, fhould not be diffracted? And what reverence can be expected from them about the exercises of piety, when their fathers and mothers who are prefent fhew none at all? This is what I have to obferve, concerning prayer, which is the principal part of divine worfhip.

As to what concerns the duties of morality, very particular care ought to be taken, to make children obferve them. The first mean to be used next to instruction, is to exhort them to the practice of virtue, and to represent to them, that piety and holinels are the effential characters of a Christian. But the exhortations directed to them will have no great effect, if they are not dispensed with prudence. Sometimes parents fpoil all, tho' they mean well. They exhort and chide at every turn, they are perpetually admonishing and moralizing; by this they give a disjust to their children, instead of winning upon them. Exhortations ought to be accompanied with discretion and gentlenels; above all, we should endeavour to perfuade and to prevail upon children by reason, that to being convinced in their own hearts of the justice, beauty, and usefulnels of virtue, they might practifie it of their own accord, out of inclination and with pleafure.

That we may be able to exhort children as is fitting, it is requifite to be well acquainted with their temper, and to obferve which are their predominant inclinations; that if those inclinations are good, they may be cultivated,

### CAUSE V.

# Corruption of Christians.

cultivated, and if bad corrected. And it is eafy to know the temper of children, becaufe they deal ingenuoufly, and have not yet learned the art of diffembling. If men did make this their ftudy, if they did take hold of the good difpolition which may be in children, if they did apply themfelves to oppofe the predominant faults, to which either their age or their conflictution inclines them; they would preferve them from many vices, and make them great proficients in virtue.

Befides this, parents either by themfelves or others, ought to watch over the conduct of their children, and to enquire frictly, whether they practife the leffons which are given them, whether they are afraid of doing ill things, whether they forbear thole faults for which they have been reprov'd, whether they refift thole vicious inclinations, whether they are gentle, fober, humble and moderate in their difcourfes, actions, and behaviour. To this end, it is very proper, that they fhould not have too much liberty, and that they fhould be for the moft part under the eye of iome wile perfons, who may obferve their deportment. I do not enlarge upon thefe confiderations, becaufe they would carry me too far; neither do I fpeak here of encouragement, correction, and example, nor of fome other means which might be very ufefully taken in hand for regulating the conduct of children, becaufe thefe have been fpoken to already.

There is ground enough to conclude from what has been faid, that corruption proceeds primarily and chiefly from the ill education of youth. The ordinary education of children being not Chriftian, what wonder is it, that true Chriftianity and folid virtue fhould be fo fcarce? The firft imprefisons are the ftrongeft. The principles which have been imbibed in the firft years of life, do not wear out afterwards; and those who had not a good education, are not often known to be wife and regular in their conduct.

Let it not be objected here, what many are wont to alledge upon this fubject. That the errors of education are not fo confiderable, but that they may be corrected afterwards, and that wifdom comes with years. Thus those men reason who only examine things fuperficially; but fuch perfons did never ferioully reflect upon man's temper, upon the manner how ill habits are formed, or upon experience. Almoit all good or ill habits begin in infancy, and they grow fironger afterwards. The age which fucceeds youth is fo far from fupplying the defects of education, that on the contrary, the longer a man lives, the more difficult it is for him to return to virtue, if he did not fet out well at first. For befides, that habits are then fironger and deeper rooted, bufinefs does also come with age, and people have no longer that leifure and freedom, which they had when they were young. Those therefore who do not take right measures early, and who launch into the world with ill principles, are fill growing worfe infread of amending. This is verified by daily experience. Age feldom alters men for the better.

I do not deny, but that people who were neglected in their infancy, or whole youth has been unruly, are fometimes known to change their manners and their conduct, when they come to a riper age. But we are to confider how this change happens, and what the nature of it is. In fome it is a thorough change and a fincere return to virtue. God S 2 fometimes works conversion in the greatest finners; and he does this commonly by afflictions, fickneffes and pains. But fuch kinds of converfion are not very frequent. The change which we think we observe both in our felves and others, is not always fincere; it is often no more than an effect of age, of the flate we are in, or of cuftom.

Age does two things, it deadens the paffions, and it changes them. In the heat of youth paffions are violent, and make a great flir; when the prime of life is over, a man perhaps is no longer a libertine or a debofhee ; but his exterior only is reformed. The fame principle of corruption remains in his heart. He that was fenfual and given to lewdnefs, moderates himfelf; but fill his heart and his imaginations are defiled. He that was profane and impious, does' no longer profess libertinism openly, he practifes fome duties of religion. But for all that, he has no more devotion, or faith than before. Age does likewife change mens paffions and inclinations. Young people have their paffions, and supporting these should abate about forty or fifty, or even that they should be quite left off, which yet happens but feldom ; there are other paffions which fucceed those of youth, and which work the ftronger, becaufe they are not fo much mistrusted, and because they make less noise, and are hid under the pretence of a lawful calling. Thus we fee often that libertines and debofhees, end with ambition and covetoufnefs. The world calls the change which is observed in those men, conversion and amendment. A man is faid to be reclaimed from the errors of his younger days, when his conduct is no longer fcandalous, or manifeftly criminal; but if he is free from the faults of his youth, he is guilty of others, which he had not then. He is no longer diffolute, but he is a flave to ambition, he is covetous, unjust, and wedded to the world, more than ever. Nay, all things well confidered, he is worfe than he was in his youth; fince he has run from one vice into another, and loaded himfelf with the fins of the feveral ftages of life. We are not to imagine, that every alteration which age makes in mens conduct and manners is a true conversion.

The various states, callings, and professions of men, do likewise put many of them upon altering their way of living and make them give over those excelles to which they have been addicted for fome time. As foon as a man comes to be the mafter of a family, or to be preferred to places, he must of necessity grow more regular in his conduct, and forfake feveral diforders which he allowed himfelf in before. He becomes more ferious, he applies himfelf clofer to labour, he lives more retired, and he takes leave of the amufements of youth. Honour, decency, intereft, the neceffity of making a family, and other confiderations, oblige him to this; but religion has not always a fhare in this change.

Laftly, a habit of finning does often blind and harden men to that degree, that they imagine, there is a fincere amendment in them, when there is none at all; nay, when they are more corrupt than when they were young. Men at first are fensible of their faults, confcience checks them for the fins they commit ; but in process of time they perceive them. no more ; confcience grows feared, and they fin without being aware of it. Habits feldom fail to produce this effect, of which we fee a thousand inflances in old finners. All

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All this fnews, that the foundations of the conduct of our whole lives are laid in youth, and that the chief reason why men live ill, is because they have not been well educated.

I do not think it neceffary to mention the remedies of this Caufe of Corruption : I have obferved them all along, in fhewing the faults which are committed in the education of youth : I fhall only add, before I difmifs the fubject, that all this does properly concern mafters of families and paftors.

It were therefore to be wifhed, in the first place, that parents would take more care than they do, to breed their children well, and that in this they would proceed by the rules which reafon and religion prefcribe. They are miltaken if they think they may excuse themselves from this obligation, which both nature and piety lay upon them, and which cannot be neglected without a fin. But the carelefness of parents in this point, may very justly be wondered at; the education of their childron is generally that of all things which they mind the least, and the reason of it is, that they themfelves want religion and piety.

It would be requilite in the next place, that paftors fhould difcharge their duty with relation to young people, and that to this end in all places and Churches, the neceffary order and method were eftablished for instructing the people and particularly children. I remark this, because in this respect things are not well ordered, fo that in many places such helps and means are very much wanting. It is well known, that the opportunities of inftruction and the helps to piety are mighty fcarce in the country and in villages. Schools are there managed at a very ordinary rate, and many places have no fchool at all, whereby it happens that many perfons cannot fo much as read. There likewife, divine fervice is but feldom performed, and very carelefly too. The minifters who are appointed in those places, are generally either men of little worth, or men who do not watch over their flocks as they ought, and who are remifs in the exercife of their office. These are the effential defests which should be remedied, by those who have authority in Church or state.

Above all, it is requisite that Church-men should have a strict inspection over schools and families, and that catechifings were more frequent than they are. Young people ought to be the chief objects of the care of paltors; no part of their office is more uleful, or rewards their labours with better fuccels than that. Their endeavours to mend those who are come to age, are for the most part to little purpose, but what they do for children is of great benefit. If therefore they have a zeal for the glory of God, and if they wish to see a change in the face of the Church, let them apply themfelves to the inftructing of youth, and make it their bulinefs to form a new generation.

Among the particular establishments which might be made, for the edification of the Church and the benefit of young people there is one which would be of great use, and which feems to be abfolutely neceffary. And that is, that with relation to children, who have attained the age of difcretion, the fame order fhould be observed for their admission to the facrament, which was practifed in the primitive Church, when catechumens were to be received into the Church by baptifm. This admission miffion was very folemn. A long probation and inftruction went before it. The catechumens were required to give an account of their faith, and they bound themfelves by folemn promifes and vows, to renounce the world and to live holy. No fuch thing is done at this day in the administration of baptism, because young children are baptized; but what is not done at the time of baptism, should be done when they come to years of difcretion. And truly if there be not a publick and folemn profession, a promise in due form on the children's part, I do not see how we can well answer what is objected by fome against infant-baptifm, which yet is a good and laudable practice. A man cannot be obliged to profess the Christian religion, against his will or without his knowledge: this engagement is a perfonal thing, in which every body fhould act and anfwer for himfelf. When children are baptized, they know nothing of what is done to them; it is therefore abfolutely neceffary that when they come to the years of reafon, they fhould ratify and confirm, the engagements they came under by their baptism, and that they should become members of the Church out of knowledge and choice. Now the fitteft time for fuch a confirmation and promife, is when they are admitted to the participation of the holy facrament.

The order then which I mean is this: firft that when children defire to be admitted to the facrament, they fhould be infructed for fome weeks before, and that at the fame time they fhould be informed of the facrednefs and importance of this action, and of the promife they are to make, that fo they might prepare for it betimes. In the next place, that they fhould be examined, and that they fhould publickly render an account of their faith. This examination being over, that they fhould be required, to renew and confirm in a publick and folemn manner their baptifinal vow, to renounce the devil and his works, the world and the pomp of it, the flefth and its lufts, and to promife that they will live and die in the Chriftian faith : and then that they fhould be admitted to the communion by benediction and prayers.

It will no doubt, feem to fome, that I am here propofing a novelty, and that too not very neceffary; that there is no occasion for all this folemnity; that it is enough to examine and exhort children in private, and that this confirmation of the baptifinal vow is included and fuppofed in the admiffion to the facrament. To this I fay, that the order I propofe will be thought a novelty by none but fuch as do not know what was anciently practifed, and who call innovation every thing, which does not agree with the cuftom of their country or their Church. This is an imitation of the ancient and the apoftolical order; and befides, this eftablifhment being altogether fuitable to the nature of the Chriftian religion, as I have jult now made it appear, it ought not to be rejected.

As for what is faid, that it is fufficient if children are examined and admitted in private: I anfwer, that the corruption of the age we live in is fo great, that in many Churches this admillion, and the examination which precedes it, is but three or four hours work, and fometimes lefs. Pailors and those to whom this function is committed, do often go about it very negligently; they content themfelves with fome quefitions, which for the most part relate only to doctrine and controvers; they addrefs to children general exhortations to piety, but they take no care to

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instruct them in morals, or to examine their conduct; they do not require of them an express ratification of the baptismal vow. I know there are paffors who do their duty, but the best thing would be, to have this form of examination and admiffion regulated in fuch a manner, that it might not be in the breaft of every minister to do in this matter as he thinks fit. And that all this might be done the more orderly, it would be fitting that according to the practice of the primitive Church, fome perfons thould be appointed on purpose to instruct young people and catechumens. What care foever may be taken of children, and whatever may be done for them in private inftructions, it is certain, that publick and folemn exhortations on the one hand, and promifes on the other, would make a much greater impreffion upon them. They would then look upon their admission with respect, they would remember it all their lives, and this folemnity would prove as useful and edifying to the whole Church as it would be to young people. I offer this with the greater confidence, becaufe an order like this has been fettled of late in fome Churches, and is there obferved with extraordinary fuccefs.

#### CAUSE VI.

#### Example and Cuftom.

TAX HERE is no doubt to be made, but that birth, education. T and imitation, are three general principles of the irregularities of men's conduct. The ftate in which they are born gives them a byafs towards vice. Education, as has been thewn in the foregoing chapter, cherifhes and maintains in most men that vicious inclination : but cuftom and example give the finishing stroke to men's corruption, and make vice reign in the world with a fovereign fway. This third principle is fo general and fo powerful, that fome have thought it the chief caufe of corruption, and that we cannot better explain how fin is propagated and transmitted from the parents to the children, than by faying, that this happens through imitation. And indeed it cannot be denied, but that men are particularly drawn into evil by example and cuftom. If this be not the primary or the only fpring of corruption, it is at least one of the principal fources of it. And therefore I thought it proper to confider this matter here with fome attention.

All that I am to fay in this chapter is founded upon thefe two fuppofitions. I. I suppose that men love to act by imitation, and that example is one of those things which have the greatest force upon their minds. But when the example is general, and fupported by cuftom and multitude, they are yet more inclined to follow it. They not only conform to cuftom, but they think it befides just and lawful to do fo. General use is to them inftead of a law, by which they judge of what is innocent and forbidden. And that which doth yet more forcibly determine them to follow example and the greater numbers, is, that they think it a difgrace to do otherwife.

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otherwife. So that the fear of contempt added to their inclination makes them perfect flaves to cuftom. If fome remnant of knowledge and confcience does not fuffer them to imagine that there is no hurt in complying in all things with cuftom, however they comfort themfelves with the thought that the evil they do is not very great, and that if they are not innocent, they are excufable at leaft, when they can plead example and common practice in their own behalf.

I fuppofe adly, That example and cuftom are bad for the most part. This I think needs not be proved; and if it did, this whole treatife might afford us fufficient proofs of it, fince ignorance, prejudices, falle maxims and all the other caufes of corruption I have mentioned, are fo many difpolitions, fentiments and practices, which are grown cuftomary, and are established by the most general ufe.

But it is not fo needful to prove that the multitude of ill examples is very great, and that cuftom is generally vicious, as it is to fhew that under the fhelter of example and cuftom, corruption is ftill fpreading farther in the world and in the Church.

In order to this, I thall confider the power of cuftom and example, in thefe three refpects. With relation, I. To matters of faith. 2dly. To the order of the Church. And, 3dly. To manners. What I am to fay upon thefe three heads will difcover the fource of thofe three great imperfections which are obferved in the Chriftian Church, I mean error, want of order, and the bad life of Chriftians.

I. Matters of faith fhould not be fubjected to the tyranny of cuftom. Religion does not depend upon men's fancies and opinions: the truths of it are eternal truths, it is founded upon an immutable principle, and it is not more liable to change than God who is the author of it. And yet we fee but too frequently, that in religion as well as in worldly affairs, example is more prevalent than either reafon, juffice or truth. Men do fearce ever examine things in their own nature, but cuftom is the rule of their faith and fentiments; by this rule they determine what is true or falfe, what they are to believe or to reject. And this prejudice is fo flrong and men have carrried it fo far, that multitude and cuftom, are looked upon as a proof and character whereby Chriftians are to diffinguidh truth from error, and to judge what fide they are to chufe in matters of religion.

What is the reafon why fo many people do not perceive, that certain doctrines are palpable errors, and monftrous tenets? We wonder how it is pollible in to learned and refined an age as this is, that the grofileft fables and extravagances fhould fill go down with men of parts, for divine truths and adorable myfferies. A time will come, when pofterity will hardly believe, that ever fuch opinions were received, or that ever men did in earneft difpute for or againft fuch or fuch a tenet. It is only the prejudice of example and multitude, which do blind men at this day; they have been nurs'd up and educated in those perfuations, they see them obtaining among numerous focieties, and that is the occasion of their obflinacy in error.

Nothing but this inclination of men to follow cuftom, keeps up in the Church those diffutes which rend it into fo many different fects. The principle and defign of most diffutes is no other, but that men will main-

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tain at any rate, the fentiments of their party; and by this means those who are in error, inftead of being undeceiv'd, are more and more confirm'd in it. Every body fwallows without chewing, all that is profeft in the fociety or communion in which he lives, and condemns without examination the opinions which are maintained by finall numbers or by perfons of another country or fociety. Those who are prepoffeffed do not fo much as make it a queffion, whether they may not be miftaken, and whether the truth may not be on the other fide. It is to no purpose to alledge to fuch people the most invincible reasons, to press them with exprefs declarations of Scripture, or with un-anfwerable objections; for either they do not attend to all this, or if they examine those reasons and objections, it is with a mind full of prejudices, and refolv'd before-hand to think them frivolous, and not to alter their fentiments. They fatisfy themfelves with fome forry argument, or wretched anfwer. If any feruples and difficulties remain, they fhake them off in a trice, and fet their confcience at reft, with this confideration, that they follow the common opinion; they make no doubt but that they are fafe, as long as they fide with the greater number. Befides, the advantages of the world which may be obtain'd by the adhering to the general opinion, would fully determine them, if they were not determin'd before, and they eafily perfuade themfelves, that their fpiritual welfare and the truth are to be found in that party, which agrees beft with their temporal intereft.

2. Cuftom is likewife, the chief obffacle to the reftoring of order in the Church. I could here make a long article, if I would mention all the defects, which may be obferved in the flate of the Church and of religion, with relation to order. But having done this already in the beginning of this fecond part, I fhall only fay in general, that nothing contributes fo much to the maintaining of diforder as cuftom does. The moft beneficial laws and infitutions are look'd upon as dangerous innovations, when they are not authorized by practice : men dare not fo much as attempt to introduce them. On the other hand, ufelefs or ill practices, are thought facred eftablifhments, as foon as they are confirmed by time and cuftom. If men do but endeavour to lay afide fome ceremony, to make fome alteration in a liturgy, or in the form of divine-fervice; it feems to many, that the very effence of religion is flruck at. Thus it happens that abufes which are palpable, and acknowledged by all men of fenle, fubfift for whole ages and cannot be reformed.

The difficulty of reviving the apoftolical difcipline, and of reftoring, Church-government and the miniflery of paftors, to the flate they ought to be in, proceeds from the fame caufe. Becaufe a certain form of ecclefiaftical government and difcipline, obtains in a country, it is pretended to be the beft and moft perfect, in which nothing is to be altered, and thole are not fo much as heard, who propole the eltablithing of another. If any one thinks it a fault to fuffer fcandalous finners in the bofom of the Church, if he thinks that they ought to be excommunicated, and that Chriftians ought to maintain no familiar intercourfe with thems tho' fuch a man has the laws of the apoftles on his fide, yet he fhall be calle l an innovator. Tho' he fhould plainly flow the inconveniences of the ordinary practice, and the neceflity of difcipline, from Scripture, from the pattern of the firft Chriftian ages, and by the moft convincing arguments: arguments; yet cuftom will fill be urged against him; the divine laws fhall give place to common usage, and the present practice shall prevail above that of the primitive Christians.

III. Example and cuftom have a great force, efpecially in those things which concern manners. Men are not altogether fuch flaves to cuftom in matters of opinion about religion, because opinions are shut up within the heart, but in practical things and in manners, there are few men who are not carried away by the ftream of the multitude. People think themfelves excufed from the observation of the plainest and the most facred duties, as foon as they cannot obferve them without departing from cuftom, and fo they conform to the common use how bad foever it may be. Those who condemn the vicious and corrupt manners of the age, and practice the rules of the Gofpel, who for inftance abstain from fwearing, and reprove those who do it, who make fcruple of lying and of transgreffing the rules of their duty; are look'd upon in the world as humourfome people, and fligmatized with odious names and imputations. If they plead the express commands of Christ and his apostles; instead of giving up the caufe, men will ftrain the Scripture, and by forced explications and impious gloffes, endeavour to fix a fense upon it which may favour the ordinary practice. While piety dares not fhew it felf, vice is respected, and bad men carry it boldly every where, because the numbers are of their fide. Maxims directly opposite to the moral precepts of our Saviour, are not only received and tolerated, but they are defended as innocent for this fingle reason, that the generality of men approve and practife them. This might be confirmed by innumerable inftances.

We can hardly imagine any thing more contrary to the precepts of the Golpel, than that worldly life which is led by many Chriftians. They frend their whole time in the cares of the body, they wear out their lives in idlenefs, gaming, pleafures and divertifements; they deny themfelves nothing, they make it their fludy to live luxurioufly and to gratify them-This kind of life is inconfistent with piety, but because it obfelves. tains among perfons of the higher rank, it is very hard to perfuade those who follow it, that they ought to quit it. It is by alledging common practice, that men defend a foft and effeminate life, fashions contrary to chaftity and modefty, the too great familiarity of the young perfons of both fexes, the reading of ill books, the plays which wound honefty and religion, scandalous diversions, and those affemblies where the most enticing baits and allurements to vice are to be met with, and where the minds of young people receive the most dangerous impressions: all these things, I fay, are defended by cuftom.

So that when luxury, and expensiveness and ftate in apparel, eating, or furniture, are once established; we endeavour to no purpose to bring men to Christian moderation, and to banish that multitude of scandals and vices, which must needs attend such kind of excesses. Thus in some nations where drunkenness is in vogue, it is in vain to oppose so vicious a custom. In spight of all that can be faid against drunkenness and intermperance, people are so far from parting with that vice, that they fancy there is no fin in being drunk.

To put up no injuries, to indulge revenge, to be tender and nice upon the point of falfe honour, to flick at nothing that can promote one's fortune, to affume all fhapes, to difguife one's fentiments, and to fupplant others; all thefe arc maxims which are followed without feruple, becaufe they are authorized by ufe, and by the falfe opinions of men. It would fignifie nothing to alledge to thofe who are pofielfed with fuch fentiments, what the Gofpel enjoyns us concerning patience, forgiving of injuries, humility, fincerity, juffice and charity; fuch morals will not be fo much as hearkened to, becaufe thefe matters are otherwife determined to cuffom. By the fame reafon it is pretended, that in offices, in trade, in arts and in the various profeffions of life; every thing which is ufually practified by men in thofe feveral callings, may lawfully be done. Nay, even an oath is not fufficient to undeceive people; moft men explain their oaths and regulate their conficiences by the examples of others; they ufe all the methods of gain which cuffom has introduced, without enquiring whether they are juffifiable or not.

When I ipeak here of cuftom and example, I do not only mean that which is eftablifhed by general uc, but that likewife which is authorized by men in credit. The quality of perfons produces the fame effect that great numbers do; one fingle example has fometimes as much force, as the united examples of a multitude. All that is done and approved of by princes, great men, magiftrates, and perfons of quality, is a law to a great many people. A final number of confiderable perfons, who join their endeavours to bring a practice into fafhion, is enough to make it in a little time to be generally followed, how bad foever it may be. This is fo commonly feen, that I think it needlefs to give inflances of it.

I shall add three confiderations, which deferve a very particular attention; I have already touched them by the by, but I will propose them more diffinctly here.

1. That common opinion, that it is neceffary to embrace the fentiments and the ways of living which are received in the world, is that which makes corruption fpread and infinuate it felf every where. Men make it a law to themfelves, and repute it honourable to comply with cuftom. It is laid down for a maxim, that we must live as others do, and accommodate our felves to the faihions which are established, and that it would make us ridiculous, if in behaviour and manners we should differ from the age and the place we live in. I do not abfolutely reject this maxim, because it is capable of a very good fence. A Christian fhould not profess an unsociable piety: he may lawfully observe certain decences, and comply to a certain degree with the opinions and manners of those he converses with; nay, he ought to do this for the interest of religion and piety. But fuch a compliance and fuch regards become criminal, when they engage him to act against duty and confcience. If the cuftom be bad, he ought to depart from it, and to do in fpite of it. whatfoever God commands; he does not deferve the name of a Chriftian, who has not the courage to do this.

And yet few people are capable of this refolution, the greateft part is overcome by the temptation of the multitude; the regard they bear to the example and judgement of others, produces in them a falle fhame which hinders them from doing their duty, and prompts them to evil notwithstanding all the checks of conficience. And nothing is fo fatal and permicious in the flate of those who thus comply with custom, as that that they become fuch habitual flaves to it, that they are no more able to alter their conduct. When a man is once got into a certain courfe of life in the world, he purfues it, and he is ftill engaging deeper into it, till at laft he comes under a kind of impoffibility of leaving it tho' he would; becaufe in order to that, he muft break of thofe ties and engagements, which he has been contracting for a great while; he muft withdraw from divers companies, and enter quite upon another way of living; now it is very feldom, if ever, that people can refolve upon all this.

2. Even those perfons who are well difpos'd, are fhaken by example and cultom: I faid fomething of this in the chapter of falfefhame. A great many are fatisfied, that the fide of the multitude is not the beft, and that the manners of the age do not agree with religion; but they dare not fwerve from cultom, the fear of being hated, reproached, or defpifed, reftrains them, and frequently, extorts finful compliances from them.

I shall take notice to this purpose of what happens every day to young people, whom parents have endeavoured to breed up to piety and good manners. When they first go out of their father's house, they are ashamed and afraid of doing ill things, fin raises some kind of horror in them. With these dispositions they lanch into the world, they are placed either in the army or at court. And there they do not find those maxims of piety practifed which have been infufed into them, but they have only ill examples before their eyes. They fee there perfons who have been recommended to them for patterns, of whom they are to learn how to behave themfelves, upon whom their promotion and fortunes depend, and who are reputed honeft men; they fee fuch perfons I fay living in a licentious manner. This at first surprizes and troubles them, their confcience holds out for a while, but example does infenfibly leffen in them the abhorrence of vice, their good dispositions vanish in a little time, and at last they fwim with the ftream, they embolden themfelves in ill things, and they become finished libertines. They do in like manner drink in the atheiftical fentiments, which commonly are in fashion among persons of quality. If they are but told, that men of wit and qaulity do not believe a thing, or, that they entertain any opinion; that is enough to make them embrace that opinion, and queftion the truths of religion.

3. In the laft place men are apt to think that if cuftom does not juftify, it does at leaft excuse vice, and that if they do amifs in the following the general practice, it is but a fin of infirmity which God will not take notice of. This is the laft refuge of a great many perfons; they will own, that mens manners are very much depraved, and that there is little of true piety among them, but they will fay; this is the fashion now adays, this is the way of the world, and he cannot be very guilty, who does only what others do. Nay, feveral men who are not libertines, and who fee what fhould be done for the good of the Church, and the promoting of piety, fancy themfelves under no obligation to oppofe cuftom. Their excuse is, That it fignifies nothing to strive against a torrent. So that floth and timoroufness together, magnifying the difficulties which their imagination represents to them, they make no efforts, and they let things go on at the ufual rate. While cuftom corrupts and blinds fome, it intimidates and difcourages others; and thus vice and diforder are ftill taking deeper roots.

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Now two forts of remedies may be applied to this caufe of corruption, to wit, particular and general remedies.

The particular remedies are those cautions which every body ought to use, to prevent his being feduced by example and custom. There are two principal means for a man to keep himself free from this feduction, the first is to avoid ill examples as much as possible, to withdraw from those conversations, and to abstain from those imployments which draw men into fin, and to chuse a kind of life which may not engage us too far into the world; and on the contrary, to feek after good examples, and to be conversant with virtuous perfons.

\* But as notwithftanding all these circumspections, we cannot avoid being often tempted by ill example, fo we ought in the fecond place to arm and fortify our felves against this temptation ; by strongly possessing our minds with the fentiments which religion infpires. I have fnewed elsewhere, what judgement a Christian ought to make of custom and men's opinion. It is evident, that God having fet us a law, by which he will judge us, and having given us the knowledge of that law, and powerful encouragements to make it the rule of our deportment; neither example nor the judgement of the world, can any ways excufe us from doing what God commands, or deliver us from the punishment which our difobedience deferves. Those who have a greater regard to cuftom than to their duty, are fo much the more inexcufable; becaufe the Gofpel exprefly forbids us, to govern our felves by the practife or example of the men of the world. St. Paul exhorts Christians, + Not to be conformed to this prefent world, not to walk after the course of this world, not to follow other men's way of living; to renounce the world and the lufts of it. Our Saviour enjoyns his difciples, To avoid the wide gate and the broad way of the multitude, and to firike into the narrow path which is walked in but by a few. These are reflections, which every man who believes the Gospel. should frequently and feriously make, and which should ferve him for remedies against the temptations arising from example and custom.

There are other general remedies, which tend to leffen the number of bad examples, and to alter the cuftom and ufages which are contrary to the Chriftian religion. For tho' it may feem, that to go about the abolifting of that which is eftablifhed, by a general cuftom and a long ufe, is to attempt an impofibility; and tho' we cannot expect that this caufe of corruption fhould be entirely removed, yet the difficulty is not fo great, but that it might in fome measure be overcome.

This we might have reafon to hope for, if firft, thofe who know and love their duty would difcharge it with courage, and if they did add to their knowledge a zeal fupported by prudence and firmnefs. How great foever the degeneracy of men may be, there is ftill fomething in virtue, which attracts their refpect and their love. The endeavours of good men againft vice, are always attended with fome fuccefs: if the benefit of their exhortations and good examples does not reach far, they may at leaft be uteful to their families and their acquaintance.

But fomething more than this is requifite to reform general cuftoms and

• See Part I. Caufe III. Art. II. 4, &c. Caufe V. Art. II. about the end. † Rom. xii. Eph. ii. and iv. Tit. ii. Mat. vii. 13, 14. and practices; and none can do this more eafily and effectually, than those who are raised above other men, and who are in publick frations. I fay therefore fecondly, That if Christian princes and magistrates, would use their authority to this end, and be exemplary themselves, the corruption of the world would confiderably abate, and bad examples would neither be fo frequent nor fo forcible as they are. It is in their power to banish the greatest part of those customs which are commonly received, and to effablish contrary ones. The care and example of pastors are likewise a most efficacious remedy. If they did instruct Christians as they ought, if they did oppole the corruption of the age with the pure maxims of the Gofpel, if they did fet themselves against abuses, if they did endeavour in publick and in private, to bring all those that err into the way of truth, if they applied themfelves to the inftructing of youth, and if their manners were edifying and exemplary, there is no doubt but that they would foon ftop the current of vices and fcandals. It fhould be their chief care to oppose abuses and ill customs in their beginnings : because when they have once taken root, the remedy is much more difficult. In fine, as cuftoms are eftablished by degrees, so they are not abolished all at once, and therefore those who do not succeed at first in for good a defign, ought not prefently to be difcouraged and to grow away.

# CAUSE VII.

Books.

DEXC HIS is the laft Caufe of Corruption which I shall mention, but T & without queftion, it is one of the moft general and of the moft remarkable. Books are as many publick fountains, from which vaft numbers of notions and fentiments which are commonly received among men, and which are the principles of their actions, diffuse themfelves into the world : and as it is impossible but that among an infinity of books, a great many must be bad, so it is certain, that books contribute very much to the keeping up of corruption. If men, as we have fhewed in the precedent chapters, are ignorant and full of prejudices, if they have loofe and impious notions concerning religion, if great defects are observable, both in the lives of Christians and in the state of the Church in general; if the people are ill inftructed, and children are ill educated, the caufe of all thefe diforders is partly to be found in books. It is therefore a most important fubject which I am to handle in this chapter, but it is likewife a very large one by reafon of the prodigious multitude of books, which I might have an opportunity to fpeak of here. But I must confine my felf to that which is most material to be faid upon this head. I fhall speak, I. Of ill books. And, 2. Of books of religion.

The number of bad books is infinite, and it would be very hard to give a catalogue of them; but I think that among all the forts of ill books none do greater mifchief in the world, than either those which lead to irreligion irreligion and impiety, or those which are impure and filthy. The first attack faith, and the other corrupt manners.

I. The moft dangerous of all books are those which attack religion, fuch are not only all the books of Atheifts and Deifts, but fuch are likewife all those works which tend to overthrow either the authority of the holy Scripture, or the facts and doctrines of Christianity, or the difference between virtue and vice, or any other principle of religion. I rank allo in the fame order the books which introduce scepticis, and the defign of which is, to render the principles of faith or morality uncertain and dubious.

Those books in which impiety appears bare-faced, are not the most pernicious. Few perfons ever durft maintain Atheilin openly, or deny directly the fundamentals of religion. And befides avowed Atheifts and Deifts have not many followers. Their opinions raife horrour, and a man's mind rebels againft them. But those men, who tho' they do not openly efpouse the cause of impiety, but pretending all the while that they acknowledge the exiftence of a God and a religion; do yet fhake the principal truths of faith; those men, I fay, diffuse a much more subtil and dangerous poifon, and this may be particularly faid of the Scepticks. In the main they drive at the fame thing with the Atheifts, they affault religion with the fame weapons, and make the fame objections. There is only this difference, that the Atheist decides the question and denies, whereas the Sceptick after he has muftered up all the objections of the Atheist and started a thousand foruples, leaves in fome manner the queftion undetermined; he only infinuates that there is no folid anfwer to those difficulties, and then he concludes with a falle modefly, and tells us, that he dares not embrace either fide, and that which way foever a man turns himfelf, he meets with nothing but obscurity and uncertainty: this differs little from Atheifm, and it does naturally lead to incredulity.

It is an aftonishing thing, that books containing fuch pernicious principles should have been published, and that libertinism in opinions about religion, should have grown up to that pitch which we now fee it at. The enemies of Christianity did never oppose it with so much fublety and with such vigorous efforts, as some Christians do at this day. Some books appear from time to time, which are only collections of all the objections of Heathens and Atheist against the existence of God, against Providence, the divinity of Scripture, the truth of facred history, the foundations of morality, and many other important heads; so that impiety is now arrived at its greatest height. It might be more general, but we cannot imagine how it could rife higher.

And this occafions a very confiderable objection. It may be afked; How it came to pais that incredulity and feepticifm, fhould appear in fo knowing an age as this is, and that men of parts and learning fhould entertain fuch impious fentiments? It is neceflary to dwell a little upon the examining of this difficulty, becaufe it is fo apt to perplex many. The Infidels urge it with great affurance, and they pretend to infer from it, that religion cannot ftand a philofophical and learned age, and that none but the mob and the credulous part of mankind believe it. They fay, that ignorant ages were the moft favourable times to religion, that then every

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every thing was believed; but that fince men have begun to examine matters a little more narrowly they are become credulous.

But any reafonable man who does not love wrangling, may eafily be fatisfied upon this point. Firft, Infidels have no ground to fuppofe, that men had more faith, in the ages of ignorance than they have now; for this fuppofition is altogether falle. There was but little faith in thofe ages, for we are not to call by the name of faith, a filly credulity which made the groffeft impoftures to pafs then current, for certain, and even for divine truths. The Infidels do likewife fuppofe falfly that the learning of an age more enlightened than the precedent, is prejudicial to refligion; for on the contrary it has done great fervices to it. If fome fubtle fpirits have attackt it, a great many knowing and judicious perfors of extraordinary erudition and eminent worth have illuftrated and proved the truth of it, with greater folidity of arguments, than ever was known before. This mult be acknowledged to the honour of God, and for the credit of the Chriftian religion.

But it will be faid, That those who make objections against religion, are learned; that they are philosophical men, who in all other things reafon true, and can diffinguish truth from error. Let it be fo; but then I afk those who urge this objection, how it happens that we fee every day inen of parts and fenfe, who yet will obstinately maintain palpable errors, and refuse to yield to the evidence of fome truths, which are clear as the fun? To this nothing elfe can be faid, but that fuch men are not fo knowing and perfpicacious as they fhould be, or that they do not make that use which they ought of their parts and judgement. I confess, that indeed that a man mult have fome parts and fubtility to be able to find difficulties every where. But that man makes a wretched use of his parts, when they ferve him only to wrangle about the most certain truths. . Those which the Infidels call ftrong objections against the truths of faith, are but for the most part vain subtilties and meer flights of wit, which may be used alike upon all forts of subjects. That we may be convinced of this, 1 shall only name here fome of those truths or matters of fact, which are thought unquestionable, and which no man, tho' he had a mind, can doubt of. It is certain that the fame objections by which the Infidels attack religion, may be turned against fuch truths or matters of fact. The fubtilities of fcepticifin may puzzle a man, who fhall maintain, that there was heretofore an emperor at Rome called Augustus, or who fhall believe with all mankind that parents ought to love their children, and that it would be a fin to murder a poor wretch who is begging an alms; I fay, a man, who maintains thefe truths, may be hard put to it, before he can get rid of all the questions of a captious sophister. But does it follow from thence that this man is miftaken? Is it to be imagined that a man can doubt in good earnest whether or not there was ever at Rome an emperour named Augustus, or whether parents ought to love their children ? Will any ever be fo extravagant as to believe ferioufly, that it is indifferent whether we can cut a poor man's throat, or give him an alms? The fubtilities of arguments fignify nothing against facts which are well averred, or against those natural fentiments, which are common to all mankind. Now religion is founded upon facts, and its principles are in part natural truths and fentiments, which

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which we must needs feel and believe at all times. He that would deftroy religion must confute those facts and sentiments, and infidelity will never be able to do it.

Philofophical knowledge is very much extolled by the Infidels; they pretend chiefly to a great exactness in reasoning, and yet they visibly run counter to right reafon, and tranfgrefs the rules which true philofophy prefcribes. It is contrary to reafon, to judge that a thing is falle or dubious, because there are fome difficulties in it; it ought to be confidered, that no man knows all things, or is able to answer all objections, and that what feems obfcure to one man, will appear very clear to another. When we have reafons on the other hand to believe that a thing is true. when its proofs are ftronger and more numerous than its difficulties, and when there are proofs which upon other occasions are sufficient to determine our judgment, true fense requires that we should yield to fuch an evidence. This method is particularly to be followed, when the matter in queftion is of fome moment. In fuch things we are wont to govern our felves by the greater evidence, and to chufe the fafer fide. What can be therefore more irrational, than to hazard eternity, and to queftion the truth of religion, upon fuch confiderations as would have no weight with us, and as would not ftop us a minute in the ordinary affairs of this life?

Further, it is contrary to the rules of good fenfe, to pafs a judgment upon those things of which we have no diffinct idea, or which we do not thoroughly know. Men who can give no account of the operations of their fouls, or of a hundred things, they fee before their eyes, will yet talk at random about the manner in which God acts, or forefees future events; about what God ought or ought not to have done for the orderly disposing of all things; about the ends which that fupreme Being proposes to it felf, and about the means which may conduce to those ends. This is the height of extravagance and temerity, and yet it is at this rate, that the Infidels reafon.

I muft add befides, that men of parts are fubject to the fame paffions with the vulgar, and that those paffions hinder them from differing the truth. These makers of objections who pretend to politeness and wit, are not generally found at heart, but they love licentiousness; they are not addicted perhaps to a grofs and fhameful, but to a more refined libertinifin; they observe a little decorum, but they do not relift the maxims of devotion and piety, and they cannot endure to be tied to them. Vanity has likewise a great fhare in their conduct. A great many imagine, that it is for their credit to diffinguish themselves from the vulgar, and not to believe the things which are believed by the people: and when they have once embraced this way and fet up for Scepticks in the world, they think themselves bound in point of honour, to maintain that character.

Men of knowledge are fometimes governed by many prejudices, and falfe motives. A preconceived notion or a meer circumftance is fufficient to determine them to the embracing of an opinion. What has been faid of the conduct of princes, may be applied to the opinions and hypothefes of the learned. Wars and fuch other great events, upon which the fate of nations depend, and which make fo much flir in the world, do not always proceed from wife and mature deliberation; fome-Vol. VI. T

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times they are but the effect of a paffion, of a humour, or of fome particular circumflance. Thus it is with the learned : we think too well of them, if we fancy that they are always determined by the greater weight of reafon. The motives which prompt them to maintain certain opinions, are often very flight. They are not fenfible of this; they think themfelves guided by reafon, and they do perceive the true principle of their actions or judgments. If Infidels did ftrictly examine themfelves, they would find perhaps, that their foruples were first raifed, and have been maintained fince, either by fome book they read when they were young, or by the love they had for fome perfons, or by their averfion to others, or by fome ill treatment they have met with, or by the praifes which have been given them for their wit, or by fome prejudice they have conceived againft religion in general, when they heard it ill defended ; or againft certain tenets which are particular to the fociety they live in, and manifeftly abfurd; or by fome other motion of this nature.

If we call to mind in the laft place, what has been faid in the beginning of this treatife, to wit, That few Chriftians apply themfelves fincerely to the fludy of the general truths, and of the principles of faith; we fhall not wonder that among fo many, who never inquired into the proofs of religion, fome fhould be inveigled by the objections of libertines, and fall into infidelity.

I have in a manner flept out of my way; but this digreffion is not impertinent, fince these confiderations may serve as a remedy against incredulity and scepticifin, which some authors would fain establish by their writings.

One would think that every body fhould abhor those impious books, but yet they are read and liked by many perfons. Young people efpecially, who for the most part love novelty, and are inclined to vanity and licentioufnefs, do eafily imbibe the principles which are fcattered through fuch books : they are imposed upon by the genteelness, the wit, and some kind of learning which they commonly find there: being not well grounded in religion, they are ftruck with the reasonings of Infidels; the very first objection puzzles them; they begin to doubt of many things, and in a little time they become thorough-paced Scepticks. I leave any one to judge, what effects this may produce in an age to prone to vice as this is, and if young people can avoid being corrupted, when they are no longer reftrained by religion and confcience. There is no condition more remediles, nor is there any state more deplorable, than when incredulity is joyned with diffoluteness of manners. People then are hardly to be reclaimed; age and ill life fortify their doubts and fcruples, and they continue in that flate to their dying day. This is the fruit which many reap from the reading of those pernicious books, but it is not all the mifchief which is occafion'd by fuch writings. They may fall into the hands of many who have no great compass of knowledge, and beget feveral fcruples in the minds even of good men. After these reflections, I make no doubt but it will be granted, That no books are more dangerous than these, and that to have the confidence of publifting them, is a fuperlative degree of impiety.

II. The books I have now fpoken of, affault religion and piety in general, and by confequence open a door to all manner of diforders and vices. vices. There are others which tho' they do not attack the principles of faith, do yet introduce licentioufnefs of manners. It would be a long work, if I fhould (pecify here their feveral forts, which are as many as there are vices, paffions, or received errors among men: this is a detail which I 'cannot enter into. Being then forced to ftint myfelf, I fhall only fpeak of impure books: and I chufe this particular fpecies of ill books, becaufe the number of thefe is not only very great, but becaufe they are those likewile, which do moft generally corrupt men.

Their number is prodigious. Firft we have the obfcene books of the Heathens, which are not only read by men, but are put likewife into the hands of youth. Some people are fo infatuated with thefe books, that they fancy one cannot be a mafter of the Greek or Latin, unlefs he has read all the obfcenities written in thofe two languages; which is as extravagant an opinion, as if a man fhould pretend, that whofoever defigns to acquire a thorough knowledge of the French, or of any other living language, and to be able to fpeak and write elegantly in it, mult read all the lewd poems and all the fcandalous books which this age has produced.

Secondly, Befides impure books of Pagan authors, we have thole that are writ by Chriftians. The world is over-run with books of this ftamp, their number increafes every day, and their amazing multitude is one of the ftrongeft proofs of the extreme corruption of the times. It is the laft degree of impudence to write in that ftyle, and then to difperfe it in the world by the prefs : the diffolution muft needs be very great, when this is done fo freely and fo often as it is in this age. Nothing can be imagined more lafcivious or execrable than fome books which have been, and ftill are publifhed from time to time : Paganifm did never produce any thing more abominable upon the head of impurity, than feveral works which were hatch'd in the very bofom of Chriftianity; fo that in this refpect Chriftians have no caufe to reproach Heathens.

These detestable books are not the only impure ones, nor perhaps the more dangerous; vaft numbers of others, are current in the world. What are so many books of love and gallantry, so many feandalous novels either feigned or true, and so many licentious pieces of poetry, but the productions of that spirit of impurity and diffoluteness which prevails in this age? Nay, even books of learning which treat of ferious subjects, have a mixture of impurity. This infection is diffused through all forts of books, and appears every day in some new stage.

As the number of impure books is great, fo their effect is moft pernicious; and none ought to wonder that I fhould affign thefe books as one of the general caufes of corruption. No bad books are more generally read than thefe, none can with more reafon be called publick fountains of vice and diffolutenefs. The mifchief they do in the world cannot be imagined. They prove to an infinity of perfons, but effecially to young people, fchools of licentioufnefs. It is by the reading of them, that youth learn to know and to love vice. That age is prone to pleafure and to every thing that gratifies fenfe; and that inclination is fo much the ftronger, becaufe it is cherifhed and fortified by an education altogether fenfual, and becaufe young people for want of good inftruction, have not much piety, nor any great averfion to vice. From whence we may eafily judge, that they are fufceptible of thofe paffions which gra-

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tifie fenfuality; and that it is hard for them to refift thole imprefions, which the reading of impure books conveys into their minds. We fee in fact, that uncleannefs is commonly the first fin and the first paffion which feduces men in their youth, and which engages them into vice, for their whole life: for it feldom happens but that all the ages of life, retain a fpice of the irregularities of youth.

And yet for all that, these books have their advocates. Many perfons reckon, that there is no harm either in reading, or even in publishing them. If we believe fome authors, who infect the publick with books full of obscenities; none but fantaftical people, possefield with a ridiculous and precife devotion find fault with those that write upon this fubject. And in defence of their opinion, they alledge this maxim, \* To the pure all thing are pure; as if St. Paul who does not allow Christians fo much as to fpeak an undecent word, did permit them to read and write things which are contrary to modefty, and may occasion scandal: from this maxim they conclude, that there is nothing in those books that offends modelty or religion; and they proteft that for their part, the reading of them does not defile their imagination. I do not know the particular frame of those men's hearts; perhaps impure ideas and lascivious objects, are grown to familiar to them, that they do no longer perceive, that fuch ideas and objects make any impreffion upon them. But it is unconceivable how people can preferve a chafte heart, when they delight in writing or reading filthy things. After all, tho' the reading of fuch works fhould have no ill effects upon fome perfons, there are a great many more who will make an ill use of them; and this is enough to make every man who has any fenfe of religion to deteft impure books.

What I have now faid will be granted by many, but it will be thought, that to rank books of love and gallantry among impure books, and to condemn the reading of them, is fomething too fevere. I confefs, that all those books are not equally bad, and that fome do not hurt modefly fo visibly as others do. But yet there are not many, in which a spirit of impurity and licentioufnefs may not be obferved. That love which makes the fubject of fo many books, is nothing elfe at bottom, but an impure and irregular paffion, of which the Gospel obliges us to stifle the very first motions. What the world calls a meer intrigue of gallantry, is fometimes a pretty large ftep towards the fin of adultery. Sin indeed may be difguifed in those books under another name, and may be drefs'd in a modest garb, but that makes it slide the more easily into the mind. It is dangerous to dally with things, which deferve the utmost averfion of a Chriftian; and it is almost impossible but that the horrour of impurity and of every thing that comes near it, must infensibly abate, in any one who is addicted to fuch readings. There are two maxims in the Gofpel which decide this matter; the one is, + That we are to abstain from the appearance of evil the other, that in things indifferent, we ought to avoid whatfoever may prove a fcandal or an occafion of falling to any body, especially when the scandal may be foreseen. Now here is at least the appearance of evil; it is certain that divers perfons will make an ill use of those books, and by consequence the reading and publishing of them cannot be excufed. But

• Tit, i. 15. + 1 Theff. v. 22. Sce Rom. xiv. 13. 1 Cor. 10, &c.

But as if it were not enough to maintain, that the books in queftion may be read without fin; it is pretended befides, that the reading of them is ufeful and neceflary to open the minds of young people. I do not deny but that it is a valuable quality to have quick and well-fathioned parts, but there are other books which may be read without danger, and which are much fitter to form the minds and judgments of young people, than books of gallantry, the reading of which, every body knows, has often fpoiled the minds of thofe who were given to it. The greateft mifchief that attends this kind of reading, is that it corrupts the heart and fullies the imagination, at the fame time that it opens the mind. Now it were better to have a little lefs of that fafhionablenefs and politenefs of parts, which is fo much effeemed in the world, than to acquire it at the expence of one's innocency.

But fome people do not ftop here. They proceed to far as to fay, that thefe books are ufeful even in reference to religion, and that they are proper to reftrain youth from vice; becaufe we fee in them the follies and misfortunes which irregular paffions betray men into. I can hardly think that this is alledged in earneft. It is a ftrange fort of remedy againft impurity, to make agreeable pictures of love, and to reprefent minutely, and in a natural and infinuating manner, all the motions which that paffion excites in thofe who are poffelfed with it. We muft be very ill acquainted with the tempers of men, and particularly of young people, if we can fancy that the reading of fuch books, will put them upon moral reflections, and infpire them with an averfion to vice. Daily experience fhews that nothing is more vain or falfe than fuch an imagination.

It will be faid, that at least those books ought to be excepted, in which among love-matters and licentious fubjects, the reader meets with fine moralities; which may however ferve for a prefervative. But thefe books are not much better than the others; nay, I cannot tell whether they are not more dangerous. Those moralities are very ill placed, and few people are the better for them. It is a very fufpicious kind of morality, which comes from the pen of those authors, who write indifferently upon matters of love, and religious fubjects; who fometimes feem to be libertines and fometimes devout; who after they have faid a hundred licentious things, given you the hiftory of a great many diforders, and related feveral fcandalous paffages; entertain you with devotion and piety : this is a monstrous mixture. If those authors were truly religious, they would forbear writing those things which religion condemns, and which fcandalize the publick. Such books are particularly fit to confirm worldly men in their opinion, that gallantry, provided it does not proceed to the higheft degree of crimes is no great fin, and to perfuade young people that they may eafily grow devout hereafter, tho' they now fpend their youth in libertinifm. From all these confiderations I infer, that let people fay what they will, all the books which prefent their readers with impurity, either bare-faced, or under fome vail, are extremely pernicious.

Having thus difcourfed of ill books, I come now to the books of religion. It may feem at firft, that I fhould rather feek in thefe the remedy, than the caufe of corruption. Indeed the end of religious books fhould be to banifh corruption and to eftablifh piety in the world, and T 3

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here are many of them which attack ignorance and vice with fuccefs, and which may prove excellent prefervatives against the corruption of the age. But I hope no body will take it amifs if I fay that there are books of religion, which do not conduce much to the promoting of piety, nay that fome prove hind'rance to it.

This I fhall now endeavour to fhew. I fhall not fpeak of any particular book, I will only offer fome general confiderations, which my readers may apply as they fee caufe. It is not my defign to rank among bad books all those works, to which fome of the following reflections may be applied. Some indeed are down-right bad, but many are in feveral respects good and useful tho' they have their faults; and as good books ought to be diffinguished from bad ones, fo is it no less necellary, to difcern what is good in every book, from what is naught or useles.

The books of religion which I think ought here to be taken notice of, are of four forts. 1. Those which explain the Scripture. 2. The books of divinity. 3. The books of morality. 4. The books of devotion.

1. It cannot be denied but that among the books of the first fort there fome very good ones, and that we have at this day great helps for the understanding of the holy Scripture. But it ought likewife to be granted, that fome of those books which are defigned for the expounding of Scripture, do only obfcure and perplex the fense of it. It would be tedious to mention here all the defects of that kind of writing, I thall therefore obferve only the principal.

1. The first and the most effential is the not expounding of Scripture, according to its true meaning; and this fault, which is but too frequent in commentaries, proceeds chiefly from two caufes: 1. That expositors do not apprehend the fcope of the facred writers: and, 2. That they enter with prejudices upon the reading of Scripture.

The true way to underftand the Scripture, is, to know the fcope of it, and never to fiverve from that. Good fenfe and picty, joyned with the fludy of languages, hiftory, and antiquity, are here very ferviceable. A commentator cught in a manner to transport himfelf into those places and times in which the facted authors lived. He fhould fancy himfelf in their circumftances, and confider what their defign was, when they fpoke or writ; what perfons they had to deal with, and what notions, knowledge or cuftons did then obtain. But those who, being ignorant of these things, fet about expounding the Scripture, can hardly do it with funces. It is a wonder if they do not mifs the true mark, and if they do not obtrude forced, and very often, falle gloffes upon their readers.

On the other hand, many authors apply themfelves to the examining of Scripture with a mind full of prejudices. They explain it by the prefent notions of the world. Nothing is more ufual with commentators than to make the faithful under the Old Teftament fpeak as if they had been as well acquainted with the truths of the Gofpel as Chriftians are; and as if those queftions and disputes, which are treated in commonplaces of divinity, had been agritated at that time. When those expositors, for inftance meet with the word *righteous* or *righteoufnels* in the *Pfalms*, they fancy that *David* had in his thoughts all that divines have vented concerning juffification; and upon this fuppofal, what do they not fay, or what do they not make preachers fay? It has been observed, that almost almost all commentators are partial, and endeavour to put upon the Scripture a fense that favours the opinions of their respective sects. This spirit of a party is chiefly remarkable in some of those commentators which these last centuries have produced.

2. The fecond rule of a commentator fhould be, to expound clearly and familiarly the literal fenfe of Scripture, and never to have recourfe to a myftical exposition, but in those places where the spirit of God directs us to look for it: and yet a great many authors do almost intirely forfake the literal fenfe, to purfue mystical explications. In their opinion, every thing is myffical in the holy Scripture, efpecially in the old Teftament. They are not contented with unfolding the true mysteries and prophecies which manifeltly relate to the times of the Gospel, but they turn all things into figure. They find mysteries, allegories, types and prophecies every where, even in the plainest discourses. This they call fearching and diving into the Scriptures. But this way of expounding the word of God is a fountain of illufions: for as the Holy Ghoft does not explain those pretended mysteries, so they must be put to their guesses and be beholden to their imagination for the difcovery of them; and he that is the most copious or lucky in his conjectures, is the greatest man. Now I leave any one to judge, whether commentators, who follow no other guide but their imagination, can avoid being very frequently miftaken, and giving a great many handles to libertines and infidels.

3. We are not to forget here the fchool-commentators. The holy Scripture should be expounded in a simple and popular manner; and this cannot be denied, if we confider that it was given for the inftruction and the falvation of all men, and that the difcourfes of Chrift and his Apoftles were addreffed to the common people, and to fuch perfons as were far from being philosophers. Nothing therefore feems more repugnant to the defign of Scripture, than to explain it philosophically, and, which is worfe, according to the principles of a falle philosophy, as divers commentators do. They make use of the method, notions, and terms of the fchools, to find out the meaning of the facred writings. They apply to all fubjects the rules prefcribed by the fchool-men. They carefully diftinguish in a text in those things which are called in the schools Materia, Forma, Causa efficiens, Finis, Subjectum, Adjunctum, &c. They seek in all reafonings the Major, the Minor, and the conclusion, as if the Holy Ghoft, infpiring the facred authors, had followed the icheme of Ariftotle's logick, and had intended to make fyllogifms in mood and figure. I fay nothing here of that spirit of dispute and wrangling which runs through the scholaftical commentaries, nor of the falle fenses and metaphylical explications, which they put upon the Scripture. Such books are obstacles rather than helps to the understanding of the word of God; they are fit only to perplex what is clear, and to fpoil divines and preachers, by taking away from them that qualification they have most need of, I mean, good fenfe.

4. Another very different way from that fimplicity with which the Scripture fhould be handled, is the method of those authors, who without neceffity infift upon all the circumftances of a text, who lift all the terms of it, as if a myftery did lurk in every word; who defcend to the minutes ft things and weary themfelves in conjectures and queftions. This  $T_4$  exactnets

exactnefs is very ufelefs and infipid. It may be fometimes neceffary to clear a difficulty, to unfold an intricate meaning, and to obferve the critical fignification of words: but when the fenfe is natural and eafie, and when the words are clear, to what purpofe fhould a man infift upon all thofe illuftrations? What need is there for him to be always preffing the fignification of words, to remark all their different acceptations, and to explain what is to be underflood by the words, *Death*, *Faith*, *Juft*, every time that thefe terms occur. The true method is to purfue the things themfelves and the meaning of a text, without criticizing upon words and circumflances.

5. It is the fault of many commentators to be prolix and too large. From every verfe, nay, from every word, they take occafion to run into a common-place, and to vent a multitude of notions, fo that they really give us fermons, differtations, or lectures of divinity, under the title of commentaries. I do not abfolutely condemn diffus'd commentaries; we meet fometimes with good things in them, but we find there likewife a great many which fignific nothing. When all is done, brevity, clearnefs, and exactnefs, are infinitely to be preferred in a commentary before prolixity and copioufnefs : fuch length breeds obfcurity and confution, it makes preachers lazy, it tempts them to fill their fermons with a hundred needlefs things, it brings them to a cultom of being tedious, of making digreffions, and of paffing by that which is effential and folid : all which is very far from promoting the edification of the church.

Befides, it is evident, That the defects of commentaries contribute very much to the corruption of Chriftians. The holy Scripture is the foundation of religion and piety; but commentaries are the flores from which the fenfe of Scripture is drawn, and from which preachers commonly take the matter of their fermons. Few of them endeavour to find out the fenfe of a text by their own induftry; they confult their commentaries like oracles, and they blindly follow their decifions; it is therefore highly requifite that thefe books fhould not lead into error thofe who have recourfe to them. When a blind man leads another, they both fall into the ditch. If then the guides, to whofe conduct preachers give up themfelves, are deceifful and falfe, the word of God will neither be well underftood, nor well preached, and both preachers and people will err.

II. It is with divinty books as with commentaries; fome are good, and others bad. The diverfity of opinions which we fee among authors, is a proof of what I fay: fome maintain as divine truths, things which others reject as falfe and pernicious fentiments; fo that there mult be no finall error on one fide or the other. All divincs will own the truth of this remark; but it is here of no ufe, becaufe it does not decide which books of divinity are good, and which are bad. Every body will pretend, that the bad books are those which teach a doctrine contrary to that which obtains in the fociety to which he belongs. In order to know who is in the right, or in the wrong, it would be neceffary to judge here upon the merits of the caufe, and to enter into the examination of all the controverfies which divide Chriftians. But this I will by no means take upon me to do: it would be fitter for me to take notice of those faults which are common to the greateft part of divinity-books, I fhall fay nothing but what muft needs be owned by all the fensible divines of any party;

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party; and the reflections I am to make, tho' general, may perhaps be of fome use to direct our judgement concerning the doctrine it self contained in those books.

I. Almost all the authors who have writ of divinity, have made of it, upon the matter, a fcience of meer speculation. They establish certain doctrines, they deliver their opinions, they prove them as well as they can; they treat of controverfies, and confute their adverfaries; but they do not feem to have meditated much upon the ufe of the doctrines they teach, with relation to piety and falvation. They are very fhort upon this head, which yet is the chiefeft of all; they are not by half fo follicitous to affert the duties, as they are to maintain the truths of religion. Now this is not teaching divinity. The defign of religion is to teach men how they ought to ferve God, and to make them holy and happy. If this was confidered in the handling of divinity, and if care was taken to fhew what relation all the parts of religion have to the glory of God, and to the holinels and felicity of man, there would be much more piety than there is now among Chriftians. Those who fludy divinity would learn betimes to direct it to its true end; and this would likewife be a means to diffinguish material from infignificant points and questions, and to eafe religion of all those needless disputes, which are one of the main caufes of the corruption of Chriftians.

2. What I have now faid leads me to a fecond obfervation; which is, that as feveral things might be left out of divinity-books, fo other things are wanting, which it would be neceffary to add to them. For the purpofe, common-places do not infift much upon the general truths and principles of religion. Theyfcarce give us any inftruction about Churchdifcipline and government, or about the belief and practice of the firft ages of Chriftianity: as for morality, it is there touched but very fuperficially. And yet thefe are effential articles in divinity, the knowledge of which is neceffary to thofe who are called to preach the Gofpel, to guide a Church, or to direct man's conficiences.

3. Divinity-books are, for the most part, too scholastical. The method of the fchool has been long in vogue; and tho' the fchoolmen's ways of handling divinity, may juftly be looked upon as a defiance to fenfe and religion; yet that method has prevailed to that degree, that for fome ages it was not lawful to fwerve from it. Of late years indeed the school-men have loft a great deal of their credit; and in divinity, as well as in philosophy, many perfons have no longer that blind deference for them which was paid heretofore. Yet, for all that, a great number of divines do still fet up that method for their rule, and it is still as it were facred in colleges and univerfities. Common-places to this day favour too much of the barbarism of the schools, and we find there but too many remainders of that dry and crabbed theology, which had its birth in the ages of ignorance. Instead of those simple and clear idea's, which render the truth and majefty of the Christian religion fensible, and which fatisfie a man's reason, and move his heart, we meet with nothing in several bodies of divinity but metaphysical notions, curious and needles queftions, diffinctions, and obscure terms. In a word, we find there such intricate theology, that the very apoftles themfelves if they came into the world again, would not be able to understand it, without the help of a particular cular revelation. This fcholaftick divinity, has done more mifchief to religion, than we are able to express. There is not any thing that has more corrupted the purity of the Christian religion, that has more obfcured matters, multiplied controverfies, diffurbed the peace of the Church, or given rife to fo many herifies and fchifms. This is the thing which confirms fo many ecclefiafticks in their ignorance and prejudices, and which keeps them from applying themfelves to the folid parts of

divinity, and to that which is proper to fanctify men. Now all thefe defects are vifible caufes of corruption, which may be proved by this fingle confideration, that it is in common-places that Church-men learn their divinity: fuppofe then that those books do not give them a true idea of religion, what religion or what divinity can fuch men teach their people? One fcholaftick and injudi, us author who is in credit in a country, and who is patronized by a profefior, is enough to fpoil the minds of young divines, and to bring into repute the most abfurd and dangerous opinions and fyftems.

Tho' catechifms are not ufually reckoned among divinty-books, yet it will not be useles to fay fomething of them here, some great men have beftowed their pains upon works of this kind to very good purpofe; and yet in this refpect there is still fomething to be defired for publick edification. r. It is to be wifhed that those subjects should only be treated in catechifms, which ought to be handled there, and that all the matters and queftions which are above the reach of the people and of children, or which are not neceffary to falvation, fhould be banished from thence. 2. That fome effential articles, about which catechifms are very jejune fhould be added to them, and particularly thefe three; a general idea of the hiftory of the bible; the main proofs of the fundamental truths of religion; and an exact explication of the dutics of morality. This laft article is for the most part extremely neglected in catechisms; nothing can be more dry and inperficial than what they fay upon the decalogue. 3. It would be fitting to make fome alteration in the method obferved in catechifms; for they are not all familiar enough: fchool-terms or figurative phrafes are used in them; which either the people do not understand, or to which they affix false idea's. For instance, I would not have it faid, That the eucharist is the symbol of our spiritual nourishment, and of our union with Jefus Chrift : for befides that this is not an exact difinition, this ftyle= is not proper for a catechifm. These words symbol, spiritual nourishment, union with Jefus Chrift, are figurative and obscure terms, would not the thing be plainer both to children and to every body, if we fhould fay, that the cucharift is a facred action and ceremony, wherein Chriftians eat bread and drink wine, which are distributed in remembrance of the death of Chrift, and of the redemption wrought by him? In those works which are intended for youth and for the common people, it concerns an author to be clear and accurate, to omit nothing that is effential, to fay nothing that is needlefs, to use plain and proper expressions, and to propose nothing but what is natural and eafy to be apprehended. Catechilms are deligned to give children the first tinctures and idea's of religion: now those idea's, we know, commonly flick by them as long as they live; if then they are not clear and true, it is not possible for them ever to be well acquainted with their religion.

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III. The third fort of books are those of morality. This important part of religion which regulates manners, has been treated with a great deal of folidity and force in feveral excellent works. Nay, it is obferved. That morality is more cultivated of late than it has been heretofore. But it were to be wifhed that the good books of morality we have at this day, were of a more general ufefulnefs than they are. The beft works of this kind, are above the people's capacity. There are various things in them, relating either to the reasoning part, the turn of thoughts, or the ftyle, which cannot be underftood, but by knowing and difcerning perfons. Almost all the able men who write upon morals have this fault, That they fpeak too much like ingenious men, and do not accommodate themfelves enough to the capacity of the readers. They do not confider, that they ought to be useful to every body, that what feems clear to them, is obscure to the greatest part of those who peruse their writings, and that a book of morality, which is only underftood by men of parts or learning, is of a very limited ufefulnels. They fhould therefore, at leaft in fome of their works, endeavour to fpeak in a popular manner, and to handle matters with all poffible clearness and fimplicity. This would be no difparagement to them, and the doing it well would, I think, require all the abilities, parts, and talents, of the best writers : it is more difficult than it feems, to fpeak or write in fuch a manner, as that a man shall fay all that is proper to be faid, and at the fame time be intelligible to all forts of perfons.

But if there are good books of morality, there are many on the other hand, which have confiderable faults in them, and those faults are of great confequence, because morality ill explained, is capable of doing more hurt than good.

1. An author who treats of morality fhould always have thefe two rules in his view. 1. To explain exactly the nature of the duties which it prescribes. And 2. To perfuade men to the practice of those duties. Now thefe two rules have not been fufficiently observed by all thefe who have published moral books, I. They do not always represent with dueexactnefs the nature of vice or virtue. Either the notions they give of them are not true, or they are too general. On the one hand, they are not accurate enough, in defcribing the true characters of each virtue and vice; and on the other hand, they do not diffinguish their various kinds and degrees, which yet ought to be done if they intend that men should know their own pictures. 2. They do not prefs men enough to the practice of virtue. The end of morality, is to work upon man's heart and paffions. In order to compais this end two things are neceffary. 1. That all those great motives which the Gospel affords, should be ftrongly urged : and 2. That the falfe reasons and motives which engage men into the love of this world and give them any averfion to holinefs. fhould be confuted. Morals cannot be usefully handled without the obfervation of these two maxims, the second especially : for the reason why many are not prevailed upon by the arguments and motives which are offered to them, is, because they are hindred by other arguments and motives. A reader frames in himfelf a hundred objections against what he reads in a book of morality; man's heart is no fooner inclined to any vice, but it grows fertile in evafions, reafons, and pretences. Every finner

finner has his excufes and his fhifts. If thefe who teach morality do not obviate those objections and deftroy those excufes, they can never obtain their defign; but this is a trouble which few authors care to take upon them.

2. Books of morals would produce more fruit than they do, if the morality they teach was neither too much relaxed, nor too fevere. Morality is relaxed, when it does not propole the duties of a Chriftian life in their full extent, or when it does not affert the abfolute neceffity of the obfervation of thofe duties. It is firained and too fevere, when it impofes duties which God has not commanded, or which cannot poffibly be practified; and when it ranks among fins things which are innocent. I touch this only by the by, becaufe I have fpoken already in forme other places of this Treatife, both of the remifs and over-fevere notions which men form to themfelves about religion. See Part I. Caufe I. Art. II. and Caufe II. Art. V. VI. and Part II. Caufe III. Art. I.

3. Some of the authors who handle morality are guilty of another fault, and that is a want of accuracy and exactness in their ideas and reafonings. They do not confider enough, whether every thing they advance is ftrictly folid and true, whether the principles they lay down will hold, whether their maxims are not ftretched too far or abfurd, whether they do not contradict themfelves, whether they do not make use of frivolous reafons, whether nothing is falle or mean in the motives they urge; in a word, whether or not their works will be able to ftand the cenfure of a judicious reader. Moralifts as well as the generality of preachers, are a little too much carried away by the heat of their imagination and zeal, and they do not reafon enough. They often go about to move people with rhetorical figures, rather than by dint of reafons. And this is a very ill method. In matters of morality, it chiefly concerns a man to fpeak and to argue clofe; without this it is impoffible that he fhould either convince the mind or produce a folid and difcerning piety.

4. The world is full of books of morality, and yet there are feveral important fubjects which have not hitherto been treated as they ought, or if they have, it was in works which are not read by the people. Thofe who fludy morality are often fenfible of this defect, and complain juftly that they do not find in books, all the light and helps they look for there: it is but of late that any thing has been writ with exactnets in French, upon refitution. Who can doubt but that a good book concerning impurity would be highly ufeful ? This fin is exceeding common, but it is one of thofe about which the people are the leaft infructed. If Chriftians underflood the nature of this vice, its confequences, and the duties of thofe who have fallen into it, they would certainly avoid it more carefully than they do. I might fay the fame of injuffice, of fivearing, and of fome other fubjects.

IV. I come in the laft place, to books of devotion: it is very neceffary to make a right choice of them, becaufe of all the books of religion, they are those which are the most read.

i. I cannot help faying in the first place, That there are books of devotion which are capable of introducing corruption of manners, and diverting Christians from the study of holines. We may easily apprehend how

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how there fhould be books of this kind, if we confider that many, even among divines, think it dangerous to infift upon good works, and to prefs morality: and there are books of devotion, which were made on purpose to maintain so strange an opinion. Some authors have taught that true devotion and folid piety, is not that which confifts in the practice of good works; they have writ that the doctrine which reprefents good works as a neceffary condition in order to falvation, overthrows the doctrine of juftification by faith; that works cannot be looked upon as the way to heaven; that all we have to do now under the Gofpel-covenant, is to receive and to accept of the falvation purchafed for us; and that the Gospel requires works, only from the motives of gratitude and love. Nay those authors enter into dispute ; they attempt to refute the arguments drawn from the exhortations, promifes and threatnings of Scripture which might be urged against them, and they tax with Pharifailm or Pelagianism, those who are of an opinion contrary to theirs. I cannot think the authors of fuch books did publish them with ill intentions, but I could wifh they had abstained from writing things which give fuch mighty advantages to libertines, and which may blaft the fruit of all the books of morality, and of all the exhortations which are addrelled to finners. And yet these books are printed, and which is more furprizing, those divines who are fo rigid and scrupulous in point of books and fentiments, do not oppose the publishing of fuch works, but they fuffer them quietly to pass for current in the world.

2. The books of myffical devotion are likewife moft dangerous; and their number is greater than we imagine. For to fay nothing of thole in which myffical and fanatical principles are openly propoled, many works which are otherwife full of good things are forinkled with that fpirit of fanaticifm. I fhall not ftand to give here the character of thole books, nor to fhew the mifchief they may do in relation to libertines, or to thole perfons who want either knowledge or a differing judgment; becaufe I will not repeat what I have faid of myffical piety. Part I. Caufe II. Art. VIII.

3. Some authors who have put out books of piety have made it their whole bufinefs to adminifter comfort. Thofe who read their works, may eafily fee that they looked upon the comfortable fide of religion, and that their principal defign was, to fill their readers, with confidence, hope and joy. Without doubt it is a laudable and pious defign, to ufe one's endeavours to comfort the afflicted, and particularly good men; and I confefs that we find in the books which have been compofed with that view, many edifying things and noble fentiments of piety; but for all that, thofe books may eafily infpire men with fecurity when the confolations which they difpenfe, are not attended with great circumfpection and prudence.

I could wifh that all those who have published books of this kind, had well confidered these two following truths. The first is, That the comforts which religion affords, belong only to true Christians; so that is an effential part of the duty of comforters, carefully to diffinguish perfons, and to mark clearly who those are that have a right to religious comforts. The fecond is, that it is as necessity to fanctifie, as it is to comfort men; nay, That the fanctifying them is the more necessary of the two, e becaufe holinefs is more effential to a good man, than confolation and joy; and alfo becaufe men are much more inclined to prefume than to condemn themfelves; befides that there are but few who want comfort, in comparison with those who ought to be terrified.

The confolations of which the books of piety are full, are intended either for afflicted perfons or for finners. As for the firft, it is better to teach them how to make a good use of their afflictions, and to bring them to examine and amend their lives, that to difcourfe to them upon fome general topick of comfort, which perhaps will only lay them fafter affleep in focurity, and which is befides generally mifapplied. For all that the Gofpel fays of afflictions is commonly laid together, and that too with no great judgment; and what is faid only of the afflictions of the faithful who fuffer for Chrift's fake, is applied to the afflictions which are common to all mankind. It is much more neceffary to teach men how to die well, than to fortify them againft the fear of death; nay, we cannot give them a more fubflantial comfort, than if we perfuade them to live well, fince a good life will most certainly bring them to a happy death.

But we ought to be particularly cautious when we comfort finners and give them affurances of the divine mercy; for if this is not done with great circumfpection, we may eafily harden and ruin at the fame time, that we are comforting them. This is the milchief of those books, which speak but little of repentance and infift much upon confidence, whofe only defign it is to encourage the greateft finners, and to exhort them to a bold reliance upon God's mercy, without fearing either the heinousness, or the multitude of their fins. Such consolations are capable of a good fense; but if they are not proposed with due explication and reftrictions, vaft numbers of people will abuse them. That which has been writ by fome authors in books of devotion, concerning fin and good works, is apt to lead men into this fancy, That good works fignify nothing in order to falvation, and that fin does not obstruct it. Under pretence of anfwering the accufations of the devil and of the law, thefe authors enervate the ftrongest arguments for the necessity of good works, they confute the declarations of Scripture concerning fanctification, and they deftroy as much as in them lies, the fincerity and truth of the precepts and threatnings of the Golpel. For what they call the accufations of the devil and of the law, is fometimes nothing elfe but the just apprehensions of a guilty confcience which are inspired by the Gospel, and which should be cherished and fortified to bring finners to repentance, inftead of being removed by ill-difpenfed confolations.

It is faid to this, that finners are not to be driven to defpair. But do we make finners defperate, by faying that they are not in a flate of falvation, when really they are not? Do we not comfort them enough, when we exhort them to have recourfe to God's mercy and to repent? What if we fhould by unfeafonable confolations, fill them with a vain and groundlefs confidence; would not that fecurity ruin them more certainly than defparation? To make men fearlefs is the ready way to undo them. After all, I cannot imagine, why people fhould talk fo much of defpair, and feem fo hugely afraid of it. By the endeavours ufed in books and fermions to keep finners from it, one would think that we had great readon reafon to fear on that hand, and that nothing were more ordinary than for men to defpair of the divine mercy; and yet there is nothing more unufual. For one finner who is terrified with his fins, thoufands are undone by fecurity. It is remarkable that the Scripture fpeaks but feldom of defpair, and when we have well examined all the places which are thought to mention it, we fhall not find many that fpeak politively of it. Many Church-men who have cure of fouls, confels that they never faw any perfon afflicted with defpair. And as for the inflances which are alledged to this purpofe, it is certain that what is called defperation is commonly nothing elle but a fit of the fpleen and an effect of grief and melancholy. So that thole who make long difcourfes to prevent finners falling into defpair, take great pains to little purpofe, and do for the moft part fight with a fhadow.

4. There is another fault in fome books of devotion quite contrary to this I have now obferved, which is, that they terrify their readers, without reason. If authors, otherwise pious and learned, had not spoken in their writings of the fin against the Holy Ghost, of reprobation, delpair, the power of the devil, and of fome other matters, many people would have been free from those terrible frights which the indifcreet handling of those subjects did throw them into. The reading of such books has occafioned, and does still produce great mischiefs, when they are read by men of weak heads, that are inclined to melancholy; and the number of fuch perfons is very confiderable. Some have fancied they had committed the fin against the Holy Ghost ; and being possefied with that difmal thought, they have fpent their lives in dreadful apprehenfions, of which nothing could cure them. Others have imagined, That their cafe was desperate, and that they were in a flate of reprobation, and damnation : others have conceited, that they were given up to the power of fatan; and they have taken the diforders of imagination, for certain figns of their being poffelled with an evil fpirit : and the worft of it is, that fuch indifcreet difcourfes are more apt to alarm good, than wicked men. In fine, I reckon among the books that fright men without caule, all those which contain too rigid and austere maxims of devotion and morality.

5. Piety would be better known, and more efteemed than it is, if books of devotion were always writ with judgment, and good fenfe, and if there was nothing in them, but what, upon a fevere examination, would appear to be frictly true. Those who set about works of this nature, do generally make it their bufinefs to move the heart, and to excite fentiments of piety. This is a good defign ; but we ought to know that it is the force of reasons; the evidence of proofs, the greatness of the objects proposed, and the clearness and folidity of what a man favs. which does truly affect the heart. This is what judicious authors chiefly mind; and thereby many have had good fuccefs in those excellent works which they have enriched the publick with. But other writers do not confider this; they rather choose to fay tender and pathetical things, than to think, or fpeak with exactness : they confult imagination more than good fense, they pour out every thing, which is in the heat of meditation, or in the fervency of their zeal, feems to them proper to move, to melt, to comfort, or to terrifie. Hence it is, that there are weak places

places in their books and thoughts; which appear mean, and even falfe, to differning readers; contradictions, and fuch like,defects: for on the one hand, they produce only a confufed, and not a very rational devotion, in those who read and relift them: and on the other hand, they expose religion to the flouts, and contempt of libertines. We are often troubled and fcandalized, to find, that fome men of parts express but little effecem for books of piety: we hear it is faid every day, that those books are only good for women, and for the vulgar. This contempt chiefdy proceeds from a profane humour, and from libertinifm; but it fprings likewife from the want of exactness and folidity, which is obfervable in fome books of devotion.

6. Divers confiderations might be offered here about those books which contain forms of prayers and devotion; but I fhall confine my felf to these two, which appear to me the most material. The first is, That those kinds of forms, make all forts of perfons indifferently, and even good men fay things, which cannot agree, but to the greateft and the most notorious finners; which gives people this dangerous notion, That all men, without excepting the regenerate, are extremely corrupt. In divers prayers we plainly fee, that those who composed them, had no other defign, than to draw the picture of the most heinous finners, and that they supposed all men engaged in a deep corruption, and in the most criminal diforders. Exaggerations, and hyperboles, are fo little spared by fome people upon this head, that they utter abfurdities and falfhoods in their prayers : as when they fay. That ever fince we were born, we have been continually, and every moment, offending God, by thoughts; words, and deeds.

I do not deny, but that such prayers may have their use, provided nothing be faid in them that is extravagant, or contrary to truth and common fense; they fit great numbers of persons : there are but too many of those wretched Christians, who can never fufficiently bewail the enormity of their fins, and the irregularities of their conduct. I know befides, that all men are finners, and that the best of them have reason to humble and abase themselves in the fight of God, out of a sense of their own weaknefs and unworthinefs. Neverthelefs, fince the Scripture makes a difference between good and bad men, it is at least a great piece of imprudence, to appoint the fame language for both, and to make them all speak as if they were guilty of the most horrid crimes, and as if there was not one good man in the world. This takes away the diftinction between the finners and the righteous; for if these prayers are proper for all forts of perfons, if all that is faid in them is true, it is a vain thing to diffinguish a good man from a bad; and, it is to no purpose to pray to God for his converting grace, or to make any promife of amendment to him : all those leffons of holines which the Gospel gives us, are but fine ideas; all men are upon the matter equally bad, and they may all be the objects of God's mercy, how irregular foever their deportment may be. These are the inferences which may be drawn from those forms of devotion I have mentioned, and which finners do actually draw from them. From all this, I conclude, That in fuch works it is neceffary to diffinguish perfons and conditions : and this accordingly has been judicioufly observed by some authors. The

#### CAUSE VII.

#### Corruption of Christians.

The other confideration relates to the form of prayers; thefe are not always plain enough. They are fometimes fludied difcourfes, which have more of art and wit than of affection in them. And we may eafily difcern how far moft prayers are removed from a due funplicity, if we compare them with those which are contained in holy Scripture, or with the ancient way of praying which was received in the Church, and of which we may judge by the *liturgies* which are now used, or which have reached to us. Prayers were neither to intricate then, nor fo long as they are now. Long preambles were not used in the beginning of prayers, and men did not then by fo many windings approach the throne of grace, to confess their fins, and to beg pardon for them. Prayers then were fhort, fimple and natural, much fitter to excite devotion, to lift up the heart to God, and to nourifh piety and zeal, than many forms which obtain at this day.

7. Of all the books of piety, none are more carefully read; and none perhaps have a greater influence upon the conduct and manners of Chriftians, than the books of preparation for the holy communion. The ufe of the facrament is one of the moft important acts of religion, and one of the moft efficacious means to promote piety; and it is certain that the books which people read, in order to prepare themfelves for that faered action, contribute very much to the good or bad ufe of the eucharift, and by confequence to the good or ill life of Chriftians. Now what I have faid of the other books of devotion may be applied to thefe. Some books of this kind are extraordinary good, but there are others, in which among many good things fome defects are obfervable, and particularly thefe three.

1. All the books of preparation for the holy Communion, are not infructive and folid enough. We find nothing elfe in fome of them, but a heap of thoughts, which have no dependance upon one another, of rhetorical figures, allegories, and comparifons fetched from the Old Teftament, or from prophane hiftory. These things may have their use; they may be placed in a fermon: but not to fay that fometimes, those thoughts and comparifons are not very apposite or fuitable to the fubject; I shall only observe, That fomething more than this is neceffary, to ftir up devotion in the communicants. I do but just name this, because I have delivered my opinion more at large concerning this defect, in my three reflections upon books of morality, and in the fifth upon books of devotion.

2. Other books of preparation are too general. They only confider in the lump the duties of Chriftians in reference to the communion; they fpeak of felf-examination, repentance, faith and charity: but all this is of no great ufe to many großs and ignorant Chriftians, who neither know thole duties, nor how they ought to be performed. Befides, all thofe who come to the facrament are not in the tame condition, fome being good men, and others impious and hypocritical perfors. There are likewife feveral degrees of good men as well as of hypocrites and ungodly perfors, and the fame man may be better or worfe at one time than he is at another. Therefore it would be fitting that books of preparation, were composed in fuch a manner, that every reader may be led by them, into thofe reflections which are fuitable to the flate he is in. It is a groß Vol. VI. U error to imagine, that a general preparation or difcourfe concerning the receiving of the factament, is proper for all forts of perfons. I confess that this is not the fault of all the books of preparation, fome we have, which are particular enough. The true characters by which every man may know his own ftate, are very exactly defined by fome authors; but it is an unhappinefs that fuch works, are not better calculated for the ufe of the common people.

3. I think I may fafely fay in the third place, That the too fevere notion which fome books give of the communion, is one of the caufes, why fo many people do neither live, nor receive the facrament as they ought. It is a fad thing that the minds of Chriftians fhould be filled with fo many foruples in relation to the facrament, by inconfiderate difcourfes and overfirained maxims; writers and preachers do fometimes fpeak of the holy facrament, as if every thing in it was full of fnares, and as if hell and damnation were conflantly waiting about it. They reprefent the communion, as fo extraordinary, fo difficult and fo dangerous an action, that thole who read or hear thole difcourfes, are tempted to keep off from the holy table, and defpair of partaking of it as they ought. So that whereas there fhould be nothing but joy, when the eucharift is celebrated in the church, many are then agitated with extreme perplexities and terrors.

By this indifcreet feverity it happens, that many good men receive the facrament without comfort; because their confciences are disturbed with divers fcruples, which proceed from the reading of those books. There is a great number of pious Chriftians, who never receive the facrament but with ftrange apprehenfion and dread, infomuch that feveral think they receive it to their condemnation. Nay this difcourages likewife many finners who have fome inclinations to good, and fome defire to fet about the work of repentance. Indeed we must take heed not to flatter finners in their vices, nor to propofe to them too eafie a devotion and morality. It is very fit in my judgment, to give them a great idea of the purity which is required in fo holy and folemn an action as the communion is, and of the ftate which a Chriftian ought then to be in. But as this ftate of purity and holinefs is attained only by degrees; that idea, how true foever it may be, is apt to fright a finner, in the beginning of his converfion, because he does not find in himself at first, all the characters of true repentance and fincere regeneration : he ought therefore to be informed, that the beginnings of repentance are weak, that it has its degrees and its progrefs; and fo that he ought not to be different that God will accept of his devotion and endeavours, provided his repentance increase afterwards and he forfake his fins honeftly. The matter is over-done in point of devotion and morality, not only when we propofe rules which are too rigid, but alfo when we fay things, which tho' true and confonant to the Golpel, are not fufficiently accommodated to the flate of those we fpeak to.

Thefe are the principal reflections I thought fit to beftow, both upon books of religion and upon bad books. All that remains now is to inquire, what remedies are to be applied to the caufe of corruption. The fureft of all would be to exterminate all the ill books, and to take care that none fuch fhould be made for the time to come. But as this is not to be hoped, the only remedy which can be tried, is on the one hand, to

prevent

prevent as much as we can the effect of bad books; and on the other, to engage men to read and to make a good ufe of good books.

The books which are contrary to religion and good manners may eafily be known; but how to keep men from reading and being corrupted by them is the difficulty: and in all probability this is a point which will never be entirely gained. Yet I think it is not impoffible to prevent in fome meafure the mifchief which those books occasion in the world. In order to this, it would be requifite, to take care in the first place, that young people might not read books which infpire libertinifm. To this end, the authors who have writ things repugnant to modefty and honefty, fhould be expelled the schools. It is a surprizing thing that the ecclesiasticks, who have the direction of academies and colleges, and who are bound by their characters to redrefs this abufe, have not done it yet. In the next place it would be neceffary, that in families, books that are apt to corrupt youth fhould be taken out of their way, and that they fhould not be indulg'd in dangerous readings. As for the reft, I fee no other remedy, but that preachers should strongly infist in their fermons, upon the reafons which ought to make Chriftians averfe to the reading of ill books. I know that all these precautions, will not wholly suppress those books; nor prevent their being read by divers perfons, but we may however gain thus much, that ill books fhall not be fo freely and fo commonly read as they are, and that they thall do lefs hurt.

As for books of religion, every one fhould endeavour to difcern those which are good, and to make a good ufe of them. Indeed the difcerning and the choice of books of religion, is attended with fome difficulty. The general rule is to chufe those which are instructive and edifying. Every body will own this to be a good rule, but all men do not agree in the application of it. What feems edifying to fome, appears quite otherwife to others. In point of religion all men fhould be of the fame mind, fince they are all bound to believe the fame truths, and practife the fame duties, but their taftes are different, becaufe many of them have a vitiated palate.

To fpeak my mind upon this fubject, I think that Christians should chiefly flick to those books, which prove the truths of religion, and which eftablish by folid arguments the fundamental articles of the Chriflian faith, and to those which give a clear and exact view of the duties of morality : to thefe it may be ufeful to add the works, in which we find the examples of perfons eminent for their piety and virtue. Such examples are very efficacious to excite men to the practice of what is good, and they prove a great prefervative against the fcandal occasioned by bad example, and against the corruption of the age. But not to enlarge further upon the choice of books, I refer the reader to what has been faid in this chapter.

A judicious choice of books being once made, the next thing is to make a good use of them. And here two rules are to be observed. I. A man should read with judgment; and, 2. he should read in order to practice.

1. What book foever we read, it is abfolutely neceffary to read it with difcretion and judgment. We are commanded in Script He, \* To prove all U 2

<sup>\* 1</sup> Theff. v. 21. 1 John iv. 1.

#### Caufes of the prefent

all things, and to hold faft that which is good; to try the fpirits and the dactrines whether they are of God. This caution is to be used left we fall into errors, fince every author is a man, and by confequence may fometimes be miftaken. The common people do particularly need this advice, because they are very apt to believe, that whatfoever is read in books, efpecially in books of devotion, is true. But tho' a book fhould contain nothing but what is good; differentian is neceffary to make a juft application of the contents of it to our felves, because that which is proper for fome is not fuitable to others. The not obferving this rule is the reafon why fome readers, who have a pure, but a timorous and fhort-fighted conficience, are terrified without caufe, and apply to themfelves what is faid only of wicked men; when on the other hand, hardned finners deceive themfelves with vain hopes, by adapting to themfelves, what relates only to good men.

2. We ought to read, in order to practice, and that we may grow better; this is the more important rule of the two, and that which diffinguifhes true from hypocritical devotion. Many are very regular and conftant in reading, and they feldom fail to do it mornings and evenings: but the deportment of those perfons who are to affiduous in the perufing of good books, is not always agreeable to the rules of devotion and piety. When they are but just come from their reading, we may find them often fowr, previfh, and paffionate; after they have read in the morning, they fpend the day in flandering, gaming, or idlenefs, and they avoid only the groffer, and the more noise fins. There are readers of another character; they read, and even delight in the reading of books of religion : they like well enough those works which prove the truths of the Christian religion, or treat of morals; they speak of them advantageously, and they will fay fine things concerning the abufes which are crept into religion, and upon the neceffity and the beauty of morals; but all this terminates only in a vain and fruitless approbation, which they give to the truths and duties of the Golpel; for after all, they reform nothing in their lives: fuch readings are but meer amufements, and they are good for nothing but to rock confcience into a most dangerous fleep. The end of reading, as well as that of religion, ought to be the practice of holinefs.

I shall here observe, last of all, That Christians have a book, which alone might suffice to preferve them from the danger of ill books, and to secure them against the corruption of the age, if they did use it as they ought; I mean the holy Scripture : it is the best of all books, a work divinely infpired, which contains nothing but what is most excellent and trace, and wherein we find every thing that is neceflary to instruct, and to fanchise men. But it were to be wished,

1. That the translations of Scripture, which are in the hands of the people, should be rendered more perfect, fo that they might express the fense of facted authors with all possible exactness. All those who have fludied the original text of the Bible, will own, that this is a necessfary work, and that the translations need fome amendments. And fo we fee accordingly, that now and then, divines and translators, apply themselves to the correcting of them.

 It would be to no purpole to have exact translations of Scripture, if men could not read it: I have already remarked it elfewhere, as a crying and and fhameful abufe, that a great part of Chriftians fhould not be able to read. This abufe fhould have been reformed long ago; and this might eafily be done, if every paftor did endeavour it in his own church, and if the magiftrates did lend a helping hand towards it.

3. The holy Scripture fhould be read more than it is, and men fhould make that use of it for which it was given. Other books are only ftreams, but when we read the Scripture, we drink at the very fountain-head. Humane books have their faults, and therefore they ought to be read with great difcretion: but this divine book is most perfect, it is a guide to whole conduct we may give up our felves without fear or danger : this being certain, is it not ftrange that the beft of all books fhould be the most neglected ? In many countries the Bible is a book unknown to the people. In other places the reading of it is permitted but with great cautions, as if it were dangerous for Christians to read a book, by which God was pleafed to reveal his will to men. In those places where Chriflians have an entire liberty to read the Scripture, great multitudes make no advantage of that freedom. Many that are addicted to reading leave the word of God for other books. In a word, very few read it with fuitable dispositions, and with a fincere defign of learning the will of God and of growing the better by it. And thus the far greater part of mankind, is defitute of the most efficacious mean and remedy, which the divine goodnels has afforded to men, to preferve them from the contagion of fin, and to make them happy. And fo we need not wonder that the corruption of Chriftians fhould be fuch, as it hath been represented in this work.

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## The Conclusion of this Treatife.

AXXSHIS is what I had proposed to fay concerning the Caufes of Corruption. I might have been larger upon these matters, and have added many things which I have not touched. This is a very copious field, and a fubject which can hardly be exhausted; yet I think I have observed what is most material.

But it will be to little purpofe to have detected the caufes of corruption, if those caufes do ftill fubfift; and therefore I conclude this work with an earneft entreaty to my readers. That they will make ferious reflections upon it, and that if they find that in fact, corruption proceeds from those caufes I have mentioned, they will firive to remove them. The undertaking will, no doubt, appear very difficult to many. They will own the truth of what I have faid, but they will look upon the defign of opposing the corruption of the age, as vain and chimerical. They will fay that all this is very fine in the theory, but that the practice of it is impossible: I confess here is fome difficulty, but yet I am perfuaded, that what I have proposed might fuccefsfully be done, at least in fome refpects.

But the general caufes of corruption can fcarce be remedied but by U 3 publick

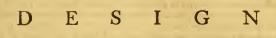
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PART II.

publick perfons. I therefore apply my felf here particularly to divines and to the paftors of the church, and I conjure them to make it their ferious bufinefs, to difcover and to ftop the fprings of corruption. Let them turn all their endeavours that way; let them labour to difpel the ignorance and prejudices which fo many Christians live in, and to confute those maxims and fentiments which feed fecurity and libertinism; let them prefs with zeal the reftoring of order and difcipline; let them incelfantly lay before the people and the magistrates, the necessity of redreffing feveral abufes which are now in vogue; let them inculcate thefe things and infift upon them with zeal, but at the fame time with prudence and charity; let them concert measures among themfelves; let them act unanimoufly in fo noble a defign. Above all things let them take care to feafon young people with good instruction, and to infpire them with fentiments of religion and virtue. These are the follicitudes which become the ministers of Jesus Christ. These are enterprizes worthy of their character and their zeal, and the things which ought chiefly to be confidered in the affemblies of the Clergy. But let them not be difcouraged by the difficulties they are like to meet with. They will ftill gain fomething, even when they may fancy they labour in vain. If they do not obtain all that they defire, if they do not cure the whole evil. they will remove at least fome part of it. So holy an enterprize will fooner or later be fortunate in the iffue, and God will pour down a bleffing upon those means which he himself has appointed.

One would think that Providence is at work to bring about happier times, and that things are tending that way. This is an age of knowledge, and religion is now better proved and explained than ever it was. There is a confiderable number of judicious and learned divines, and paftors, who are deeply griev'd to fee the prefent face of things, and who are fenfible how neceflary it would be to oppofe corruption. So many books which are writ on purpofe to revive true Chriftianity, and to bring men to holinefs, feem to bode fome bleffed revolution, and to argue a general difpofition towards it. God who prefides over all things, and particularly over that which concerns religion, blefs the defigns and endeavours of all thofe, who have good intentions, and grant that we may quickly fee truth, piety, peace and order, intirely reftored among Chrifikans.



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## INTRODUCTION.

T the Christian religion, had the impudent confidence to fasten them to, the practice of immorality and wickedness, is so notoriously falle and groundless; that there is nothing truer, or more perspicuously held forth in the books that contain Christianity, than that the perfectly contrary is the great defign of it. But yet notwithstanding, those that thall heedfully observe the lives and actions of an infinite number of fuch as call Chrift their mafter, would be very fhrewdly tempted undoubtedly to conclude, that they fecretly think, what those Heathens had the face to publifh.

And as for (I fear I may fay) even most of those professions of faith in Chrift, which have escaped the fcandalous and more grofs pollutions of the world; that man that shall take an exact furvey of their converfations also, and confider what matters they most bufic themselves about, what the defigns are which they chiefly profecute, and that not only as men, but as Christians too; what things they are that exercise most of their zeal, and for and against which is spent the greatest part of their religious heat; will be ftrongly enclined to fuspect, that, though they have not entertained fo highly difhonourable an opinion of their Saviour, as to efteem him a patron of vice, yet they think fo undervaluingly of him, as to judge him fo mean a friend to holinefs, as that the promoting it in mens hearts and lives, if it was at all a defign of his

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#### Introduction.

his coming into the world, and of the religion he left behind him, yet. it was at best but a *bye-one*, and that fome other matters were much more in his cye, and principally intended by him.

Though I will not fay that the greater part of our most forward profeffors have their heads leavened with fuch thoughts, yet any one may dare to affirm that they behave themfelves exactly as if they had : and moreover I am abfolutely certain, that it is utterly impossible, men thould make fuch a buffle, and ftir about matters of none, or but [mall importance, to the ferving or prejudicing the real intereft of their fouls ; and, on the other hand, be as lukewarm; unconcern'd and carelefs in diverse things that have the most immediate and direst tendency to their eternal welfare; if they duly confidered and had a quick fence of what was now intimated, viz. That the bufiness that brought the bleffed Jefus by the appointment of God the Father down from heaven; and the end of his making us the objects of fuch rich and transcendent kindness, was the destroying of fin in us, the renewing of our depraved natures, the ennobling onr fouls with virtuous qualities and divine dispositions and tempers, and (in one word) the making us partakers of his holinefs. And fo long as there are but few that either believe or confider, that this is the end of Christianity, and that alone which it directly drives at, it cannot be matter of wonder, if multitudes of those which lay a great claim to it, should be (as excellent a religion as it is) little the better, nay, and in fome refpects even the worfe for it.

And on the contrary, it is not to be in the leaft doubted, That nothing can be fo available to the introducing of a better flate of things, the abating and perfectly quenching our intemperate heats, the regulating and bringing into due order our wild exorbitances, the governing and reftraining our extravagant and heady zeal, the ioduing us with becoming tempers, fober, thoughts, and good fpirits, as would the thorow-belief, the dwe minding and digefting of this one principle.

And for this reason, I am not able to imagine how time may be fpent to better purpole, than in endeavouring to polic's mens minds with it: and to contribute thereunto, what it can, is the bulines of this Treatile: whereof these following are the general heads: which fhall be infifted on with all polibble perforcint, and convenient brewith output

2: First, A plain Demonstration, that, True Holinofs is the Special Defigu of Christianity.

Secondry, An Account, bow it comes to pass that, our Saviour bath laid fuch Strefs upon this was to prefer it before all ather, .....

. Thirdly, An Improvement of, the apple Difcourfe, in diverfe (and most of them Practical) Inferences.

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SECT.I.

A Demonstration, that True Holinefs is the Defign of Christianity.

# C H A P. .....

# The Nature of True Holine's deferibed.

N order to the demonstration hereof, it is neceffary to be premifed. That the *holinefs* which is the defign of the religion of Christ Jefus, and is by various forms of fpeech express d in the Golpel (as by gadlinefs, righteou/nefs, conversion and turning from fin, partaking of a divine nature; with many other) is fuch as is to in the most proper and highest fence: not fuch as is subjected in any thing without us, or is made ours by a mere external application, or is only partial: but is originally feated in the foul and spirit, is a complication and combination of all virtues, and hath an influence upon the whole man (as shall hereafter be made to appear) and may be deforibed after this manner.

It is fo found and healthful a complexion of foul, as maintains in life and vigour what forver is effential to it, and fighers not any thing unnatural to mix with that voluch is for, by the force and power whereof a man is enabled to behave himfelf as become that creature indued with a principle of reasons, keeps his furpreme faculty in its thrane, brings into due subjection all his inferiour ones, his ferfual imagination, his bruish passions and affections.

It is the purity of the bunane nature, engaging those in whom it refides, to demean themselves fuitably to that flate in which God bath placed them, and not to all differomingly in any condition, circumflance, or relation.

It is a divine or god like nature, caufing an hearty approbation of, and an affectionate compliance with the elernal laws of righteou/nefs; and a behaviour agreeable to the effential and immutable differences of good and evil.

But to be fomewhat more express and diffinit, though very brief. This *bolinels* is so excellent apprinciples or habit of foul, as caufeth those that are possessed of it (I mean fo far forth as it is vigorous and predominant in them,)

First, To perform all good and virtuous actions, whenfoever there is occafion and opportunity; and ever carefully to abitain from these that are of a contrary nature.

Secondly, To do the one, and avoid the other, from truly generous motives and principles.

Now, in order to the right understanding of this, it is to be observ'd, That actions may become duties or fins these two ways

First, As they are compliances with, or transgreffions of divine positive precepts. These are such declarations of the will of God, as retrain ftrain our liberty for great and wife reasons, in things that are of an indifferent nature, and absolutely confidered, neither good, nor evil; and so makes things not good in themselves (and capable of becoming fo, only by reason of certain circumstances) duties; and things not evil in themselves, fins. Such were all the injunctions and prohibitions of the ceremonial law; and some few such we have under the Gospel.

Secondly, Actions are made *duties* or *fins*, as they are agreeable or oppofite to the divine *moral* laws: that is, Thofe which are of an indifpenfable and eternal obligation, which were first written in mens hearts, and originally dictates of humane nature, or neceffary conclufions and deductions from them.

By the way, I take it for granted (and I cannot imagine how any confiderative, fuppofing he be not a very debauch'd, perfon can in the leaft doubt it,) that there are first principles in morals, as well as in the mathematicks, metaphylicks, St. I mean fuch as are felf-evident, and therefore not capable of being properly demonstrated; as being no lefs knowable and eafly affented to, than any proposition that may be brought for the proof of them.

Now the boline/s we are defcribing is fuch, as engageth to the performance of the former fort of duies, and forbearance of the former fort of fins; for this reafon primarily, becaufe it pleafeth Almighty God to command the one, and forbid the other : which reafon is founded upon this certain principle; That it is most bigbly becoming all reafonable creatures to obey God in every thing; and as much diffecoming them, in any thing to differ bim. And fecondarily, upon the account of the reafons (if they are known) for which God made thofe laws. And the reafons of the positive laws contained in the Gofpel are declared, of which I know not above three that are purely fo, wiz. That of going to God by Chrift, and the inflitutions of baptifm and the Lord's fupper.

Again, This *bolinefs* is fuch as engageth to the performance of the *duties*, and forbearance of the *fins* of the *fecond kind*; not merely because it is the divine pleafure to publich commands of *thofe*, and prohibitions of *thofe*; but alfo, and especially, for the *reafons*, which moved God to make those publications: namely, because *thofe* are good in *themfelves*, and infinitely becoming creatures indued with understanding and liberty of will; and *thefe* are no lefs evil in *their own nature*, and unworthy of them.

That man that would forbear, gratefully to acknowledge his obligations to God, or to do to his neighbour as he would that he fhould do to him, &c. on the one hand; and would not flick at difhonouring his maker, or abufing his fellow creatures in any kind, &c. on the other; if there were no written law of God for the former, and againft the latter; doth not those duties, nor forbears these fins, by virtue of an holy nature that informs and acts him; but is induced thereunto by a mere animal principle, and becaufe it is his interest for to do. And the reason is clear, becaufe no one that doth thus, only in regard of the written precepts and prohibitions of the divine Majefty, doth fo out of respect to them, as fuch, but as they have promises, but especially threatmings annexed to them: for to be fure, he that performs the one, and forbears the other from any lovely notion he hath of obedience, and any hateful hateful one he hath conceived of diffedience, will also make conficience of thefe and the like dutics, in regard of the goodnets, becomingnets, and excellency he differns in them; and will abstain from thefe and the like fins, because of the intrinsick evil, turpitude, and deformity he apprehends in them: for thefe are no whit lefs manifestly lovely, and worthy of mankind, than is obedience to the divine will, confidered in an abstracted notion; nor thefe lefs apparently vile, and abominable than is diffuedience. For, that very reason, that makes it an intolerable thing to disobed a law of God, (viz. because it is highly unjust fo to do) makes it to also to commit the forementioned, and fuch like fins; and fo on the contrary; now this proposition, That it is a bafe thing to do unjustly, is one of those which I call first principles; than which there is nothing mankind doth more naturally affent to: and those fins, with many other, are alike plain inftances and expressions of that thameful vice injustlie, though not of an equal degree of it.

The fum of what we have faid in this account of the nature of true bolinefs is this, viz. That it is fuch a diffosition and temper of the inward man, as powerfully enclines it carefully to regard and attend to, affectionately to embrace and adhere to, to be actuated by, and under the government of all those good practical principles that are made known either by revelation, nature, or the use of reason.

Now though nothing is more natural to the fouls of men, confidered in their pure effentials, and as they came out of their Creator's hands, than this most excellent temper; yet by their apostafie from God, and finking into brutish fensuality, did they fadly disposses themselves of it, and so became like the beafts which perish. But it pleased the infinite goodness of the divine Majesty not to give us over so; for when we had destroyed our felves, in him was our help found. He greatly concerned himfelf for the recovery of fallen mankind by various means and methods, and when the world was at the very worft, did he make use of the most sovereign and effectual remedy. He, who at fundry times, and in diverse manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets, did in these last days send his dearly beloved and only begatten Son to us. And to prove that the great errand he came upon was the effecting of our deliverance out of that finful state we had brought our felves into, and the putting us again into poffeffion of that holinefs which we had loft, is now our next bufinefs. and an interest in

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# CHAP. II.

## A general Demonstration that the Holinefs described is the Design of Christianity, by a Climax of seven Particulars.

I our observation, that St. John the Baptif being fent to prepare the way before our Saviour, did so, by teaching the doctrine of

#### The Defign of Christianity.

SECT. I.

of repentance, and baptizing men thereunto: and that we no fooner read of his appearing in publick, and entring upon his office of barbinger or forerunner, but we find him preaching this doctrine, and making use of the news of the Meffiah's approach, as a motive to perfwade them to that duty. Matth. in. 1, 2. In these days came John the Baptifi preaching in the wilderne's of Judea, and Jaying; Repent ye, for the kingdom of beaven is at hand. And this was that which the angel foretold Zacharias he should do, when he gave him the first notice that he should be the father of fuch a fon. Luke i. 16, 17. And many of the children of Ifrael Ball be turn to the Lord their Gad; and he fball go before him in the power, and fpirit of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wildom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord : that is, He thall make way for the Meffiah with the fame zeak against all wickedness, as was expressed by Elias; and likewife with an immediate commission from heaven, as he had, in order to the working of a general reformation among the Jecos. This (neweth that Christ's great errand to us, was our thorow conversion from fin, and the making us holy; feeing that the only preparation neceffary for the entertainment of him, confifted in having this work begun in us.

Secondly, Upon the first news of Christ's near approach, brought by Malachi the last of the Prophets, this is expressed by him as that which thould be his grand business when he was come, Mal. iii. 1, 2, 3. The Lord, unbom ye feek, shall fuddenly come to bis temple, even the meflenger of the covenant whom ye delight in (or, have a longing expectation of.) Bebold, he shall come, faith the Lord of hosts: but who may abide the day of his coming? Or, who heall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a reformer's fire, and like fuller's scap: and he shall fit as a refiner, and purifier af filver; and he shall purifie the fous of Levi, and purge them as gold is purged, Gr.

Thirdly, Immediately after his conception in the womb of the bleffed Virgin, this was foretold to 'foleph concerning him by an angel, Matt. i. 21. She hall bring forth a jan, and theu halt call his name Jelus; for he fall fave his people from their fins. 'This bleffing of making men holy was to much the defign of Chrift's coming, that he had his very name from it. Obferve the words are, He fold fave his people from their fins; not from the punifiment of them: and (as will fully appear hereafter) that is the primary fence of them, which is most plainly expressed in them: that he fhall fave his people from the punifiment of fin is a true fence too, but it is fecondary and implied only; as this latter is the newer-failing and neceffary confequent of the former falvation.

This again was foretold by Zacharias, betwixt his conception and birth. He faith, Luke i. 72, &c. That God performed his covenant in fending Cbriff; which covenant contifts in this, That he would grant us, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might ferve him without fear, in holinefs and rightcoufnefs before him, all the days of our hfe.

Fourthly, We I kewife find this expressed by Simeon, immediately upon his birth, Luke ii. 32. where having called him God's folvation, which he had prepared before the face of all people, he adds that, He is a light to lighten the Gentiles: whereby is meant, that he should bring them

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them into the way of righteoufnefs and true holinefs. Holinefs is not in a few places exprefied by the metaphor of light, and wickednefs by that of darknefs: turning from darknefs to light is explained by (a) Turning from the power of Satan unto God. And the following claufe, viz. And the glory of thy people Ifrael, fignifieth the fame thing: namely, that in the place of their outward and ceremonial obfervances, called by the Apoftle (b) Beggarly Elements, he fhould bring in among them a far more noble, viz. an inward, fubftantial and everlafting righteoufnefs, he fhould enlarge their Church, an acceffion of the Gentiles being by that means made unto it.

Fifthly, This is expressed by St. John the Baptist, immediately before our Saviour's solemn entrance upon his office, as the business he was undertaking, Matth. iii. 11, 12. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance (that is, especially from the more plain and confessed exorbitances) but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shows I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghoss, and with fire z (which will take away those fains and pollutions, that water cannot :) whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor.

Sixthly, Again, after our Saviour's entrance upon his office, he himfelf declared, that be came to call finners to repentance: and that he was to far from coming to deftroy the law and the Prophets, that he came (c)  $\exp_{2} \exp_{2} \exp_$ 

Laftly, This was frequently afferted, after he forfook the world, by the Apoftles he left behind him. St. Peter told his country-men, Ads iii. 26. That, as God fent Chrift to blefs them, fo the bleffing defigned them by him, confifted in turning them from their iniquities. To you first (faith he) God baving raifed up bis fon Jefus, fent him to blefs you, by turning every one of you from his iniquities. Again, Adds v. 31. the fame Apofile, with others, faith that, Him bath God exalted with bis right band, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Ifrael, and forgivenefs of fins. Repentance fifth, and then forgivenefs. St. John tells us, 1 Epift. 11. St. that, for this purpofe the fon of God was manifeled, that he mighe deftrey the works of the devil. And St. Paul calleth the golpel of Chrift, 1 Tim. vi. 3. The mystery of godlinefs, 1 Tim. iii. 16. The dostrine that is according to godlinefs. And gives us to underftand that, that which the grace of God which brings falvation teacheth, is, That denying ungodlinefs, and all worldly lufts, we fhould live foberly, righteoufly, and godlify in this prefent world, Tit. ii. 12.

(a) Acts xxvi.
 (b) Gal. iv. 9.
 (c) Mat. v. 17. or wλnewow, may fignifie fully to preach, as Rom. xv. 19.
 and Col. i. 25.

CHAP.

#### C H A P. III.

#### A particular Demonstration that Holinefs is the only Defign of the Precepts of the Gospel. And that they require, I The most extensive Holinefs, 2. The most Intensive. An Objection answered.

 $\mathcal{I} \times \mathcal{S}$  UT to give a more particular proof of what we have under- $\mathcal{S} \to \mathcal{B}$  taken.

First, It is most apparent, that *bolines* is the defign, the only defign of the *Christian precepts*, and that this is the mark which they are wholly levelled at. What the (d) Apostle spake of the *Fewilks*, may be much more said of the *Christian* law, that It is boly, just, and good. For as *Clemens Alexandrinus* in his *Padagogus* saith, is Xussi uniting reasing is w, bec. Even infant Christianity is perfection, compared with the law, or the Mosaical dispondation.

There is no affirmative precept in the Golpel, but it either commands *holinefs* in the general, or one or more particular virtues, or habits of holinefs, or fome effential act or acts of it; or means and helps to the acquiring, maintaining, or encrease of it. Such as *hearing* and *reading the word*, *prayer*, *meditation*, good conference, watchfulnefs argainst temptations, avoiding occasions of evil, Ec.

And there is no *negative precept*, but doth forbid the contrary to fome one or more of those duties; but doth forbid fome thing or other that doth tend either directly or indirectly, immediately or mediately, in its own nature, or by reason of fome circumstance, to the depraving of humane nature, and rendring us *perfectly wicked*, or in fome degree or other *lefs halv*.

To make this appear by going over the feveral *precepts* contained in the Gofpel, would be a work of too much time; but wholoever, as he reads them, fhall duly confider each of them, cannot be to feek for fatisfaction, concerning the truth of what I have now faid; and I dare undertake he will readily acknowledge, that there is nothing that is not upon its own, or fome one or other account, greatly becoming us, and perfective of humane nature, in the whole Goipel commanded: and that there is not any thing in it felf, and in all refpects innocent, there forbidden. This can be by no means faid concerning the precepts of the law of Moles; but that it may concerning thofe of the Goipel, is abfolurely certain.

But my whole difcourfe upon this prefent argument fhall be confined to thefe two heads: namely to flow, That the Chriftian precepts require the most extensive, and most intensive holinefs; that is, exactly such a holinefs as hath been deferibed.

First, They require the most extensive boliness, not only towards God, but also towards our neighbour, and our felves. In the forecited place, Tit, ii. 12. St. Paul puts all these together, under the phrases of living soberly, righteously, and godhly, as making up that boliness which the grace of God, that brings falvation, teacheth. The precepts of our Saviour command

(d) Rom. vii.

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command us not only to give unto God the things that are God's, but alfo to Cæfar the things that are Cæfars : not only to obey God in all things, but to be fubject likewife to every ordinance of man for the Lord's fake; that is, to every ordinance of man that doth not contradict the law of God : not only to fear God, but also to honour the king, and to obey our spiritual governours, which watch for our fouls, &c. and to behave our felves towards all perfons futably to the relations we ftand in to them : Wives to fubmit themselves to their own husbands, as unto the Lord; husbands to love their wives even as Christ loved the church : children to obey their parents in the Lord; and fathers not to provoke their children to wrath, but to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord : fervants to be obedient to their masters, with singleness of heart as unto Christ, &c. and masters to do the fame things unto them, forbearing threatning, or a harth behaviour towards them, (e) knowing that they have a master in heaven, with whom is no respect of persons. We are commanded to love not our relations, or our friends only, but also all mankind; and to do good to all without exception, though especially to the houshold of faith; to good men. Nay our Saviour hath laid a strict charge upon us, not to exclude our malicious (f) enemies from our love (that is, of benevolence) but to pray for them that despitefully use us, and to blefs those that curfe us. Which law, as harthly as it founds to carnal perfons, they themfelves cannot but acknowledge that what it enjoyneth, is heroically and highly virtuous.

Secondly, The Christian precepts require the most intensive boliness; not only negative but positive, as was now intimated; that is, not only the forbearance of what is evil, but the performance also of what is good: not only holiness of actions and words, but likewife of affections and thoughts: the worthip of God with the spirit, as well as with the outward man; a holy frame and habit of mind, as well as a holy life. They forbid cheristing fin in the beart, as well as practifing it in the conversation. They make lusting after a woman adultery, as well as the gross act of uncleanness. They make malice murther, as well as killing; they forbid coveting no less than defrauding; and being in love with this worlds goods, as much as getting them by unlawful means.

And I shall digrefs fo far as to fay, That there is infinite reason that *thoughts* and the inward workings of mens fouls should be restrained by laws, upon these two accounts.

First, Because irregular thoughts and affections are the immediate depravers of mens natures; and therefore it is as neceffary in order to the defign of making men holy, that these should be forbidden, as that evil actions and words should. But suppose this were otherwise; yet

Secondly, Laws made againft evil words and actions would fignific very little, if men were left at liberty as to their *thoughts* and *affections*. It would be to very little purpose to forbid men to do evil, if they might *think* and *love* it: for where the sparks of fin are kept glowing in the *foul*, how can they be kept from breaking out into a flame in the *life*? From the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak, and the hands act.

But to proceed, The precepts of the Gofpel command us not only to perform

(e) Eph. vi. (f) Matt. v.

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perform good actions, but allo to do them after a right manner, with right ends, &c. or in one word, from good principles. Whatfoever we do, (g) to do it heartily, as to the Lord and not as to men. To be (b) forvent in fpirit in our fervice of God. To do all to the (i) glory of God. To be holy (&) as be that bath called us is holy, in all manner of converfation. (1) To be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect: Which precepts thew that we ought to imitate him, not fonly in the matter of our actions, but likewife in the qualifications of them: among which, that which I faid is effential to true holinefs, is a principal one; namely, To do good actions for thole reafons which moved God to enjoyn them, and, I add, which make it pleafing to him to perform them himfelf, viz. becaufe they are either in themfelves and upon their own account, excellent, worthy and moft fit to be done, or are made fo to be by fome circumfance.

Our whole duty to God and our neighbour (as our Saviour hath told us) is comprehended in the *love* of them: and the *love of God* required by him is a moft *intenfe* love: we are commanded to love him (m) with all the heart and foul, mind and firength; and that of our neighbour which he hath made our duty, is fuch, as for the kind of it, is like the love which we bear to our felves; fuch as will not permit us to wrong him in his (n) good name, any more than in his effate or perfon; fuch as will not allow us rafbly to fpeak, or fo much as think ill of him; fuch as will caufe us to put the beft conftructions on thofe actions of his that are capable of various interpretations, &c. And for the (o) degree, tuch as will make us willing to lay down our very (p) lives for him, that is, for the promoting of his eternal happinefs.

To fum up all together, We are commanded to (q) add to our faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, to patience godlinefs, to godlinefs brotherly kindnefs, and to brotherly kindnefs charity. To behave our felves in all respects towards our Creator as becometh his creatures, and those which are under unspeakable obligations to him: towards one another, as becometh those that are indued with the fame common nature, and according to the diverse relations, engagements and other circumftances we ftand in each to other; and towards our felves according as the dignity of our nature requires we should. In short, (r) what sever things are true, what sever things are honeft, what foever things are just, what foever things are pure, what foever things are lovely, what foever things are of good report. what foever things have virtue and praife in them, are the objects of the Christian precepts, and by them recommended to us. Let any one read but our Saviour's incomparable fermon upon the mount, the twelfth to the Romans, and the third chapter of the epiftle to the Coloffians, and well confider them, and it will be ftrange fhould he find it difficult to affent to the truth of that proposition.

Even Trypho himfelf, in the dialogue betwixt Justin Martyr and him, confested, that the precepts contained in the book called the Gospel are Januard

(g) Col. iii. 23. (k) 1 Pet. i. 15. (n) Tit. iii. 2. (q) 2 Pet. i. (b) Rom. xii. 11. (l) Mat. v. 48. (o) 1 Cor. xiii. 5. (r) Phil. 4. (i) 1 Cor. x. 31. (m) Mat. xix. 19. (p) 1 John iii. 16.  $\Im aupasa u_{j} \mu_{1}\gamma d\lambda a$ , great and admirable. He faith indeed, that they are fo admirable, as that he fufpected them not to be by humane nature observable; but in that he fpake not unlike to himfelf, that is, a prejudiced and carnal Jew.

If it be now objected, that notwithstanding what hath been faid concerning the Chriftian precepts recommending the most elevated virtue to be practifed by us, it is acknowledged by all fober Chriftians, that they are not to be underftood in fo high a fence as to require of us indefective and unfpotted holinefs, or at leaft that our Saviour will accept of and reward that holinels which is far fhort of perfect; and therefore he can be no fuch great friend to it, as hath been affirmed ; the anfwer is very eafie and obvious, viz. That our Saviour's not rigidly exacting fuch a degree of holinefs as amounts to perfection, proceeds from hence, that the attainment of it is in this flate impossible to us; and therefore it is not to be attributed to his liking or allowance of the leaft fin, but to his fpecial grace and good will to fallen mankind: Nay, moreover, it proceeds from his paffionate defire that we may be as pure and holy, as our unhappy circumstances will admit; he well knowing, that thould he declare that nothing thort of *perfetion* thall be accepted at our hands, he would make us defperate, and take the most effectual courfe to caufe us, to give over all thoughts of becoming better. nay, and to let the reins loofe unto all ungodlinefs. But yet nothing fort of *fincerity*, and *diligent*, *ferious endeavours to abflain from all fin*, will be admitted by him in order to our being made the objects of his grace and favour : and as for wilful and prefumptuous fins of what kind foever, he makes no allowances for *them*, but hath by himfelf and his minifters declared very frequently, that they fhall not be pardoned, without our reformation. And, Laftly, notwithftanding the allowances and abatements that in tender compassion to us he is pleafed to make us, no lefs than our abfolutely perfect holinefs is defigned by him. though not to be effected in this, yet in the other world.

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#### CHAP. IV.

#### That Holinefs is the only Defign of the Promifes of the Gofpel, fleewed in Two Particulars: and of the Threatnings therein contained.

**CHARTONELY**, the promifes and threatenings of the Gofpel have most apparently the promoting of Holine/s for their only defign. First, The promifes, it is plain, have. This St. Peter affureth us, 2 Epifl. chap. 1. ver. 4. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promifes, that by thefe you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through luft. And St. Paul doth more than intimate the fame, in 2 Cor. 7. 1. Having (faith he) thefe promifes, dearly beloved, (viz. those which the foregoing chapter concludes with) let us cleanfe our felves from all filthine/s of the fields and fpirit, perfecting holine/s in the far of God. Again, Rom. 12. 1. Vot. VI. I befeech you, by the mercies of God, that ye prefent your bodies a living facrifice, boly acceptable to God, which is your reafonable fervice. And be ye not conformed to this prefent world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, &cc.

1. We always find these promises either limited to holy perfons, or made use of as encouragements and exciting motives to bolinefs. The Apoftle tell us, that it is godlinefs which hath the (s) promifes of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. The promife of the beatifical vision is made to the pure in heart. (t) Bleffed are the pure in heart, for they shall fee God. That of the kingdom of heaven to the (u) poor in fpirit, or those that are of humble and lowly tempers. The promife of obtaining mercy to (x) the merciful. That of inheriting the earth (of temporal felicity) to the (y) meek, or fuch as live in obedience to government, Se. That of eternal life to those that (z) patiently continue in well-doing. That of fitting with Chrift on his throne, to those that overcome, (a) that is, that mortifie their lufts and corrupt affections. The promife of a crown of life is used as a motive to perswade to (b) faithfulness to the death. But to what purpole do I multiply inftances, when as there is not a particular promile throughout the whole Gofpel, but it is expressed, or plainly intimated, that its performance depends upon fome duty of holinefs to be on our parts first performed, or at least heartily endeavoured. And whereas the promifes of pardon, and of eternal life are very frequently made to believing, there is nothing more evidently declared than that this faith is fuch as purifieth the heart, and is productive of good works. 2. Nay the nature of these promises is fuch, as is of it felf sufficient to

2. Nay the nature of this promises is tuch, as is of it fell function to fatisfie us, that holinefs is the defign of them.

I. This is manifelly true concerning the principal promifes, or those which relate to the other life. They may be reduced to these three heads; that of the holy spirit; of remission of sin; and of eternal happinels in the enjoyment of God.

Now for the first of these, viz. The promise of the spirit, that is it to which we are beholden for grace and affistance in the great work of subduing fin, and acquiring the habit of holines; and this is the very business for the sake of which that promise is made to us.

And for the fecond and third, they are fuch as none but holy fouls are capable of. That none but fuch are capable of having the guilt of their fins removed, and of being freed from the difpleafure and wrath of God, is felf-evident; for the guilt of fin muft needs remain while its power continues; thefe two are infeparately from each other: fin is fo loathforme and filthy a thing (as fhall hereafter be fhewn) that it is perfectly impoffible that the blood of Chrift it felf fhould render a finner lovely, or not odious, in the fight of God, any otherwife than by wafhing away the pollution of it. And nothing is more apparent, than that holy fouls alone are in a capacity of the happinels that confifts in the enjoyment of God in the other world; than that, as without holinefs no man *fball fee* the Lord, (as faith the author to the *Hebrews*) fow ithout it none can fee him: for the full and complete participation of God.

(i) 1 Tim. 4. (x) Verle 7. (4) Rev. 3. 21. (1) Mat. 5. 8. (y) Verfe 5. (b) Chap. 2. 10. (u) Verfe 3. (z) Rom. 2. 7.

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which our Saviour promifeth his disciples and faithful followers, arifeth out of the likeness and conformity of mens fouls to him : but there is fuch a perfect unlikenefs and contrariety in impure and polluted fouls to the infinitely holy God, that it is impoffible there fould be any communications from him to them, any friendly agreement and complacency between him and them. He is not a God that hath pleafure in wickedness, neither can evil dwell with him. Pfal. 5. 4. What communion hath light with darkness faith the apostle, 2 Cor. 6. 14. But vicious and unholy fouls are full of darknefs, whereas God is pure fplendid light, and in him is no darknefs at all. The *Platonifts* would not admit that any man is capable of being acquainted with *divine* things, that is not purged from that which they called gabouia, and anoyia, remissines of mind and brutish passions. How utterly impossible then is it, that fucin as are not fo, should be acquainted with divinity it felf? Hierocles faith. ώσπες δφθαλμώ λημωνι, &c. As a bleer-eye cannot look upon σφόδεα φωτεινά things very bright and shining, so a foul unpossessed of virtue is unable to behold the beauty of truth : how unable then is fuch a foul to behold the beauty of God himfelf, to fee him as he is, and be happy in the fight of him? those eyes which have continually beheld vanity (as faith an excellent late writer of our own) would be dazled, not delighted, with the beatifick vision. (c) Thanks be to God (faith the apostle) who bath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the faints in light. 'Those can by no means partake of it, that are not by holinels made meet and disposed for it. What happiness can we find in the enjoyment of God, when he is of a perfectly contrary nature to our own ? and moreover, how can we then enjoy him ? there must be in us a likeness to him, or we cannot fee him as he is; for St. John proves, that when he appeareth, we shall be like him, by this agreement. It was one of the maxims of the excellent Socrates. \* It is unlawful for an impure nature to touch pure divinity. Now this being the happines promised in the Golpel, we eafily learn from the confideration of the nature of it (it being not at all grofs and fenfual, but purely fpiritual) what is the defign of those promifes that contain it. At the first hearing of them, though they should found (as they do not) like abfolute ones, we may be certain that holinefs, and fincere endeavours after a participation of a divine nature must necessarily be tacit conditions of them, as without which our fouls cannot poffibly be qualified and put into an apt difpofition for them.

2. As the promifes which concern the other life are fuch as none but holy fouls are capable of: fo those that only relate to this life are fuch as none but fuch fouls will be contented with. They are only neceffaries which the Gospel gives us an affurance of, and fuch things as may be a help to the exercise of virtue and boline's; not fuperfluities, and fuch as ferve to gratific liquorith appetites. So we are to understand that of our Saviour, Mat. 5. 3. First feek the kingdom of God, and bis righteeusine's; and all thele things shall be added unto you; the words foregoing thew, that by [all these things] we are only to understand meat, drink, and cleathes. The temporal bleffings that Christ engageth himself to X a

(c) Col. i. 12. \* Mà મલગેલકુર્વે મલગેલકુર્વે ioánી.ગેલા ભૂતે હે ઉદ્યાદ્યો તે. beftow upon his difciples, are fuch alone as tend to answer moderate defires, not to fatisfie *inordinate* cravings : in fhort, they are only fuch as are needful to keep their bodies in fuch a state as that they may be meet habitations and infruments of their fouls, so long as it shall be fit for them to continue in them.

Secondly, and as for the *threatenings* of the Gofpel, which are most terrible and difmal, that they have the fame defign that the *promifes* have, is out of queftion : for they are never used to feare men from any thing but what tends to pollute and debauch their fouls : and the end of them is every where to excite us effectually to diligence and industry in the purfuit of real righteousness and fubftantial holinefs.

(d) The wrath of God is revealed from heaven in the Gospel, against all ungodlinefs, and unrighteousness of men : fuch as difbelieving and difobeying Chrift's Gospel, in the general; and particularly such as (e) idolatry, adultery, fornication and uncleannefs of all forts, theft, covetoufnefs, drunkennels, reviling, wrath, contemptuous behaviour, implacability, unmercifulness, 'illiberality, malice, cenforiousness, lying, pride, hypocrisie, rebellion and difobedience to governours, &c. And therefore are the committers of these and such like fins threatned, that so those, which from the confideration of their vile nature and uglinefs will not be withdrawn from them, may from a principle of felf-prefervation be afraid of them : and our Saviour is infinitely good to us in his terrifying threatenings, as well as in his alluring promifes. For (as Clem. Alex. in his Pædagogus, faith) his threatnings proceed not from anger, but from great good will; and he therefore threatneth punishment, that finners being thereby scared into reformation, may by that means prevent their being punished. He doth not (as he proceeds) like a ferpent bite before he giveth warning. And therefore only doth he give warming, that he may not bite.

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## CHAP. V.

That the promoting of Holine/s was the Defign of our Saviour's whole Life and Converfation among Men; both of his Difcourfes and Afions. And that he was an eminent Example of all the Parts of Virtue, viz. Of the greateft Freedom, Affability and Courtefie: the greateft Candor and Ingenuity: the noft marvellous gentlene/s and mekne/s: the deepeft Humility: the greateft contempt of the World: the most perfect Contentation: the most wonderful Charity and tendereft Compassion: flupenduous Patience, and Submission to the Divine Will: the most passion to fidence and Truft in God. An Objection answerd: the most admirable Prudence.

T Saviour's tubele life, and conversation among men. All his difcourses that are on record carried on this great bufiness : not only

(d) Rom. i. 18. (e) 1 Cor. vi, 9. 10. Mat. v. 22. Mat. xi. 26. chap. xviii. 28. chap. xxv. 42. 1 John iii. 15. Mat. vii. 1. Rev. xxi. 27. Jam. iv. 6. Mat. xxiii. 13. Rom. xiii. 1, 2. CHAP. V.

only his fermons, but likewife those which were less folemn, and that occasionally, and as it were by the bye dropt from him. There is not a parable he uttered, but fomething highly conducing to the inftilling of virtue into those to whom he directed it, was the moral of it : and all advantages and occasions he greedily embraced for the infusing of true piety and holinefs into the fouls of men.

To give a few inftances : when it was told him that his mother and brethren fought for him, he took that opportunity to tell them, that wholever will do the will of God, the fame is his brother, fifter, and mother, Mark 3. 35. When he observed a reasoning among the disciples, which of them should be the greatest in the kingdom of God, he took occafion from thence to preach to them the necessity of the grace of humility and becoming as little children, of felf-denial, mortification of their most beloved lusts, and to teach them feveral other very excellent lesions, Matt. 18. in the beginning. Upon a certain woman's faying to him, Bleffed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps that gave thee fuck; he minded his hearers of the bleffedness of obedient persons; yea rather (faid he) are they bleffed that hear the word of God, and keep it, Luke 11. 28. Upon Martha's defiring him to command her fifter to help her in ferving, he reproved her over-folicitoufnels about the affairs of this life, and put her in mind of the one thing needful, Luke 10. 41. From a Pharifees marvelling that he washed not before dinner, he took an advantage to reprove their fuperstition, hypocrifies, partial righteoufnels, pride, and feveral other immortalities, Luke 11. 38. &e, From a perfon's defiring him to fpeak to his brother to divide the inheritance with him, he took an opportunity to discourse against covetousness, and to diffwade from fetting the heart upon earthly riches, from folicitoufnefs and carking carefulnefs, and to exhort to feveral most weighty and important duties, Luke 12. 15, &c. Upon fome mens talking of the lamentable difaster that befell the Galileans, he took occasion to give a caution again rash judging, and to preach to them the absolute necessity of repentance, as that without which they should all perish, Luke 13. begin. Upon his observing how that a feast they chose the uppermost rooms, he laid hold of that opportunity to teach the virtue of humility, Luke 14. 7. And in the fame chapter he took the advantage that was offered him by other paffages for the inftilling of diverse other profitable inftructions. And you may find in the four Evangelifts abundance of observations of this nature.

And as it was the bufinefs of all his difcourfes to teach virtue, fo was it also of all his actions : he preach'd holine/s to mens eyes no lefs than to t'heir ears, by giving them the most admirable example in his own perfon of all the parts of it. His whole life was one continued lecture of the most excellent morals, the most sublime and exact virtue.

For inftance; he was a perfon of the greateft freedom, affability, and courtefie, there was nothing in his conversation that was at all auftere, crabbed or unpleafant. Though he was always ferious, yet was he never foure, fullenly grave, morofe or cynical; but of a marvelloufly converfable, fociable and benign temper. Those who had checks from his disciples, as rude and troublesome, were never accused by him for being fo, but were most kindly liftned to, and lovingly received : even litt'e

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little children, as unwelcome as they were to them, were tenderly embraced, and bleft by him. He never blamed any for interrupting him in his discourses, or other businels: nor was put into the least chafe by their fo doing, but ever patiently heard them, and fent none of them from him (supposing they had no ill defign in coming to him) without latisfaction. When he was invited to mens tables (as little as their chear could tempt him) he readily went; nor did he efteem it as difbecoming his gravity to make one at a marriage-feaft; nor to contribute to it himself neither. He did not think himself defiled by bad company, nor baulked the fociety of publicans and finners themfelves, (as loathfome as they were to werfe men, the Pharifees) but freely in order to the reforming of them fate down, when there was occasion, and conversed with them. His first entertainment of the woman of Canaan, as uncivil as it might feem, was nothing lefs than fo; for the unkind and contemptuous language he gave her, though it was but the fame which the Jews always beltowed upon those people, proceeded from no contempt of her; nor was it defigned, as the event shewed, in the leaft to difcourage her, but on the contrary, to give her occasion to fhew the greatnels of her faith, in the answer the returned to it. The ever and anon infirm, imprudent and impertinent talk of his disciples, and others, could not at any time put him out of his good temper, but only gave him an opportunity of imparting to them feafonable inftructions and wife counfels.

The candour allo and ingenuity of his fpirit did to great admiration discover it felf: whereof take this one instance. Where as he (as was faid) forbad cenforious judging of other men; and commanded, confequently, to put the beft conftructions upon those actions of others that are capable of various interpretations, he hath given us no fmall encouragement fo to do, by his behaviour towards those three disciples, whom he could not perfwade for a little while to forbear fleeping, no not in his agony; as great obligations as he had laid upon them, to do any thing he thould pleafe to defire of them. Their fleeping at fuch a time feemed a certain fign of their being very much unconcerned for their bleffed Lord, and of great coolness of affection to him ; especially he having (I fay) before defired them to watch with him, and given them the reason why he did to: yet for all this would he impute it to no worfe a caufe than mere infirmity, nor entertain any ill opinion of them upon that account; and when they themfelves had nothing to fay to excule their fault, he makes this apology himfelf for them'; The fpirit indeed is willing but the flefh is weak : nay though, for all this, and notwithstanding that friendly expostulation of his with Peter, [Couldest thou not watch with me one hour ?] they fell asleep again, yet did he not at his laft return to them pafs any cenfure upon them, but carried it towards them as he was wont to do.

And the gentlenefs and meeknefs of his difposition was very marvellous: when James and John in a great heat, would have perforded him to call for fire from heaven, after the example of Elias, to confume the Samaritans for their inhospitable and barbarous refulal to give him entertainment, he rebuked them immediately for that revengeful motion, and gave them this reply; Ye know not what manner of fpirit, ye are of; for

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for the fon of man is not come to destroy men's lives but to fave them, Luke 9. 55. and fo, filently went his ways, without giving them fo much as a lath of his tongue for to rude an affront. Never had any one to ftrong provocations to wrath and revenge, as the bleffed Jefus; but never were either fo undifcernible in any as they were in him. In his carriage indeed towards the Pharifees he might feem to fome to be once or twice transported with a fit of unordinary passion, but it would not have become the zeal he had for God and true goodnefs, to behave himfelf otherwife towards fuch monftroufly immoral wretches and moft hatefully conceited and proud hypocrites. Nor was his overturning the tables of the money-changers, or whipping the buyers and fellers out of the temple, any other than a very befitting and feemly expression of his just difpleafure against those facrilegious and prophane people. But he was never fo concerned for himfelf for his own reputation, or ought else that belonged to him, as to be put into the least heat by all the ignominious language that was from time to time given him, and the vile reproaches and unfufferable abufes that were heap'd upon him. When he was accosted with a never-to-be-parallell'd impudence by his old disciple Judas, in the front of an armed multitude, who could have forborn to receive fuch a villainous and intolerably bafe traytor with the most emphatical expressions of an exasperated and enraged mind? but with what wonderful mildne/s was that moniter of ingratitude and diffimulation treated by our dear Lord ! the worft words he beftowed upon him being these, Judas, betrayest thou the son of man with a kis? nor did he more angrily befpeak the wicked followers than he did their leader, when they rudely affaulted and apprehended him. And fo far was he from revenging himfelf upon them, as able as he was to do it effectually; and notwithstanding (as he gave them to understand) that he could, if he lifted, have no fewer than twelve legions of angels imployed in his fervice, that he wrought a miracle for the healing of the wound that one of them received from the fword of Peter; and withal, charged him to put up that weapon.

Nor was it ever in the power either of the calumniating and black tongues, or rude and cruel hands, of his bittereft enemies to draw from him to much as a reviling or fierce word. But of for arely moderate a temper and ferene fpirit was he, that (as S. Peter faith,) (f) When be was reviled, he reviled not again; when he fuffered, he threatned not. but committed himfelf to him that judgeth rightcuff. (g) He gave his back to the finiters, and his checks to them that plucked off the hair, he hid not his face from fhame and fpitting. (h) He was opprefied and he was afflicited, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the flaughter, and as a fheep before her fhearers is dumb, fo he opened not his mouth. And thus hath he taught us by the moft excellent example to obey thofe precepts of his whereby the practice of that virtue of meeknefs and fedatenefs of fpirit towards injurious perfons is injoyned on us.

Nor was his *meeknefs* lefs to be parallell'd or more obfervable than his great *humility*; from whence indeed that proceeded, and was of this no finall expression. And especially confidering his high descent, most transcendent perfections and infinite worth, it was impossible he should  $X \ 4$  have

(f) 1 Pet ii. 23.

(g) Ifai. 1. 6.

(b) Ifai. liii. 7.

have been fo meek as to put up fuch contemptuous ufage and inexpreffibly provoking affronts as he did, if his humility were not equal to his other excellencies; if he had not been moft lowly minded, and of a profoundly fubmifs fpirit. God only had the glory of all his mighty works, he would not afcribe to bim/elf the leaft. The father, faith he, that dwellcth in me, he doth the works, John xiv. 10. Verily, verily, I fay unto you, the fon can do nothing of himfelf, but what he feeth the father do: for, whatfoever things he dath, thefe doth the fon likewife, John v. 19. I can of mine own felf do nothing; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is juft, becaufe I feek not mine oven will, but the will of the father which hath fent me, verfe 30.—I do nothing of my felf: but as my father bath taught me, I fpeak thefe things, John vii. 28.

Though he was king of kings, and lord of lords, the prince of the kings of earth, yet did he hide his greatnefs, told his difciples that his kingdom is not of this world, and chose the condition of a subject and a private man in it : nor would he be perfwaded to affume to himfelf fo much authority, as judging but between two perfons in a cafe of civil right did amount unto. In the above cited place (Luke 12. 15.) when one defired him, to fpeak to his brother, that he divide the inheritance with him, he returned him this answer, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? nay he put himfelf into the condition, not only of a private, but also of a mean, a most despicably mean perfon. As he chose to be born of a mean woman, in the meanest and even vilest of places, a flable, where a manger was his cradle, and brute beafts his chamber-fellows; fo did he afterwards fubject himfelf to his poor mother, and the carpenter her hufband. He was not unacquainted, when he was but a child, with the nobility of his defcent, the greatnels of his extraction, he even then did well understand whole fon he was, and that no lefs a perfon was his father than the infinite God of heaven and earth; for faid he to Foleph and Mary, when after a forrowful learch after him they found him in the temple, will ye not that I must be about my Father's bufines? yet notwithstanding, he went down with them from Ferusalem, and came to Nazareth, and was fubjet unto them, Luke ii. 49, 51. And under 70feph, though he knew him to be but his reputed Father (if we may believe \* one of the most ancient Fathers) he wrought at his own trade, and, as he faith, reclound iera siera (ilo, did carpentry-work ; and particularly bufied himfelf in making deoled in Eura, ploughs and yokes.

Again, the perfons that he took for his most intimate alfociates were of no better quality than forry filhermen, and men of the lowedt rank. As for his worldly estate, I cannot fay 'twas mean, for he had none at all (that is, but what he was beholden to others for.) The foxes, faid he, have bales, and the birds of the air have nefls, but the fon of man hath not where he may lay his head. And as for employments, he thought not himfelf too good to undertake the wileft, even one in comparison of which making ploughs and yokes was molf gentle, wiz. The washing of his difciples feet. In thort, for marvellously humble was this infinitely great perfon, that (as he faith, Matth. xx. 28.) He came not to be ministred unto, but to minister; and was in this world as one that ferveth, Luke xxii. 27. and that, though be was rich, he became poor, that we through he

<sup>·</sup> Justin Martyr.

his poverty might be rich. (i) That, though he was in the form of God. he thought it no robbery (or spoil) to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the' form of a fervant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled him/elf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cro/s, Phil. ii. 6, 7. And our Saviour hath declared that he was our pattern both in his maekness and humility; For, learn (faid he) of me, for I am meek and lowly in beart, Matth. xi. 29. And therefore did he fubmit to that meanest office of a fervant (which was but now mentioned) that we might from the confideration of his example, not look upon the loweft, whereby we may ferve our brethren, as below us: for, after he had washed his Disciples feet, and was fate down again, he faid thus to them, John xili. 12. Know ye what I have done unto you? Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye fay well, for fo I am: If I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one anothers feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do, as I have done unto you. Verily, verily, I fay unto you, the fervant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is fent, greater than he that fent him. If ye know thefe these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

Confidering what hath been faid of his chufing fo mean and defpicable a condition in this world, I need not fpend time in fhewing what an example he hath given us of contempt of it. Never was any one fo dead to its pleafures as he was : nor were ever its glories fo trampled on as by our Saviour : and that, not as were the carpets of Plato by that cynick Diogenes, who was truly enough (no queftion) told by that great philosopher, that he trod under foot the pride of Plate, with a greater pride; for he was guilty of no infolent behaviour either towards great men or their greatnefs, nor of any thing that looked in the leaft like it. But he gave most eminent demonstrations of the mean opinion he had of popularity and applause among men, of titles of honour, and vast revenues, and that he infinitely despifed them in comparison of mental endowments and accomplishments. He confuted the idle fancies of the world concerning thefe and the like things, and difparaged those vain estimations that are founded upon them, in that he chose to be wholly devoid of them, and in the very other extreme to those which abounded with them : whereby he likewife fignified how little evil he apprchended in difefteem, reproach and poverty; which we vain creatures have fuch frightful conceptions of, and fo greatly dread ; in that he did not at all matter them, nor in the least concern himfelf at them.

So great and generous a foul had he, as to be fo far from fuffering his mind to be at all difquieted with them, that he voluntarily and freely chofe them, For it lay in his power to be the *richeff* man under heaven, and moft to abound with this worlds goods, if it had fo pleafed him; and he could, if he had lifted, have been alfo the moft *pepular* perfon upon earth; could always have kept the credit which for a while he had among the common people, and gained, the like among all forts : for he had infinitely the advantage above all that ever appeared in the world to have raifed to himfelf a moft mighty renown, and

(i) 2 Cor. viii. 9.

SECT. I.

and to be adored by all people. So that the truth of that faying of *Epicitetus*, [\*They are not the things themselves which fo affright and feare men, but the false opinions they have conceived of them,] is greatly confirmed as to the forementioned reputed evils, by our Saviour's practice.

And this bleffed perfon, chufing fo mean and contemptibly poor a condition of life, I need not tell you that he was perfectly contented with it; nor that he was altogether free (though he had many times fearcely from hand to mouth) from thoughtfulnefs and anxiety of mind, concerning his future maintenance. For as he cautioned his Difciples against taking thought for their life, what they should eat, what they should drink, and wherewith they should be clothed; and thewed the folly and finfulnels thereof, as proceeding from distrustfulnels of the divine providence, (Matt. vi. 25, Sc.) So was he fo far from being guilty of that fault himfelf, that he was no lefs liberal than he was poor. For when he was provided with a fmall pittance of victuals, inftead of hoarding it up, or being faving of it, he would not think much of fpending it upon others whole needs craved it : we read twice of his bestowing the little stock that he and his Disciples had gotten between them, upon the hungry multitude, and of his working a miracle to make it hold out among them.

And how full he was of charity, and tender compassion, is beyond expreffion : for as he commended to his difciples, and inculcated upon them nothing more, nor fcarcely fo much, fo in the exercife of no virtue was he more exemplary. We read often of the yerning of his bowels towards miferable mortals, and his pity did always exert it felf in acts of mercy. Never did any make application to him for deliverance from the evils that did afflict them, that had not their requefts granted them : nor were any more forward to beg relief of any kind of him, than he was to beftow it upon them : nay he frequently made poor creatures the objects of his mercy before it was fought for by them. It was even his whole bufinefs to oblige the world by fignal kindneffes, and (as fhall be farther fhewn anon) be continually went up and down doing good either to the bodies or fouls of men. Nay his charity was of fo large and universal extent, that the wicked and unthankful, and even his bitterest enemies, were (as well as others) very ample partakers of it. Whereas the duty of bleffing thefe that eurse us, and praying for those that despitefully use us, is to our corrupt natures one of the harsheft and most difficult of any he hath imposed upon us, he hath taken a courfe by the admirable example he hath herein given us, to make it one of the eafieft and most pleafant to us. For the devilish malice that by the vilest of men was exprest towards him, could not in the least imbitter his spirit or harden his heart against them : nor could he be diffwaded by it from persisting in doing good to them : but continued to entreat them to accept of life from him, to grieve at their infidelity, and with tears to bewail their most obstinate perverseness. And lastly, when their inveterate and implacable hatred came to vent it felf in the cruelleft and most barbarous manner imaginable upon him, did he pray to his father for them ; even whilft they were tormenting him, did he befeech him to forgive them; naya

Ταξάτλει τὸς ἀνθεώπες ἐ τὰ πεάγματα ἀλλά τὰ περι ἀυτῶν δύγμαλα.

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nay, and in order thereunto laid down his very life for them; even for them, I fay, that took it from him.

And this gives occasion to discourse fomething of his most wonderful patience, and fubmiffion to the will of God, which he gave us in his extreme fufferings an example of. We are exhorted, Heb. xii. 1, 2. to run with patience the race that is fet before us, looking unto Jefus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Crofs, despifing the shame, &c. The ignominy that was caft upon him by ungodly creatures, he defpifed ; and as for the exceffive tortures felt by him, them he endured : he did not indeed defpife thefe alfo, but neither did he faint under them ; according as we are forbidden to do, ver/e 5. of the now mentioned chapter, My fon defpife not thou the chastifement of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him. There were on the one hand no floical rants heard from him. fuch as that of Pollidonius in the prefence of Pompey (when he was afflicted with a fit of the gout. or fome fuch difease,) viz nihil agis dolor, Sc. O pain, thou art an infignificant thing, I don't matter thee : For we find that our Saviour had as quick a fence of pain, as have other men; and his agony in the garden did fo affect his foul, as to force, Deóubas a"ualo, clodders of blood through the pores of his body. We read that he was fore amazed, and very heavy; and he told his Disciples that his foul was exceeding forrowful, even unto death : But yet, on the other hand, notwithstanding the immense weight and most heavy pressure of grief his mind fuffered under, through his Father's with holding the wonted influences of his love from him, and the intolerable torments of body that he underwent, (though, both in regard of the greatness of his fufferings, and also his most perfect innocence, and therefore nondefert of them, he might have the greatest temptations imaginable to be impatient) he never uttered a murmuring or discontented word. nor conceived the least displeasure at the Divine Majesty, or doubted either of his justice or goodnefs; but intirely submitted himself to this his fevere difpensation of providence, and willingly acquiesced in it. He praved indeed to his Father, that this bitter cup, if it were pollible, might pals from him; but it was on this condition, that it might feem good to him. And as fo much is implied in those words, [If it be poffible] fo is it expressed, Luke xxii. 42. where it is faid, Father, if thou be willing, remove the cup from me : And it immediately followeth ; Neverthelefs not my will, but thine be done; according as he hath, in the abfolute form he left us, required us to pray. And again, faith he, John xviii. II. The cup which my Father giveth me, Shall I not drink it ? And John xii. 28. After he had put up the forementioned petition to be delivered from that most difinal hour that was approaching near him, he doth, as it were, recall it prefently, in these words, But for this cause came I unto this hour; and then put up this fecond, Father glorifie thy name : which is plainly as much as if he had faid, Father, as dreadful and terrifying as the thoughts are of my future sufferings, seeing glory will redound to thy felf by them, I am not only contented but allo defirous to undergo them.

Celfus having mentioned that celebrated Bravado of Anaxarchus to the tyrant of Cyprus, when he cruelly pounded him in his mortar; and the merry laying of Epistetus to his mafter when he brake his leg, e and and thereupon fcoffingly demanded of the Chriftians, what faying like to either of those, was uttered by their God in the midft of his fufferings, Origen makes this good reply to him, viz. That our Saviour's filence in the midft of the tortures he endured, thewed greater patience and fortitude of mind, than did all the fayings of the Greek philosophers in the like cafes: And he adds that those words of Chrift, Nat as I will, but as thou wilt, were not only furn indidation, inageneusing it rois outbeausers, Sc. the voice of one that patiently fuffered, but also that was well pleafed with bis fufferings, and spake his preference of what was appointed for him by the divine providence before his own defires and natural affections.

In the next place, our Saviour gave us the most eminent and noble example of Love to God, and the devoutest temper of mind towards him. That love of him, with all the heart and foul mind and Arength which he commended to us as our duty, did he himfelf give the highest demonstrations of. His last mentioned patience, and perfect submisfion to the divine pleafure under the most dreadful fufferings, is alone fufficient to convince us that his love to his father was most intenfe : for it was utterly impoffible that bis will should be fo entirely refigned up to the will of God, if his love of him had not been, as fincere, fo of the bighest degree and absolutely perfect. So his heavenly Father might thereby be glorified, he was willing to endure the extremest miferies, that ever were inflicted on any mortal : and indeed his mere well interpreting fo fevere a providence was a great expression of no small love. And befides, it was (as he told his Difciples) his very (k) meat to do the will of him that fent him, and to finish his work. As he was heartily well pleafed to fuffer his will, fo he took infinite content, fatisfaction and delight in the doing of it. It was to him the most pleafant thing in the whole world to be about his Father's bufinefs; and therein he abounded, and was indefatigable. All he did was referred by him to the honour of God; and of each of his glorious works he gave him the glory, and him only: which thing was no lefs an argument of the ardency of his love, than (as we have faid it is) of the depth of his bumility. In all his ways he acknowledged God, and took all occafions to make mention of him, and to speak of his excellent perfections. When the ruler called him but good mafter ; which was an epithet, had he been but a mere man, he was infinitely worthy of; as fleight an occasion as this may seem to some, it minded him to speak of God's goodnefs; and he prefently replied, Why callest thou me good? there is none good (that is originally and from himfelf) but God only. He was much in delightful converse with God, and in prayer to him, and ever and anon retired from all company for that purpole; according as he hath enjoyned us to do, Mat. vi. 5, 6. And we read Luke vi. 12. of his continuing on a mountain a whole night in prayer.

A mighty confidence and truft in God, as it could not but be an effect of our Saviour's no lefs love of him, fo did he give martellous inflances thereof. The form that put his Difeiples into a dreadful conflernation, could not terrifie, nor fo much as difeompole him; no, though he was fuddenly awaked out of a found fleep by their difmal cries. When he was hoyfted up into the air by his grand adverfary, tho the devil, and fet upon a pinnacle of the temple, and then by abufing fcripture folicited to caft himfelf down; as much as he feemed to be abandoned to his power, and under as great a difadvantage as he was through extreme fasting, his mind was as strong as his body weak, his conftancy remained unfhaken, his thoughts undifordered, and with an undaunted courage he readily replied to him, It is written again. Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, Mat. iv. 5. Where you have also two other fignal inftances of the like nature. By all which he shewed that his truft in God was fo invincibly ftrong, and his adherence to him fo infeparably close, that the utmost attempts, and fiercest affaults of the devil could have no other effect than to prove them fo. Our Saviour could never be prevailed upon to go the least step out of God's way, in order to his prefervation from the most imminent dangers, fo firm was his faith in him : and he ftill doing the things that were pleafing in his fight, he was undoubtedly affured of the continuance of his prefence with him. This he hath himself told us, John viii. 29. And be that bath fent me, is with me, the Father bath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please him.

So visible and apparent was his trust in God, that when he was given up to his adverfaries most barbarous rage, they themselves could not but take notice of it, and fcoffingly when he hung on the crofs (and therefore feemed to be in a defperate condition) did they upbraid him with it : He trusted in God, faid they, let him deliver him now if he will have him, for he faid, I am the Son of God, Mat. xxvii. 43. And whereas it hath been objected by fome of our Saviour's adverfaries, that a little before his death, he expressed very great distrust, if not perfect despair of his Father's love, in that tragical exclamation, My God, my God, why haft thou forfaken me ? There are those that conceive it may be fatisfactorily enough answered, that it is most unreasonable and barbarous to take advantage from words uttered in the very pangs of death, accompanied with unfupportable mifery; it being not ordinarily fuppolable that any can be them felves, who are in fuch circumstances ; and why the Man Jefus, or our Saviour, according to his humane nature, should not be under as great difadvantages as others in fuch a condition, he being as was faid, no lefs fenfible of pain than other men, no reafon can be affigned : Yet we ftand not however in any neceffity of this reply. But I fay, fecondly, though we should suppose our Saviour to be now as perfectly mafter of his thoughts as he ever was, these words may not be understood in so harsh a fence ; for they were but a repetition of the first verse of the 22d. Plalm; which does relate not to David's cafe only, but also to the Melfiah, whom he often perfonated, and was a type of. The ancient Fews themfelves did fo understand this Plalm. Nor can it be gathered from our Saviour's rehearfal of these words, that he either concluded, or at all doubted, he was utterly rejected and cast off by his Father, but the contrary : for feveral verfes in the forementioned Pfalm affure us that they are not there to be fo underftood; for David doth again and again afterward, not only pray for, but likewife expresseth good hopes, nay, and undoubted affurance of a gracious deliverance; and praifeth God for it too, as if it were already effected. So that this fad complaint of the bleffed 0

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bleffed Jefus, as it could not be occafioned by the leaft diffruft, fo it may be more than prefumed, to have proceeded from the higheft and intenfeft degree of love, which caufed in his foul the meft pungent and fmart fenfe of his Father's hiding his face, and abfenting himfelf (though but for a while) from him. But the leaft favourable interpretation it is capable of is no worfe than this, viz. That our Saviour did thereby express how exceffive the mifery was which he then felt; efpecially fince the word [Lama] doth fignifie how as well as why. But laftly, his dying words, and the laft he uttered, express his retaining his confidence in God (as much as he might feem to be caft off by him) to the very laft; which were thefe, Father, into thine bands I commend my fpirit.

I will instance in one virtue more wherein our Saviour was also fingularly exemplary. Whereas he advised his Disciples to be wife as ferpents, and innocent as doves, they beheld in his conversation a pattern to walk by in following the former as well as the latter part of this advice : nor was the wifdom of the ferpent lefs confpicuous in him, than was the innocence of the dove. Prudence is the first of the primitive virtues, or of those from whence all other have their original. She is the chief governess of humane actions; and those which are performed without her direction, do want a main circumstance that is necesfary to give them the denomination of truly virtuous, A rash and heady doing of those actions which are for the matter of them praiseworthy, will render them culpable as to the manner of their performance : and he that hath no regard to prudence, though he may do good things, and poffibly may fometimes mean well, yet he will never merit the commendation of a well-doer. I fay therefore that our bleffed Saviour, as he hath by his example, no lefs than by his doctrine, taught us the exercise of all other virtues, fo hath he of this also; and his prudence did wonderfully difcover it felf through his whole life. As very great as was his zeal for the Glory of God, and the good of men, it was not too ftrong for his reason; it was not a blind zeal; but he was ever very careful to give each of his actions their due circumstances. As eagerly as he was bent upon accomplishing the work that he was fent into the world about, he was not for making more hafte than good speed. He shewed great prudence in his injunctions, his preaching, and difcourfes : He never urged any duties unfealonably, and had a care not to give fuch fevere precepts to his novice Difciples as might discourage and over-burthen them. (1) He was not for putting a piece of new cloth into an old garment, or new wine into old bottles.

He very wifely timed his difcourfes; did not preach all his doctrines at once: what was faid of the orator Demofibenes, cannot be truly affirmed of him, viz. That he knew what to fay well enough, but not what not to fay: for as he well underflood what doctrines to preach, fo did he alfo what not to preach. He fpake the word unto them as they were able to hear it, Mark iv. 33. And faid he, John xvi, 12. I have yet many things to fay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. He knew both when to fpeak, and when to hold his peace; and in whatfoever he faid, he confidered the genius, temper, and capacity of his auditors. He would

(1) See Matt. ix, 14. to 17.

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would not caft pearls before fwine, as he cautioned his Difciples not to do, for this reafon, (m) Left they turn again and rend them. When he thought good to deliver those doctrines that were likely to exasperate, as that, of the calling of the Gentiles, and rejection of the Jews, &c. he chose to fold them up in parables, unfolding them in private to his Difciples, who were fitly disposed for the receiving of them; and therefore had the favour befowed upon them to understand the mysteries of the kingdom, as he told them.

We find that till he knew his time of fuffering was come, he wifely still avoided danger ( wherein he properly shewed the wisdom of the ferpent) one while by withdrawing himfelf, as Matt. xii. 14. and at other times (as was now faid) by concealing those doctrines, which he was well aware the unbelieving Jews would be fo far from embracing. and making good use of, that they would take occasion from them the more industriously to defign his ruine : we read John x. 33. to 36. That he would not expresly own himself to be the Son of God in any other fence, than fuch a one as he might acknowledge with the leaft danger; and concealed that which he very certainly knew would but confirm them in their opinion of him as a wicked blafphemer, and make him fo much the more obnoxious to their fpight and rage. So far was he from running headlong upon fufferings, and making himfelf through a rash and indifcreet zeal, liable to those that hated him ; fo far was he from being in love with perfecution, that he did (as the Apoftle exhorted the Epbefian Christians to do) έξαγοςάζεθαι τ καίςδο, buy out or gain time, becaufe the days were evil, and full of danger.

Again, how wifely did our Saviour from time to time defeat and render unfuccefsful, the plots and machinations of the Pharifees, and his other enemies against him! we find in Matth. xxii. 15. the Herodians (or those of the Jews that adhered to the Roman authority) and the Pharifees (who effeemed it as an usurpation) combining together to intangle him in his talk : and they fo ordered their plot, as that they might get an advantage from whatfoever he fhould fay, either to render him obnoxious to Herod, and the Roman party, or to inrage the most popular and highly esteemed fect of the Jews, the Pharifees. In order hereunto they cunningly put to him this queftion, viz. Whether it were lawful to pay tribute to Cæfar? if he fhould answer that it was, he would make himfelf liable to the latter mifchief; if that it was not, to the former, and the far greater. Now (as is to be feen in the 19, 20, 21. ver(es) our Saviour with fuch admirable prudence contrived his answer, that (verse 22.) both factions are faid to wonder at it, and to be baffled by it. When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way. Diverse other instances there are of a like nature; as in John viii. 3. to 9. Matt. xxi. 23. to 27. Matt. xxi 41. to 16, &c.

And thus we have fufficiently and fully enough proved, that it was the whole bufinefs of our Saviour's life to make men in all refpects *pirtuous* and *boly*; and that thereunto were fubfervient, as his *difcourfes* with them, fo his *actions* likewife, and whole behaviour. *Plus docent escempla quam pracepta*: examples are the most natural and eafle way of teaching.

(m) Matth. vii.

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teaching, and they are so by reason of mankinds being so greatly addicted to imitation; and, I say, it doth from our past discourse sufficiently appear, that our Saviour's whole conversation was a rare exemplification of all kinds of virtue and true goodness.

#### CHAP. VI.

That to make Men truly virtuous and holy; was the Defign of Chrift's unimitable Actions, or mighty Works and Miracles. And that thefe did not only tend to promote it, as they were convincing Arguments that he came forth from God, but were also very proper to effect it in a more immediate manner.

XXIU T it cannot be amifs if if we moreover add, That it was not B & only the defign of our Saviour's imitable actions, to teach the world virtue, but also of those which are not imitable, viz. of his miracles and mighty works : and that thefe did not only tend to the promoting of that defign, as they were convincing and infallible arguments that he came forth from God, but were likewife very proper to effect it in a more *immediate* way. For they were not only *argumenta-*tive, or a proof of the *truth* of *bis doctrine*, but also *instructive*, and minded men of their duty. Those miracles which he chose to work, were of fuch a nature, as to be hugely fit to accomplish at one and the fame time both these businesses. They were not such as the foolith and carnal Jews expected, that is, figns from heaven, that were apt to produce directly no other effect than that of pleasing their childish phanfies, or ftriking their fenfes with admiration and aftonifhment, by making prodigious and amazing fhews and reprefentations before their eyes; but most of them were expressions of the greatest kindness and charity to mankind. For inftance, his healing the fick of all manner of difeafes', his making the lame to walk, and the blind to fee, and the deaf to hear; his cleanfing the lepers, feeding the hungry, raifing the dead, and ejecting of evil fpirits out of those that were miserably pofferfed with them, and tormented by them, &c. In Asts x. 38. the Apostle expreffeth our Saviour's working of miracles, by this phrafe [Doing good] who (faith he) went up and down doing good, and healing all that were oppreffed of the devil. And in his miracles did he give inftances of great kindnels and good will even unto those which did least deserve it : for he made use of his divine power for the healing and relief of the difingenuous and unthankful, ill natured and wicked, as well as of the better-difpoled and more worthy persons: therein imitating his heavenly Father (as he required us to do) who maketh his fun to rife on the evil and on the good, and fendeth rain on the just and on the unjust, Matth. v. 45. And the last miracle we (I think) read of before his crucifixion, was the cure of one of these his enemies that came with clubs and staves to apprehend him. And

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And the few miracles befides those that confisted in doing kindnesses to men (for those we have on record are almost all fuch) were fuch as by which he gave us an example of other virtues : as particularly of piety, truft in God, and zeal for him. Of his piety and truft in God, his fasting forty days and forty nights was a great evidence: it was fo of his truft in him, and conftant adhering to him, as by thus doing he put himfelf by his Father's appointment upon most violent and ftrong temptations; in conflicting wherewith (as hath been fhewn) he came off a most noble conqueror. Of his zeal for God was his whipping the buyers and fellers out of the temple a great inftance; as it was alto of his most gracious respect to the contemned Gentiles, whose court they were whip'd out of; they making their house of prayer a den of thieves, as our Saviour told them. And this may defervedly be numbered among his miracles, becaufe it is unconceivable how a man unarmed, in no authority, and of mean efteem in regard of his parentage, poverty, and low circumftances, should strike fuch a fear into those people, as to force them without the least offer of refiftance to flee before him, if the caufe thereof were not extraordinary and more than natural.

And even that miracle which might feem the moft inconfiderable, namely his caufing his difciple *Peter* to catch a fifh with a fmall piece of money in its mouth, was alfo inftructive of a duty; it being an inftance of his *loyalty* to the fupreme magiftrate; for the money was expended in paying tribute, and taken out of the fea in that ftrange manner for no other purpofe.

In thort, I know no one miracle that our Saviour wrought, but over and above its being a feal for the confirmation of his divine miffion, it teacheth fome one or other good leffon, and is proper for the bettering of the fouls of those that ferioufly confider it.

And that great miracle, which after his afcenfion (according to his promife) he thewed in fending the Holy Ghoft, did promote the bufinets of making men *boly*, in a far higher way than that of example: for the grand and ftanding office of the fpirit in the world, is the exciting in us *boly defires*, and the affifting of us in the performance of *boly actions*: it is the making the Gofpel, and all means, effectual to the renovation and reformation of our hearts and lives.

If it be objected, that we read of two miracles, namely, his curfing the fig-tree, and fending the devils into the herd of fwine, which are fo far from containing any leffons of *morality*, or tending to the leaft good, that they feem to be on the contrary only of an evil and mifchievous confequence.

I answer, That as for our Saviour's cursing the fig-tree that bare leaves, and had no fruit on it, it was a most fignificant document unto men, that their profession, which is answerable to bearing leaves, must be joyned with a futable practice, and have fruit accompanying or 'twill be nothing worth: and fruitless perfons were taught by that emblem, what they must look for, if they continued fo. But the most pregnant meaning of it is (as the learned doctor Hammand hath thewn) that the Jews which were just like that least-tree without fruit at that time on it, a mere professing people, were to expect speedy destruction from Vol., VI, Y him, him, on supposition that they persisted in their unfruitfulness. It is not once to be imagined that this which our Saviour did to the fig-tree was any other than emblematical; for no one that deferveth the name of a man, would be guilty of fuch a piece of foolifh revenge, as to wreak his anger on a *fenfelels tree*, or on any thing that's uncapable of being faulty. And belides, it is mentioned in the ftory as related by St. Mark, chap. xi. 12. that the time of figs was not yet, or, it was not then a feason for figs; that is, it was not a good fig-year; which is given as the caufe of the tree's being at that time without fruit : and 'tis very probable, that, that claufe was purpofely added, that it might be the more eafily observed that our Saviour's curfe was not defigned to be determinated in the tree, but that it was pronounced against it only as it was an apt refemblance of a professor that is barren of good works. So that this miracle was defigned no lefs than the forementioned, to be instructive to the spectators of it, and to all that should afterwards hear or read the flory concerning it.

And as for that other, viz. his fending the devils, which he had ejected out of a poor man, into a herd of fwine, and by that means caufing them to run violently down a fteep hill into the fea, and to perifh there: we read, Firft, That our Saviour did not command them, but only (n) fuffered them (as 'uis expressed both by St. Mark and St. Luke) at their own request to take possible of those beafts. Nor doth the faying unto them, (a) Go, (which is in St. Matthew's relation of the ftory,) speak any more than a bare permission; feeing their befeeching him to fuffer them to go is there expressed as the occasion of his fo speaking. So that the mischief that was done, the devils only were the authors or the proper causes of. Nor, feeondly, could our Saviour permit this, either to make *fport*, or to *pleale* him with the defruition of the *poor creatures*; for both these were infinitely below him, and perfectly contrary to the fericularity of his *fpirit*, and goodnels of his nature; but there were yweighty and great reasons why he should thus do.

As, Firft, To expose the hateful nature of the devils, and to give men to underftand and take notice, how extremely they delight in doing mischief; which it doth greatly concern the welfare of our fouls, both not to be ignorant of, and well to confider. By this experiment it appeared, that those unclean spirits are so maliciously disposed, and so bent upon mischievous fields, as that rather than want objects to vent their spite on, they will be glad to do it upon brute beafts. But especially the devils most inveterate and deadly hatred to mankind was hereby thewed; in that when they were no longer permitted to do them a greater, they were glad of an opportunity to make them the objects of a less mischief; and to procure to them what hurt they were able in their goods, when they ceased to be in a capacity of tormenting them in their minds and bedies.

Secondly, By this means there was a difcovery made what a multitude there were of them that poffeffed that one, or at most (according to St. Matthew) two perfons; infomuch as that those which were cast out of them, were enough to actuate the bodies of a herd of fwine, confifting of no fewer than about two thousand, as St. Mark faith; and none could

(n) Mark v. 13. Luke viii. 32.

could tell (but he that caft them out of the men, and fuffered them to enter the fwine) how very many each of thefe might be poffeffed with. This was of great importance to be known, in order to the underftanding of the greatues of the miracle that was wrought in behalf of the miterable wretches, and to their being made fensible how mighty a deliverance Chrift had given them. For though the devils declared that their name was *legion*, to fignifie that they were a huge multitude; yet what they faid was too incredible to be received upon the bare word of those who had been lyars from the beginning; but this permiflion of our Saviour gave a plain demonstration that in *this faying* of theirs they were *not lyars*.

Thirdly, These perfons were by this means most effectually taught how infinitely they were obliged to the divine providence, in not fuffering this vast number of fiends, all the time they had possible fillion of them, to destroy them; when as they no fooner entred into the herd of fwine, but immediately they dispatch'd them all.

Fourthly, This permiffion was also a just punishment to the Gadarens to whom those beasts belonged; who (as asterward it appeared) were a generation of muck-worms, who preferred their *finite* before their *finits*; and so likewife it was a most proper and effectual means for the conversion of them. Several other reasons of this action might be inflanced in, but these, nay any one of them, may well suffice. So that it is apparent that this miracle was so far from being a *mischievous* one, or of no use, that there was fearcely any one wrought by our Saviour, more pregnant with profitable instructions.

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#### C H A P. VII.

That to make Men holy was the Defign of Chrift's Death, proved by feveral Texts of Scripture : and how it is effectual thereunto, difcovered in fix Particulars.

("## OURTHLY, the making of us holy, as it was the business of F H our Saviour's whole life, fo was it also the great end and de-("##") fign of his death. And this we are affured of by abundance of express foriptures; some few of which we will here produce, Rom. vi. 6. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of fin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not ferve fin.

2 Corinthians v. 15.——He died for a'l, that they which live should not benceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rofe again.

Galatians i. 4. Who gave himfelf for our fins, that he might deliver us from this prefent evil world, (viz. From its corrupt practices) according to the will of God and our Father.

Ephelians v. 25, 26, 27. Hufbands love your wives, as Chrift loved the shurch, and gave himself for it, that he might fanetifie and cleanse it with

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the washing of water by the word, that he might prefent it unto himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Colofians i. 21, 22. And you that were fometimes alienated, and enemies in your minds by wicked works, bath he now reconciled in the body of his flefb through death, to prefent you boly and unblamable and unreprovable in his fight.

Titus ii. 14. Who gave himfelf for us, that be might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himfelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

1 Pet. i. 18. For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as filver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish, and without spot.

I Pet. iii. 18. For Chrift also hath once fuffered for fins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, &c. That is, faith Calvin upon the place, That we might be fo confectated to God as to live and die to him.

I Pct. ii. 24. Who his own felf bare our fins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to fins, should live to righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed.

Now the *death* of Chrift is greatly effectual to this end of making us *holy*, these feveral ways.

First, As it gave testimony to the truth of his doctrine; which (as hath been shewn) hath no other design. Christ took his death upon it that *that* was true; was willing to expose himself in the defence thereof to a most ignominious and painful death.

Secondly, As the fhedding of his blood was a federal right confirming the new covenant, wherein is promifed in and through him the pardon of our fins, and eternal happinels, on condition of our fincere repentance, faith, and new obedience: fo the blood of Chrift is called the *blood of the covenant*, Heb. x. 29.

And the blood of the everlasting covenant, Heb. xiii. 20.

Thirdly, As it is exemplary of the higheft virtue, 1 Pet. ii. 21. Cbriff also fuffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps; who did no fin, neither was guile found in bis mouth: who when he was reviled, revieled not again; when he fuffered, he threatned not, but committed himfelf to him that judgeth rightcouldy. The greateft humility and felfdenial, the greateft meekness, patience and submiffion to the divine will, the most wonderful charity, and forgiveness of enemies, &c. are exemplified in our Saviour's death; and for it mult needs be very highly effectual towards the promoting of these most excellent graces, and the like, in us, and the expelling and utter extirpating the contrary vices.

One would think it impossible that he should be of an haughty spirit and a proud mind, that seriously confiders how the only-begotten Son of God humbled himself to the death, even the shameful and ignominious death of the cross: that he should cover great things in the world, that frequently affects his mind with the thoughts of his Saviour's emptying himself and becoming poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich, and preferring the death of the viles of wretches before the life of the greatest and most honourabs perfonages.

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ages. How can he be vain and frothy, that confiders his Saviour's horrid agony, what a man of forrows he was, and how acquainted with griefs ? How can he ftorm at the receiving of injuries, and fwell with indignation against those that offer him incivilities, and rudely behave themselves towards him, that fixeth his thoughts upon his Saviour's meek putting up the vileft and most contemptuous usages, and considereth how gentle, fedate and lamb-like he was when barbarous villains mocked, buffeted and fpit upon him, crowned him with thorns, put a robe in a jeer upon his back, and a reed for a scepter into his hand. and at last acted the parts of the most inhumane butchers towards him. One would think it no uneafie matter to perfwade our felves to forgive very heartily the fpitefulleft and most malicious enemies, whilst we take notice that Chrift fhed even his precious blood for those that carried in their breafts the greatest malignity against him, and bare him the most deadly hatred; that he fuffered death for those which in the cruellest manner they were able, took away his life. What temptation can be forcible enough to prevail upon us finners, to murmur and repine at the hand of God in the afflictions he lays upon us, while we observe how much greater fufferings than ours, were with profoundest /ubmillion to, and also the heartiest approbation of the divine will, endured by the not only perfectly innocent, but also the infinitely well deferving Jelus ?

Fourthly, As the death of Chrift was likewife a facrifice for fin, it was in an eminent manner effectual to this great purpofe. In the death of Chrift confidered as an expiatory and propitiatory facrifice, is the offence that God Almighty hath taken against fin, and the hatred he bears to it, as well as his love to us finners, abundantly declared; in that he would not forgive it to us without the intervention of no meaner an offering than the blood of his only-begotten Son. Obferve what the Apostle St. Paul faith to this purpose, Rom. iii. 25, 26. Whom God hath fet forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteou/nefs for the remiftion of fins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare I fay at this time his righteoufnefs, that he might be just, and the juffifier of him which believeth in Jefus. The plain fence of which words (as I conceive) is this; That God might at one and the fame time demonstrate how holy he is, and how much he hateth fin on the one hand, and how infinitely gracious he is in his willingness to forgive finners on the other, was Chrift fet forth by him to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. There are many (and they no adversaries to the doctrine of our Saviour's fatisfaction) that do not queftion but that God could have pardoned fin without any other fatiffaction than the repentance of the finner, (and in the number of them were Calvin, P. Martyr, Musculus, and Zanchy, as might be fully thewn out of their feveral works,) but he chose to have his Son die for it, before he would admit any terms of reconciliation, that to he might perform the higheft act of grace, in fuch a way, as at the fame time to fhew also the greatest displeasure against fin. And therefore would he thus do, that to he might the more effectually prevent wicked men's encouraging themfelves by the confideration of his great mercy, to perfift in their wickednefs. Therefore was Chrift fet forth to be a propi-Y 3 tiatory

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tiatory factifice for fin, I will not fay that his Father (who is perfectly *fui juris*) might be put by this means into a capacity of forgiving it, but that it might be a cogent motive, and a most prevailing argument to finners to forfake their fins.

There is an excellent place to this purpole, Rom. xviii. 2. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flish: God fending his own Son in the likenels of finful flesh, and for fin (or by the means of fin) condemned fin in the fleft; that is, what the precepts of the Mofaical law could not do, in that they were weak by reafon of the impetuofity of men's flefhly inclinations, that the Son of God (coming in the humane nature, and in all respects becoming like to us, fin only excepted) did ; and by being a facrifice for fin (fo the word [ fin] fignifieth in diverse places, as Leviticus iv. 29. chap. v. 6. 2 Cor. v. 21. and, as I suppose, alfo Gen. iv. 7.) condemned fin in his flesh; he by this means shewing how hateful it is to God, took a most powerful course to kill and destroy it. And moreover, the most dearly beloved Son of God undergoing fuch extreme fufferings for our fins, it is evidently thereby demonstrated what difmal vengeance those have reason to expect that shall continue impenitent, and refuse to be reclaimed from them: for faith he, Luke xxiii. 31. If they do thefe things in a green tree, what fhall be done in the dry? If God spared not his own most innocent, holy and only Son, than whom nothing was, or could be, more dear to him, but abandoned him to fo fhameful and painful a death for our fins, how great and fevere fufferings may we conclude he will inflict upon those wretches, that dare still to live in wilful disobedience.

And from the death of Chrift confidered as a facrifice we farther learn, what an efteem God hath for his holy laws, that he would not abate their rigour, nor remit the punifhment due to the trangreffors of them, without a confideration of no meaner value than the most precious blood of his own Son.

And laftly, In that Chrift hath laid down his life at the appointment of God the Father for the purpole of making an atonement for fin, this gives all men unfpeakably greater affurance of the pardon of true penitents than the bare confideration of the divine goodnefs could ever have done: and fo by this means have we the greateft encouragement our hearts can with for, to become new men, and return to obedience; and have all ground of jealoufic removed, that we have been guilty of fuch heinous and fo often repeated impicties, as that it may not become the holinefs and juffice of God to remit them to us, though they fhould be never fo fincerely forfaken by us.

In the *deatb* of our Saviour thus confidered, are contained (as we have feen) the firongeft and moft irrefiftible arguments to a holy life; and I farther add, fuch as are no lefs apt to work upon the principle of *ingenuity* that is implanted in our natures, than that of *felf-love*. For who that hath the leaft fpark of it, will not be powerfully inclined to hate all fin, when he confidereth, that it was the caufe of fuch direful fufferings to fo incomparable a perfon, and infinitely obliging a friend as Chrift is? Who but a creature uterly defitute of that principle, and therefore worfe than a brute beaft, can find in his heart to take e

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pleafure in the *fpear* that let out the *heart-blood* of his most bleffed Saviour; and to carry himself towards that as a loving friend, which was (and fill is) the Lord of glory's worst enemy?

Again, Hath Jefus Christ indured and done to much for our fakes, and we are able to give our felves leave to render all his fufferings and performances unfuccessful by continuing in *difabedience?* Can we be willing that he flouid do and fuffer to many things in vain, and much more do our parts to make him do to? Is this poffible?

Nay hath he been crucified for us by the wicked Jews, and don't we think that enough? But muft we ourfelves be crucifying him afrefh by our fins, and putting him again to an open fhame by preferring our bafe lufts before him, as the Jews did Barabbas.

Hath he expressed fuch aftenishing love to us in dying for us, and wo'nt we accept of it? Which we certainly refute to do while we live in fin. Hath he purchased eternal falvation for us, and fuch great and glorious things as eye hath not feen, nor ear heard, and which have not entred into the heart of man, to be conceived by him; and can we perfwade our felves to be fo ungrateful to him, as well as fo wanting to our felves, as to refuse to receive these at his hands on those most reasonable terms on which he offers them ?

Hath he bought us with fuch a price; and can we refuse to be his fervants, and rather chuse to be the flaves of fatan, the devil's drudges?

Where can we find fo many firongly inciting motives to hate and abandon all fin, as are contained, and very obvious in the *death* and fufferings of our Saviour for it?

Fifthly, The death of our Saviour is in a fpecial manner effectual to the making of us in all respects virtuous and holy, as he hath thereby procured for us that grace and affistance that is neceffary to enable us to to be. In regard of his humbling himself as he did, and becoming obedient to the death of the cross, bath God bighly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name; that at the name of felus every knee should bow, of things in beaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: and that every tongue should confess that felus Chriff is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11. Now by virtue of the authority he is by this means invested and dignified with, and particularly as he is king of his church, hath he fent the Holy Ghoft to fanctifie us, to excite us to all holy actions, and to affift us in the performance of them.

Sixthly, The death of Chrift doth alfo apparently promote this great defign, as by his patient fubmitting to it he vindicated God's right of *foveraignty* over all his creatures, and the power he hath to require what he pleafeth, and to difpofe of them as feems good to him. Whereas the *firft Aiam* by contumacy, pride and rebellion, did put an high affornt upon the authority of his maker, and his wretched pofferity followed his example, and have by that means done what lay in them to render his *right* to their obedience queftionable; this bleffed *fecand* Adam by acting directly contrary, viz. by obedience, humility, and fubjetting himfelf to the divine pleafure in the fevereft exprefions and fignifications of it, hath done publickly and before the world, an infinite honour to his Father: and his abiolute right of dominion over his Y 4 whole creation, and the power he hath to preferibe to it what laws he judges fitting (which was before fo cclipfed by wicked finners) hath he by this means in the moft fignal manner manifelted and made apparent. And of what force this is to promote our holinefs and univerfal obedience, the dulleft capacity may apprehend.

From what hath been faid, it appears to be a moft plain, and unquefitionable cafe, that our Saviour in his *deatb*, confidered according to each of the notions we have of it in feripture, had an eye to the great work of making men *haly*; and that this was the *main* defign which he therein drove at.

And I now add, that whercas it is frequently affirmed in the holy feriptures, that the end of Chrift's death was allo the *forgivenefs* of our fins, and the *reconciling* of us to his Father, we are not fo to underfland those places, as if these bleflings were absolutely thereby procured for us, or any otherwise than upon condition of our *effectual believing*, and yielding obedience to his Gospel. Nor is there any one thing fearcely we are fo frequently minded of, as we are of this. Chrift died to put us into a capacity of pardon; the actual removing of our guilt is not the neceffary and immediate refult of his death, but fuspended till fuch time as the forementioned conditions, by the help of his grace, are performed by us.

But moreover, it is in order to our being encouraged to fincere endeavours to forfake all fin, and to be univerfally obedient for the time to come, that our Saviour fhed his blood for the pardon of it: this was intended in his death, as it is fubfervient to that purpofe; the affurance of having all our fins forgiven upon our fincere reformation, being a neceffary motive thereunto. Therefore hath he delivered us from a necessity of dying, that we might live to God; and therefore doth God offer to be in his fon Jefus reconciled to us, that we may thereby be prevailed with to be reconciled to him. Therefore was the death of Chrift defigned to procure our justification from all fins past, that we might be by this means provoked to become new creatures for the time to come. Observe to this purpose what the divine author to the Hebrews faith, chap. ix. 13, 14. If the blood of bulls and goats, and the afhes of an heifer (prinkling the unclean, fanctifieth to the purifying of the flefb : bow much more fhall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal (pirit offered him/elf without (pot to God. Purge your confciences from dead works (for what end? it follows) to ferve (or in order to your ferving) the hiving God?

And thus much may fuffice to be fpoken concerning the defign of our Saviour's death.

CHAP. VIII.

#### C H A P. VIII.

#### That it is only the promoting of the Defign of making Men holy, that is aimed at by the Apostles, infisting on the Dostrincs of Christ's Resurrection, Afcension and coming again to Judgment.

DEED MIGHT in the next place proceed to fhew, that the refur-I retion of our Saviour did carry on the fame delign his precepts, promifes and threatnings, life and death aimed at, but who knows not that these would all have fignified nothing to the promoting of this or any other end, if he had always continued in the grave, and not rifen again as he foretold he would. If Chrift be not rifen, faith the Apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 13. then is our preaching vain, and your faith is alfo vain. So that whatfoever our Saviour intended in those particulars, the perfecting and final accomplishment thereof must needs be eminently defigned in his refurrection. The Apostle Peter tells his country-men the Jews, Acts iii. 21. that, To them first God having raised up his fon Jefus, fent him to blefs them in turning every one of them from his ini-quities. But farthermore we find the doctrine of Chrift's refurrestion very much infifted on, by St. Paul especially, as a principle of the fpiritual and divine life in us; and proposed as that which we ought to have not only a speculative and notional, but also a practical and experimental acquaintance with. And he often telleth us, that it is our duty to find that in our fouls which bears an analogy thereunto. He faith, Phil. iii. 10. That it was his ambition to know, or feel within himfelf, the power of his refurrestion, as well as the fellowship of his sufferings; to have experience of his being no longer a dead but a living Jefus by his enlivening him, and quickening his foul with a new life. And again he faith, Rom. vi 4. that, Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even fo we also should walk in neuvness of life; that is, Chriftians being plunged into the water in baptifm, fignifieth their obliging themfelves in a fpiritual fence to die and be buried with Jefus Chrift (which death and burial confift in an utter renouncing and forfaking of all their fins) that fo answerably to his refurrection, they may live a holy and a godly life. And it followeth, ver/e 5. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likenefs of his refurrection; that is, If we are ingrafted into Chrift by mortification of fin, and fo imitate his death, we will no lefs have a refemblance of his refurrection, by living to God, or performing all acts of piety and christianity. And then from verfe 8. to II. he thus proceeds : Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall (or we will) alfo live with him : knowing that Chrift, being raifed from the dead, dieth no more, death bath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto fin once, (or for fin once for all) but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God; that is, in heaven with God. Likewife reckon ye your felves to be dead indeed unto fin, but alive unto God through Fefus Chrift our Lord; that is, after the example of his death and rejurrection, account ye your your felves obliged to die to fin, and to live to the praife and glory of God.

And the fame use that the Apostle here makes of the refurrestion of our Saviour, he doth alfo elfewhere of his afcenfion and feffion at the right hand of God, Coloff. iii. 1, 2. If ye then be rifen with Chrift, feek those things which are above, where Christ fitteth at the right hand of God; let your affections on things above, not on things on the earth : for you are dead, that is in profession, having engaged yourfelves to renounce your past wicked life, and your life is hid with Christ in God, &c. that is, and the life you have by embracing the Chriftian religion obliged your felves to lead, is in heaven, where Chrift is. So that this sheweth the informations the Golpel gives us of these things to be intended for practical purposes, and incitements to holinefs. And Christ's refurrection, with his following advancement, we are frequently minded of, to teach us this most excellent lesson, that obedience, patience and humility are the way to glory; and therefore to encourage us to be followers of him, to tread in his holy fteps, and make him our pattern. This we have in the fore-cited place, Phil. ii. 5, 6, 7, &c. and Heb. xii. 1, 2. we are exhorted to lay afide every weight, and the fin which doth fo eafily befet us, and to run with patience the race that is fet before us : looking unto Jefus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the crois, defpijing the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. And verse 3. To confider him that endured such contradistion of finners against himself (that is, especially how he is now rewarded for it) left we be weary and faint in our minds.

And that the meaning of our being fo often minded of our Saviour's soming again to judgement, is to ftir us up to all boliness of conversation, who can be fo ignorant as not to know? for we are fufficiently told that we must be judged according to our works, especially fuch works, as the hypocrites of this age do most despise, and leave to be chiefly performed by their contemned moralifts; as appears from Matt. xxv. 34. to the end of the chapter. And, lastly, that is very certain, which is intimated in the 123 page of the Free Difcourfe, namely, " That all " the doctrines of the Golpel, as merely speculative as some at the first " fight may feem to be, have a tendency to the promoting of real righ-" teoufnels and holinels, and are revealed for that purpole." But as I did not there, fo neither will I here proceed to fhew it, in all the feveral inftances, or in any more than I have now done: and that for the reafon that is there given. But befides, I conceive that what hath been difcourfed in this fection, is abundantly fufficient to demonstrate what we have undertaken, viz. That to make men truly virtuous and boly, is the defign, the main and ultimate defign of Christianity.

## SECT. II.

Upon what Accounts the Business of making Men holy came to be preferred by our Saviour before any other thing, and to be principally designed.

#### C H A P. IX.

Two Accounts of this: The First, That this is to do the greatest good to Men. And that the bleffing of making Men holy, is of all other the greatest, proved by several Arguments, viz. First, That it containeth in it a Deliverance from the worst of Evils; and Sin shewed so to be.

There are the fe two accounts to be given of it.

First, This is to do the greatest good to men.

Secondly, This is to do the best fervice to God.

First, The making of us really righteous and holy, is the greatest good that can possibly be done to us. There is no bleffing comparable to that of purifying our natures from corrupt affections, and induing them with virtuous and divine qualities. The wifer fort of the Heathens themselves were abundantly fatisfied of the truth of this: and therefore the only defign they professed to drive at in their philosophy, was the purgation, and perfecting of the humane life\*. Hieracles makes this to be the very definition of it: and by the purgation of men's lives, he tells us is to be underflood, the cleansing of them from the dregs and filth of unreasonable appetites; and by their perfection, the recovery of that excellency which reduceth  $\arg \delta_5 \tau \partial P \Theta(i \propto \delta \mu \omega (\omega \sigma n, to the$ divine likeness. Now the bleffing of making men holy, is of all thegreatest.

Firft, Becaufe it contains in it a deliverance from the *worft of evils*. Thofe are utterly ignorant of the nature of *fin*, that imagine any evil greater than it, or fo great. It was the doctrine of the *Stoicks*, that there is nothing evil but what is *turpe et vitiofum*, vile and vicious. And *Tully* himfelf, who profeffed not to be bound up to the *Placita* of any one fect of philofophers, but to be free-minded, and to give his reafon its full fcope and liberty, takes upon him fometimes moft fiffly, and feemingly in very good earneft, to maintain it and difpute for it. But as difficult as I find it to brook that doctrine as they feem to underftand it, that more modeft faying of his in the firft book of his *Tuf-culan Queflions* hath, without doubt, not a little of truth in it, *viz. That there* 

\* Φιλοσοφία ές ¿ ζωής ανθεωπίνης κάθαεσις κ τελειότης.

there is no evil comparable to that of fin \*. Hierocles, a fober philosopher, and very free from the high-flown humour, and ranting genius, of the Stoicks, though he would allow that other things befides fin, may be zahena n' Svo Biabela, very grievous and difficult to be born, yet he would admit nothing befides this to be orras xandor, truly evil; and he gives this reason for it, viz. Because that certain circumstances may make other things good, that have the repute of cvils; but none can make this fo. He faith that the word xalus [well] can never be joyned with any vice, but fo may it with every thing befides: as it is proper to fay concerning fuch or fuch a perfon, vorei xalus, wivelas xalus, he is well difeafed, he is well poor, that is, he is both these to good purpose, behaving himfelf in his fickness and poverty as he ought to do; but, proceeds he, it can never be faid, adinei nahus, anohasaves nahus, &c. he doth injury well, or he is rightly and as becomes him, intemperate.

Now that wickedness is the greatest of evils, is apparent, in that it injures men's better part, their fouls, whereas it lieth in the power of no other, as the now mentioned philosopher also observeth, so to do. + Do I fay, it injures them ? that's too gentle a word, it marrs and spoils them; as again that perfor doth in another place speak. 1 Other evils may ruine our bodies, our fortunes, &c. and may, I confefs, by that means di/quiet and diflurb our fouls; but they can be depraved by nought but fin; this alone can deprive them of the image of God wherein confifts their excellency. And when I fay that fin undoes our fouls, and tin only, I fay that this, and this alone, undoes our felves. || For, as faith the fame brave man, Thy foul is thy felf; thy body thine; and all outward things, thy body's. And the excellent Simplicius speaking of death, hath this faying, that it is only to ownard xaxor, ix nuw, an evil to our bodies, not to us, And this both the Stoicks and Platoni/Is do much infift upon, and make great use of it. They flick not to tell us, that it is improper to fay that a man confifts of two parts, whereof the body is one; and that this is not wigh ouvreraywivor, and beyaver, a conftituent part of man, but only his inflrument : that it is but our prifon wherein we are confined, our leather-bag, our fatchel, our cafe, our theath, our house, our clothing, and the like. And we find fuch a notion of the body in the holy Scriptures, as well as in the Heathen writing. St. Paul alfo calls it our clothing, our carthly house, our tabernacle, 2 Cor. v. 1, 4. St. Peter calleth his body, this tabernacle; I think it meet, faith he, fo long as I am in this tabernacle, Sc. 2 Pet. i. 13. Knowing that forthy I must put off this tabernacle, verse 14. So that other evils have that denomination because they are so to such things only (immediately I mean) as belong to our felves, but fin is an immediate evil, and the greatest imaginable to our very felves; in that in whomfoever it is entertained, it changes the man's nature, spoils his constitution, and makes him quite another thing: from a lovely, noble and excellent, it transforms him into an ignoble, base and contemptible creature. We are not ignorant what names the Scripture bestoweth upon wicked men, even those of the

<sup>\*</sup> Ne malum quidem ullum cum turpitudinis malo comparandum.

<sup>+</sup> Taura, &c. soi τη ψυχη βλαβιεά τυλαίνει. In Car. Pythag. p. 105.

τ Φθορά δὲ ἀθανάτυ ϖράγμα]⊕ κακία. p. 162. ] Σό γαρ εί ή ψυχή, τὸ δὲ σῶμα σὸν, τὰ δὲ ἔκτ⊕ τῦ σάματος. p. 153.

the uncleanest and most impure beasts. There is no such filthiness (faid Cicero \*), as the Fæditas turpificati animi, that of an unclean foul: and the philosophers used to express vice by turpitudo and to alo year filthinefs, as being that which is infinitely difbecoming, below and unworthy of humane nature. + And the wife man in his book of the Prot verbs faith, that a wicked man is loathfome and cometh to shame. There is no fuch hideous monfter in nature as a reafonable creature living in contradiction to the dictates of his understanding, trampling under-foot the eternal laws of righteoulnels, and oppoling himfelf to the known will of the great Sovereign of the world, of him in whom he liveth. moveth and hath his being, to whom alone he is obliged for all he is or hath, and for the capacity he is in of having any thing for the future which for the prefent he is deftitute of. A body in which the head and feet have exchanged places, is not more deformed and monftrous than is a vicious foul : for her fuperiour and governing part is fubjected to, and lorded over by her inferiour, and that which was defigned by nature to be kept in fubjection and governed. Her muoxer (as the Pythagor ans phrase it) or holder of the reins, and ruling faculty, is become the nyio genevor, the reined in and ruled faculty.

I add moreover, that well may fin be faid to fpoil and mar men's fouls, for we read in the writings of the Apostles that it kills them. She that liveth in pleasures is dead, while she liveth, I Tim. v. 6. You hath he quickned who were dead in trespasses and fins, Eph. ii. I. S. Jude, speaking of certain ungodly wretches, faith, that they are twice dead, ver. 12. And the very fame notion had diverse of the Heathens also. Pythagoras used to put a zerozáquor, or empty coffin in the place of that fcholar that left his fchool, to betake himfelf to a vicious and debauch'd life, as thereby fignifying, that he was dead, dead as to his nobler part. And his followers tell us that the fouls of men died, when they apoftatized from God, and caft off the divine life. And fuch a one, as in whom fin reigneth, may be called a dead man, becaufe according to them, the definition of a man belongs not to him, nor doth he any longer deferve the name of a reasonable creature. The philosopher we have fo often quoted, and thall have occasion to do it oftner, will have wickedness to be Sarato roying doias, the death of the reasonable nature : 1 And Simplicius doubts not to affert, that a man that is drowned in fenfuality, bath no more of reason in him, than a brute creature.

To return to God and to a right mind, to be without God and without underflanding, were of one and the fame fignification with those excellent men. And our Saviour tells us that the prodigal came to kimfelf when he refolved upon returning to his father's house; as if while he perfisted in difobedience, he was as very a brute, as those whose hulks he fed on, and had utterly loss in understanding. Though that last faying of Simplicius may feem fomewhat hyperbolical, yet this following one of Hierocles hath not the least of a figure in it, viz. That wicked men do render the reofen that remaineth in them ardgearise quity explosed.

\* In lib. III. de Officiis.

† Τα κακά αισχεά λέγονται, ως απρεπή κ) ανάξια δράβαι ύπο λογικής υσίας. Hieroc. p. 78.

1 Myder wanter hoyizor + ahoyer Caer onagyor. Comment. Epict. p. 4.

## The Defign of Christianity.

SECT. II.

more bafe and wretchedly contemptible than the wileft flave. They ufe it altogether in matters of very bad, or (at beft) of moft mean concern; and therefore as upon that account, it were better, fo upon this it would be even as well, if they had none at all: for the fagatity that is in beafts is not lefs ferviceable to them, than is the reafon of a wicked man to bim: nay, had he only that fagatity that is obfervable in many unreafonable creatures, it might fland him in as much flead as his reafon doth, and perhaps more. So that from what hath been difcourfed, it appeareth evidently that wickednefs is the worft, incomparably the worft of evils; that it is fo in its own nature, as well as in its confequences: and therefore to deliver us from it, by purifying our lives and natures is to confer upon us the greateft bleffing, and confequently is an undertaking, of all others, the moft worthy of the Son of God.

CHAP.X.

The fecond Argument, viz. That the Bleffing of making Men holy is accompanied with all other that are most defirable, and which do best deferve to be so called: particularly with the Pardon of Sin, and God's special Love. And that those things which sensible Persons are most defirous of; are eminently to be sound in that bleffing.

C##为ECONDLY, This is the greatest bleffing, because it is ac-S companied with all other that are most defirable, and which do  $\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 2 \\ 2 \\ 3 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix}$  best deferve to be so called. Where fin is fincerely forfaken, it will certainly be pardoned : the nature of God is fuch as fpeaks him most ready to be reconciled to a true convert. They are our iniquities alone that make, or can make, a feparation betwixt us and our God, and our fins only that hide his face from us : but the caufe being removed, the effect ceafcth. When the divine grace that is offered to finners, becometh effectual to the turning any one from his evil ways, God's favour doth naturally return to him: even as naturally as doth the fun's light into those places, where that which before intercepted between it and them, is taken away. He is of fo infinitely benign and gracious a nature, that no man can continue an object of his displeasure one moment longer than while he is uncapable of his favour; and nothing, I fay, but fin and wickedness, as he hath often enough affured us, can make men fo. Nay, a holy foul is ever the object of his deareft and most special love. He is not only friends with, but takes pleasure in those that fear him, Pfalm cxlvii. II. He is said to make his refidence within fuch perfons, fo great is the delight that he taketh in them. Ifaiah lxvi. 1, 2. Thus faith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth my footflool, where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my reft? for all those things have mine hand made, and all those things have been, faith the Lord : but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. John

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CHAP. X.

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John xiv. 23. Jefus faid unto him, If any man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. And it is faid particularly of him that dwelleth in love, which is the fulfilling of the law, that he dwelleth in God, and God in him. And I might fhew that the Heathens themfelves had this very notion. It was a faying ufed by the Pythogoræans; that God hath not in the whole earth a more familiar place of refidence than a pure foul \*. And Apollo is brought in thus fpeaking,

Εύσεβέσιν δε βεολοίς γανυμι τόσον όσσον Όλύμπω.

To dwell in heaven doth not more pleafe me, then Within the fouls of pious mortal men.

And Hierocles, which reciteth that verfe, doth himfelf affert, that God hateth no man; but as for the good man, he embraceth him with an extraordinary and furpaffing affection +. The righteous Lord loying righteoufnefs, his countenance cannot but behold the upright. Wherefoever he finds any imprefilons of true goodnefs, as he cannot but highly approve of them, fo is it not poffible but they fhould attract his fingular love to thefe which are the fubjects of them: according to that meafure and proportion that any one participates of his goodnefs, he muft needs have a fhare in his grace and kindnefs. A holy perfon is a man after God's own heart, as his fervant David is faid to be: he is a man that carrieth his image, and bears a refemblance to him, and upon that account he cannot fail to be very dearly beloved by him. Now I need not go about to prove, that there is no bleffing whatfoever but is implied in an intereft in the divine love, and efpecially in fuch a love as that which we have fhewed good men are made the objects of.

It might be here shewn also that those things which fenfual and carnal perfons are most defirous of, viz. riches, honours, and pleafures, are eminently to be found in the bleffing we are now difcourfing of; and indeed those which best deferve to be so called and are in the properest fence fo, no where elfe. Nothing inricheth a man like the graces of God's holy fpirit : what S. Peter faid of meeknefs, is true of all the virtues; they are in the fight of God (and he judgeth of things as they are) of great price. 1 They are called gold tried in the fire, Rev. iii. 18. The true and our own riches, Luke xvi. 12. Which is as much as to fay, that these only are ours, and all but these are false and counterfeit. These inrich our fouls, which alone, as was faid, deferve to be called our felves, and will abide by us when all other have bid adieu to us. These do as much excel in true value and worth all those things which the world calls riches, as do our immortal spirits transcend our frail and corruptible carkaffes. It was one of the maxims of the Stoicks, or wing. & oopde whereby they meant the truly virtuous, man is the only rich man. And Tully hath this faying upon it. A man's cheft cannot properly be called rich, but his mind only : and though thy coffer be full,

<sup>\*</sup> דיצאה אמשמקמה דהחטי הואנוהדבפטי באו דאה אהה שבה שבי באבי.

 <sup>+ -</sup>δς μιστί μέν έδένα άνθεωπον, τ δι άγαθου διαφιερώνως άσπάζεται. p. 70.
 t Nihil neq; meum est neq; cujusquam, quod auferri, quod eripi, quod amitti potest. Cicero in paradoxis.

SECT. II.

Jo long as I fee thee empty, I fhall not think thee a rich man\*. And faith Hierocles, & <sup>3</sup>έω της ψυχης, wara μικεά. All things that are without a man's foul, are but little and infignificant trifles. And the righteous, faith Solomon, is more excellent than his neighbour; or he is of greater worth than any other perfon that is not righteous, Prov. xii. 26.

Nothing, again, makes men fo honourable as doth virtue and true goodnels, or at all truly fo. Seeing he and he alone that is indued with it, lives up to his higheft principle, like a creature pofieffed of a mind and reafon; nay, this man is moreover, as was faid, like to God himfelf, and imitates his glorious perfections, viz. his moral ones. And therefore well might wildom fay as fhe doth, *Prov.* viii. 18. *Riches* and honour are with me. To overcome our unruly lufts, and keep in fubjection all impetuous defires and inordinate appetites, makes us more defervedly glorious than was Alexander or Julius Cæfar: for he that thus doth, hath fubdued thofe that maftered thofe mighty conquerors. And fuch a one hath praife of God, of the holy angels, and of all men that are not fools, and whofe judgements he hath caule to value. He that is flow to anger, is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his fpirit, than he that taketh a city, Prov. xvi. 32.

And no pleafures are comparable to those that immediately refult from virtue and holinels: for that man's conficience is a very heaven to him that bufieth himfelf in the exercise thereof. While we do thus, we act most agreeably to the right frame and conflictution of our fouls and confequently most naturally; and all the actions of nature are confeffedly very fweet and pleafant. This also very many of the Heathens had a great fense of; even those of them which much doubted of another life wherein virtue is rewarded, commended very highly the practice of it, for this reason, that it is *fibi præmium* a reward to it felf. Simplicius in his comment upon Epistetus, hath this observable faying, that the observation of the rules of virtue in that book preferibed will make men so happy and bleffed even in this life, that they shall not need ward Scartor Tis destris dueleds imaly/ $\lambda x_1 \theta x_2$ , set to be promised any returned after death, though that also will be fure to follow.

These things, I fay, might be insisted on in this place, but they are fuch large and spacious fields of discourse, that should we make any considerable entrance into them, we shall find it no easie matter to get out of them. I therefore proceed.

\* Animus hominis dives, non area appellari potess. Quamvis illa fit plena, dum te inanem widebo, diwitem non putabo. In paradox. CHAP. XI.

### C H A P. XI.

The third Argument, viz. That what sever other Bleffings a Man may be supposed to have that is utterly defitute of Holiness, they cannot stand him in formuch stead, as only to make him not milerable. And all evil and corrupt affections shewed to be greatly tormenting in their own Nature, and innumerable fad Mischiefs to be the necessfory Consequents of yielding obedience to them.

CXX HIRDLY, what foever other bleffings a man may be supposed T & to have, that is utterly deftitute of this of holinefs, they canxx not fland him in fo much flead as but to make him not miferable. We may by the first particular, and what was faid upon it, be fufficiently convinced of the truth of this: but I farther add, That finful lufts are extremely trouble ome, disquieting, and painful. The wicked faith the prophet Ifaiah) is like the troubled fea which cannot reft, whole waters caft up mire and dirt. The labyrinths that fin involves men in, are innumerable; its ways are fo full of intricate turnings and windings, that they fadly perplex those poor creatures that walk in them; and it is impoffible but they fhould do fo. The greatest outward inconveniencies and difastrous misfortunes are very frequently as might be largely shewn occasioned by them; but vexations of mind, and troublefome thoughts are the conftant and never-failing effects of them. Tully in the forementioned book, faith thus to the vicious man, + Thy lufts torment thee, all forts of cares oppress thee, and both day and night torture thee. And Hierocles faith, that it is necessfary that the work life should be most miscrable, and the best most pleasant and delightful. Covetousnels and ambition put men's minds upon the rack to contrive ways of inriching and advancing themfelves : and when they have attained to fo large a proposition of earthly profits, or fo high a degree of honour as they at first defigned, they are fo far from being at eafe and reft (as they vainly promifed to themfelves they should) that their cravings encrease as do their fortunes; and in the midst of their abundance they continue in the fame ftraits that at first afflicted them. Nay, fo impetuous is the fury of those lufts, that they drive them into ftill greater, and caufe in their fouls that are poffeffed by them a more pungent and a quicker fence of want than they felt when their condition was most mean, and their estate at the lowest. Nor is this mischief any other than a natural and unavoidable confequent of forfaking God (who is, as the scriptures call him, 'the rest, and as Plato, the center of fouls) and of feeking fatisfaction in fuch things, as are infinitely too little for their vaft capacities: which the forementioned are, and all worldly enjoyments.

What a multitude of tormenting cares is *independency* on God and diffruft

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difrust of his providence perpetually attended with ? how impoffible is it to give a comprehensive and just catalogue of the many mischiefs and miscrise that are the neceffary products and genuine off-fpring of intemperance and lasticitation for the second memory in the second second are the fruits of the former of these, Prov. xxiii. 29. But to give a perfect account of them would be an endles work. And as for the latter, befides the loathforme and painful disease that is ordinarily the confequent of fatisfying the cravings of that filthy vice, the unclean perfon is continually in a restless condition, and as it were, in a constant fit of a burning fever; and the evil accidents that are occasioned by it are for many, that they are not neither to be reckoned up. The Epicureans, though they placed man's chief happiness in corporeal pleasures, did frictly notwithstanding forbid adultery, because (as they faid) in flead of performing its promife of pleasure, it robs men of it.

He that is *proud* and *bighly conceited* of himfelf, is difordered and difcomposed by the least fleighting word, or neglect of respect, and I had almost faid, by the smallest commendation of his neighbour too: and it lieth in the power of any forry creature, when he lift, to afflict his mind.

The inward fad effects of envy and malice are fufficiently obfervable in the difmal countenances of those that are under the power of them; and these hateful and devilith lufts do eat into, and prey upon, the very hearts of those in whose breafts they lodge; and are like fire in their boloms unceffantly torturing them: not to fay any thing of the many autward and most direful michiefs that are caused by a full fatisfaction of them. \* In short, there is not any one inordinate affection, but is fo difturbing and disquieting a thing in its own nature, that it cannot but make those who are in subjection to it, though they should havenever fo many good things to fet against it, exceeding milerable in this, as well as in the other world. So that, had our Saviour come into the world, only upon such a design as the carnal Jews expected their Melfiab would, viz, that of making us partakers of a mere temporal happines, he must in order to the fucceding of it chiefs have concerned himself to make us holy.

If it were poffible (as it hath been fhewn it is not) that a wicked man fhould have God's pardon, this would not make him ceafe to be miferable; all it could fignifie would be no more than an exemption from being immediately by bim punifhed: but tho' the divine Majefty fhould not in the leaft afflict him, his very lu/ls would be of themfelves no light punifhment, but fuch as under which he could never enjoy himfelf in this life, but will be found to be intolerable in the life to come: feeing there will then be nothing to be met with that can at all fuit with his fenfual inclinations, or that will have any aptnefs in it to pleafe and gratific them: whereas now all places abound with fuch things as are fit for that purpofe; as are able, I fay, to gratifie, though

• Qui Appetitus longius evagantur, Sc. U non fatis ratione retinentur, Sc. ab iis non modo animi perturbantur, scd ctiam Corpora : licet ora ipsa cernere iratorum, aut corum qui aut libidine aliquâ aut mecu commoti sunt, aut voluptate nimiâ gessiunt : quorum comnium vultus, voces, motus, statusque mutantur. Ciceto lib. 1, de Officiis.

### CHAP. XI.

though not to fatisfie fuch appetites. So that this man's condition in the *future* flate muft needs be very exactly like to his, that is, even parcht and dried up with exceflive thirft, but can by no means obtain wherewithal to quench it; no nor yet fo much as a little to flake it, and mitigate the pain of t; as he in this flate very frequently makes a flift to do.

Were it poffible that *Chrift's Righteoufnefs* could be *imputed* to an *unrighteous* man, I dare boldly affirm that it would fignifie as little to his happinefs, while he continueth o, as would a gorgeous and fplendid garment to one that is almost flarved with hunger, or that lieth rackt by the torturing difeafes of the flone or cholick.

And could we fuppofe fuch a man to be never fo much an object of the divine *benevolence*, nay, and *complacency* too (as there is nothing lefs fuppofeable) this could not make him, he continuing wicked, fo much as *not miferable*: he being rendred by his wickednefs utterly uncapable of fuch effects of the love of God, as could have upon him fo good an influence.

Nay, farther, were our phanfies fo very powerful, as that they could place him even in heaven it felf; fo long as he continueth unturned from his iniquities, we could not imagine him happy there ; nay, he would carry a bell to heaven with him, and keep it there. It is not the being in a fine place, that can make any one cease to be miferable ; but the being in a good flate; and the place heaven without the heavenly flate, will fignifie nothing. An unhealthful and difeafed body will have never the more ease for refiding in a Prince's court, nor will a fick and unfound foul have an end put to its unhappinels, though it fhould live for ever in the prefence of God himfelf. That faying to this purpole doth well deferve our repeating, which I find in the excellent book called, The caufes of the decay of christian piety; alas, what delight would it be to the finine to be wrapped in fine linen, and laid in odours : his fenfes are not gratified by any fuch delicacies, nor would be feel any thing befides the torment, of being with-held from the mire. And as little complacency would a brutish foul find in those purer and refined pleasures, which can only upbraid, not fatisfie him.

It is not to be doubted that fuch habits of mind as men carry *hence* with them, they fhall keep in the *other* flate; and therefore if we leave this earth with any unmortified and reigning lufts, they will not only make us uncapable of the happinefs of *heaven*, but alfo of any happinefs. For there will be (as was but now intimated) no fatisfaction er fo much as gratification of carnal and brutifb, and much lefs of devilifb appetites, in the celeftial manfions; and therefore they cannot be otherwife than very grievoufly painful to the perfon that is fraught with them; though, I fay, we could fuppofe him to be fafely poffelfed of the glorious habitations.

To fum up all I shall fay on this argument, I fear not to affert, that omnipotency it felf cannot make a wicked perfon happy, no not fo much as *negatively* fo (except he should be annihilated) any otherwife, than by first giving him his grace for the subduing and mortification of his lufts: and that to deliver one from all mifery while fin is vigorous in his foul, and bears the sway there, is not an object of any power,  $Z_2$  and and implieth in it a palpable and apparent contradiction. For *mifery* is no lefs of the effence of fin and wickednefs, than is light of the fun; fo that it is impollible they should ever be separated from one another, but that they must like the twins of *Hippocrates*, live and die together.

### CHAP. XII.

## The fourth Argument, viz. That Holiness being perfected is Bleffedness it felf; and the Glory of Heaven confists chiefly in it. This no new Notion; fome Observations, by the Way, from it.

2000 UT in the laft place, well may we call holine/s the greateft of B & bleffings, for when it is perfected, it is bleffednefs it felt, and the Signed glory of heaven is not only entailed upon it, but doth chiefly conflit in it. Beloved (faith S. John) Now are we the fons of God; but it doth not appear what we shall be; but this we know that when he appeareth, we shall be like him, &c. As if he should fay, I cannot tell you particularly and diffinctly what the bleffednefs of the other life will be, but this I am fure of, that likenels to God is the general notion of it; and that it confifts, for the fubftance thereof, in a perfect refemblance of the divine nature. The happinels of heaven doth not lie in a mere fixing of our eyes upon the divine perfections, and in admiring of them, but mainly in fo beholding and contemplating them, as thereby to be changed into the express and lively image of them : and in having fo affecting a fence of God's infinite justice and goodness, purity and holinefs, as will make the deepeft impreffions of those most amiable qualities on our own fouls.

The glory that heaven conferreth upon its inhabitants, confifts not fo much in an external view of God and Chrift, as in a real and plentiful participation of their glorious excellencies; whereby are chiefly to be underflood those, that are implied in that general word *holinefs*: for as for their other attributes, fuch as *knowledge*, *prwer*, *Esc.* the devils themfelves who are most of all creatures unlike them, have a large measure of them.

This bleffednefs principally implieth a rapturous love of God, a feeling, as well as underflanding, the goodnefs that is in him; an infeparable conjunction of the faculties of our fouls with him, and a pertect affimulation of our natures to him. The felicity of heaven is an operative thing, full of life and energy, which advanceth all the power of mens fouls into a fmpathy with the divine nature, and an abfolute compliance with the will of God; and fo makes him to become all in all to them. So that the happinefs of heaven, and perfect holinefs are by no means to be accounted things of a different nature, but two feveral conceptions of one and the fame thing, or rather two exprefiions of one and the fame conception. All that happinefs (as faid the learned and pious

### CHAP. XIII.

pious Mr. John Smith) which good men shall be made partakers of, as it cannot be born up upon any other foundation than true goodness, and a godlike nature within us, so neither is it distinct from it.

Neither are we to look upon this as any upftart or late notion, for our ancient divines have long fince taught it, in this faying that was frequently used by them, viz. Grace is glory begun, and glory is grace perfected.

And I cannot but by the way obferve, that those which have confidered this, will need no other argument to fatisfie them, That that talk of fome [that it is mere fervile obedience and below the ingenuity and generofity of a Christian fpirit, to ferve God for heaven, as well as for the good things of this life only] is very großly ignorant, very childith prattle: for to ferve God in hopes of heaven according to its true notion, is to ferve him for himfelf, and to express the fincereft, and also the most ardent affection to bim, as well as concernment for our own fouls. And therefore it could not but highly become the Son of God himfelf, to endure the trofs, and defpife the finame, for the joy that was fet before him, taking that joy in no other fence than hath been generally underthood, viz, for the hapinels of heaven confiling in a full enjoyment and undifturbed poffellion of the bleffed Deity: nor is there any reason why we should enquire after any other fignification of that word, which may exclude this.

And on the other hand, to be diligent in the fervice of God for fear of hell, understanding it as a state perfectly opposite to that which we have been describing, is in a like manner from a principle of love to God and true goodness, as well as felf-love, and is no more unworthy of a Son of God, than of a mere fervant. And thus, the truth of this proposition, That to make men holy, is to confer upon them the greatest of bleffings, by the little that hath been faid is made plainly apparent.

# CHAP. XIII.

The fecond Account of our Saviour's prefering the Business of making Men holy, before any other, viz. That this is to do the best Service to God. An Objection answered against this Discourse of the Design of Christianity.

""" T remains fecondly to be fhewn, That to promote the bulinefs of I I bolinefs in the world, is to do God Almighty the beft fervice: And this will be difpatch in a very few words. For is it not, without difpute, better fervice to a prince to reduce rebels to their allegiance, than to procure a pardon under his feal for them? This is fo evidently true, that to do this latter, except it be in order to the former bulinefs, is not at all to ferve him, nay, it is to do him the greateft of differvices. I need not apply this to our prefent purpofe. And therefore, to be fure, the work of making men holy, and bringing over finners to the obedience of his Father, much needs have been much more in the eye of

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our

our bleffed Saviour, than that of delivering them from their deferved punifhment, *fimply* and in it *felf* confidered : for his love to *him* will be (I hope) univerfally acknowledged to be incomparably greater than it is to us, as very great as 'tis.

None can queffion, but that by our apoftafie from God, we have moft highly dithonoured him, we have robbed him of a right that he can never be willing to let go, viz. The obedience that is indifferifably due to him as he is our creator, continual preferver, our infinitely bountiful benefactor, and abfolute fovereign. And therefore it is as little to be doubted, that Chrift would in the *firft place* concern himfelf for the recovery of that right. And, but that both works are carried on together, and infeparably involved in each other, he muft neceffarily be far more folicitous about the effecting of *this* defign, than of *that* of delivering wicked rebels from the michiefs and miferies they have made themfelves liable to, by their difobedience.

So that laying all these confiderations together, what can be more indisputable, than that our Saviour's chief and ultimate defign in coming from heaven to us, and performing and fuffering all he did for us, was to turn us from our iniquities, to reduce us to intire and universal obedience, and to make us partakers of inward, real rightcoufness and true holiness? and we cannot from this last discourse but clearly underfland, that it is most infinitely *reasonable*, and absolutely *neceffary*, that it should be so.

But now if after all this it be objected, that I have defended a notion concerning the defign of Christianity, different from that which hath hitherto been conftantly received by all Chriftians, viz. That it is to display and magnifie the exceeding riches of God's grace to fallen mankind in his fon Jefus: I answer that he will be guilty of great injustice, that thall centure me as labouring in this difcourfe to propagate any new notion : for I have endeavoured nothing elfe but a true explication of the old one, it having been grossly milunderstood, and is still, by very many, to their no finall prejudice. Those therefore that fay, that the Christian religion defigneth to fet forth and glorifie the infinite grace of God in Jesus Christ to wretched finners, and withal underftand what they fay; as they fpeak most truly, fo do they affert the very fame thing that I have done. For (as hath been thewn) not only the grace of God is abundantly displayed and made manifest in the Gofpel to finners for this end, that they may thereby be effectually moved and perfwaded to forfake their fins; but alfo the principal grace that is there exhibited, doth confift in delivering us from the power of them. Whofoever will acknowledge fin to be (as we have proved it is) in its own nature the greatest of all evils, and holiness the chiefest of all bleffings, will not find it easie to deny this. And befides (as we have likewife fhewn) men are not capable of God's pardoning grace, till they have truly repented them of all their fins, that is, have in will and affection fincerely left them : and also that if they were capable of it, fo long as they continue vile flaves to their lufts, that grace by being bestowed upon them cannot make them happy, nor yet cause them to cease from being very miserable, in regard of their disquieting and tormenting nature, in which is laid the foundation of hell. The free free grace of God is infinitely more magnified, in *renewing* our natures, than it could be in the bare *juflification* of our perfons: and to *juflifie* a wicked man while he continueth fo, (if it were poffible for God to do it) would far more difparage his *juflice* and *boline/s*, than advance his *grace* and kindnefs: effectively fince his *forgiving* fin would fignifie fo little, if it be not accompanied with the fubduing thereof.

In thort, then doth God most fignally glorifie himself in the world, when he most of all communicates himself, that is, his glorious perfections, to the fouls of men: and then do they most glorifie God, when they most partake of them, and are rendered most like unto him.

But becaufe nothing is, I perceive, more generally miftaken, than the notion of God's glorifying himfelf, I will add fomething more for the better understanding of this, and I am conscious to my felf that I cannot do it fo well, as in the words of the excellent man we a while fince quoted, Mr. John Smith, \* fometime fellow of Queens College in Cambridge : When God feeks his own Glory, he doth not fo much endeavour any thing without himfelf : He did not bring this flately fabrick of the universe into being, that he might for such a monument of his mighty power, and beneficence, gain fome Panceyvicks or applause from a little of that fading breath which he had made. Neither was that gracious contrivance of restoring lapfed men to himfelf, a plot to get himfelf fome external hallelujabs, as if he had so ardently thirsted aster the lauds of glorified spirits, or defired a quire of fouls to fing forth his praises : neither was it to let the world see how magnificent he was. No, it is his own internal glory that he most loves, and the communication thereof which he feeks : As Plato fometimes speaks of the divine love, it arifeth not out of indigency, as created love doth, but out of fulnels and redundancy : It is an overflowing fountain, and that love which descends upon created beings is a free efflux from the Almighty source of love : And it is well-pleasing to him that those creatures which he hath made, Should partake of it : (p) Though God cannot feek his own glory fo, as if he might acquire any addition to himself, yet he may seek it so, as to communicate it out of himself. It was a good maxim of Plato, To Oco Bois Olio . There is no envy in God, which is better flated by St. James, God giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not. And by that glory of bis which he loves to impart to his creatures, I understand those stamps and impressions of wildom justice, patience, mercy, love, peace, joy, und other divine gifts which he bestoweth freely upon the minds of men. And thus God triumphs in his own glory, and takes pleasure in the communication of it.

I proceed now to confider what *uleful inferences* may be gathered from our paft difcourfe.

\* See his Select Difcourfes, page 409.

(p) Chap. 1. 5.

SECT. III.

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# The Design of Christianity.

### SECT. III.

# An Improvement of the whole Discourse in diverse Inferences.

#### C H A P. XIV.

### The First Inference.

That it appears from the paft Difcourfe, that cur Saviaur hath taken the moft effectual courfe for the purpose of fubduing Sin in us, and making us partakers of his Holinefs. Where it is particularly shewed, that the Gospel gives advantages infinitely above any those the Heathens had, who were privileged with extraordinary belps for the improvement of themselves. And 1. That the good Principles that were by natural Light dictated to them, and which reason rightly improved persuaded them to entertain as undoubtedly true, or might have done, are farther confirmed by divine Revelation in the Gospel. 2. That those Principles which the Heathens by the bigbess fully the source of their Reason could at best conclude but very probable, the Gospel gives us an undoubted affurance of. This shewed in four Instances. 3. Four Dostrines shewed to be delivered in the Gospel, which no man without the affunce of Divine Revelation could ever once have thought of, that contain wonderful inducements, and helps to Holine/s. The first of which bath five more implied in it.

IRST, it appears from what hath been faid to demonstrate, F That our Saviour's grand defign upon us, in coming into the world, was to fubdue fin in us, and reftore the image of God, that confisteth in righteoufnefs and true holinefs to us: that he hath taken the most effectual courfe imaginable for that purpole; and that his Gospel is the most powerful engine for the battering down of all the ftrong holds that fin hath raifed to it felf in the fouls of men, and the advancement of us to the highest pitch of fanctivy that is to be arrived at by humane nature. This (as hath been shewn) was the bufinefs that the philosophy of the heathens defigned to effect; but alas what a weak and inefficacious thing was it, in comparison of Christ's Gospel: wherein we have such excellent and soul-ennobling precepts most perspicuously delivered; and moreover such mighty helps afforded to enable us, and such infinitely prefing motives and arguments, to excite us to the practice of them.

And it will not be amifs if we particularly fhew, what exceeding great advantages Chriftians have for the attaining of true virtue, and the fubliment degrees thereof, in this flate attainable, above any that were ever vouchfated to the world by the divine providence, before our Saviour's defcent into it. And (not to make a formal comparison between the *Chriftian* and beft *Pagan-Philo/ophy*, this not deferving upon innumerable accounts to be for much as named with that, and much lefs to diffuonour the religion of our Saviour fo far as at all to compare it with with any of those which were professed by heathenish nations, or that of the impostor *Mahomet*, which as well as those, in not a few particulars tends greatly even to corrupt and deprave mens natures) we will discourse according to our accustomed brevity. First, what advantages the Gospel gives us above those which fuch heathens, as were privileged with extraordinary helps for the improvement of their understandings, had; and secondly, above those which God's most peculiar people, the children of *Ifrael*, were favoured with.

First, As for those the Gospel containeth above such as the best and most refined heathens enjoyed, it will be worth our while to confider,

First, That the good principles that were by natural light distated to them, and which reason rightly improved did personate them to entertain as undoubtedly true, or might have done, are farther confirmed by divine revelation in the Gospel to us.

As, That there is but one God: That he is an absolutely perfect Being, infinitely powerful, wife, just, merciful, Sc. That we owe our lives, and all the comforts of them to him; That he is our Sovereign Lord, to whom abfolute subjection is indispensably due : That he is to be loved above all things; and the main and most important particular duties which it becomes us to perform to him, our neighbour and felves. We Chriftians have thefe things as plainly declared from heaven to us, and as often repeated and inculcated, as if there were no other way to come to the knowledge of them, but that of Revelation. So that (as hath been thewn in the free discourse, p. 88.) what the heathens took pains for, and by the exercise of their reason learnt, we have set before our eyes, and need but read it in order to our knowledge of it. It is true, for our fatisfaction whether the holy feriptures are divinely infpired, and have God for their author, it is neceffary that we employ our realon, except we can be contented to be of fo very halty and eafie a belief as to give credit to things, and those of greatest concernment too, we know not why; or to pin our faith on our fore-fathers fleeves; and fo to have no better bottom for our belief of the Bible, than the Turks have for theirs of the Alcoran. But although it is neceffary that we should exercise here our disparsive faculty, if we will believe as become creatures indued with reason, yet this is no tedious task, nor such as we need much belabour our brains about. An unprejudiced perfon will foon be abundantly fatisfied concerning the feripture's divine au-thority, when he doth but confider how it is confirmed, and how worthy the doctrine contained in it is of him whole name it bears. Now, I fay, this little pains being taken for the eftablishment of our faith in the holy scriptures, we cannot but be at the first fight affured of the truth of the contents of them. For no man in his wits can question his veracity who (as even natural light affures us) is truth it felf.

Secondly, These good principles that the heathens by the greatest improvement of their reason could at best conclude but very probable, are made undoubtedly certain by Revelation : As,

First, That of the immortality of our fouls. The vulgar fort of heathens, who were apt to believe any thing that was by tradition handed down to them, ('tis confessed) did not seem to doubt of the truth of this

## The Defign of Christianity.

SECT. III.

this doctrine, but to take it for granted ; which (no queftion) is also to be imputed to the special providence of God, and not merely to their credulity. But the more learned and fagacious, that would not eafily be imposed on, nor believe any farther than they faw caufe, though by arguments drawn from the notions they had truly conceived of the nature of humane fouls, they have diverfe of them undertaken to prove them immortal; yet could their arguments raife the best of them no higher than a great opinion of their immortality. Cato read Plate of the immortality of the foul, as he lay bleeding to death, with great delight; but that argues not that he had any more than great bopes of the truth of it. Socrates did fo believe it, that he parted with this life in expectation of another; but yet he plainly and ingenuoully confeffed to his friends, that it was not certain. Cicero, that fometimes expreffeth great confidence concerning the truth of it, doth for the most part speak so of it, that any one may see that he thought the doctrine no better than probable. He discourseth of it in his book de Senectute, as that which he rather could not endure to think might be falfe, than as that which he had no doubt of the truth of. And after he had there inftanced in feveral arguments which he thought had weight in them for the proof thereof, and expressed a longing to see his ancestors, and the brave men he had once known, and which he had heard of, read and written of, he thus concludes that whole difcourfe, \* If I err in believing the fouls immortality, I err willingly; neither fo long as I live will I fuffer this error which fo much delights me, to be wrested from me. But if when I am dead, I shall be void of all fense, as certain little philosophers think, I do not fear to have this error of mine laught at by dead philofophers.

But now the Gofpel hath given us the higheft affurance poffible of the truth of this doctrine; *life and immortality* are faid to be brought to *light* by it: He who declared himfelf to be the Son of God with power, gave men a *fenfible* demonstration of it in his own perfon, by his refurfection from the dead, and afcenfion into heaven: And both by himfelf, and his Apoftles (who were also indued with a power of working the greateft of miracles for the confirmation of the truth of what they faid) did very frequently, and most plainly preach it.

Secondly, The dottrine of rewards and punifhments in the life to come (which is for fubflance the fame with the former) according to our behaviour in this life, the learned heathens did generally declare their belief of; which they grounded upon the juftice, purity and goodnefs of the divine nature. They confidered that good men were often exercifed with great calamities, and that bad men very frequently were greatly profperous, and abounded with all earthly felicities : and therefore thought it very reafonable to believe that God would in another life files that hatred of fin, and love of goodnefs, by making a plain difcrimination between the conditions of virtuous and wicked perfons, by punifhing thefe, and rewarding those without exception. But this, though it was, in their opinion, a very probable argument, yet they looked not on it as that which amounted to a demonstration. For they could not but be aware,

 Quod fi in boc erro, quòd animos hominum immortales effe credam, libenter erro: nec mihi errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, extorqueri volo. Sin mortuus, Sc.

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aware, That that doctrine which was fo generally received by them, viz. That virtue is in all conditions a reward, and vice a punifhment to itfelf, did very much blunt the edge of it : and that other very harfh one, That all things befides virtue and vice are adiapoga, neither good nor evil, did render it (as the perfect Stoicks did feem too well to understand) too infignificant. But I must confess that Hierocles, who (as hath been faid) did not admit that notion, but in a very qualified fence, faith of those that think their fouls mortal (and confequently that virtue will hereafter have no reward) that when thay difpute in the behalf of virtue, xompetionan marrow, n annoerson, they rather talk wittily. than truly and in good earnest. The excellent Socrates himfelf, when he was going to drink off the fatal drug, thus faid to those that were then prefent with him, " I am now going to end my days, whereas your " lives will be prolonged; but whether you or I upon this account are "the more happy, is known to none but God only." intimating that he did not look upon it as abfolutely certain that he fnould have any reward in another world, for doing fo heroically virtuous an act, as chufing martyrdom for the doctrine of the unity of the Godhead. But now, what is more frequently or clearly declared in the Gofpel, than that there will be rewards and punifhments in the world to come futable to men actions in this world? than, that Christ will come a fecond time to judge the world in righteoufnefs, and that all must appear before his judgment-feat, to receive according to what they have done, whether it be good or whether it be evil, 2 Cor. v. 10.

Thirdly, That mens fins fhall be forgiven upon true repentance, from the confideration of the goodnefs and mercy of God, the heathens were likewife perfwaded, or rather hoped: but we Chriftians have the ftrongeft affurance imaginable given us of it, by the most folemn and often reiterated promifes of God; and not only that fome or most, but alfo that all without exception, and the most hainous impieties, upon condition of their being fincerely forfaken, shall in and through Chrift be freely forgiven.

Fourthly, The doctrine of God's readinefs to affift Men by bis fpecial grace in their endeavours after virtue, could be no more, at the beft, than probable in the judgment of the heathens, but we have in the Gofpel the moft express promifes thereof, for our mighty encouragement. Tully in his book de Natura Deorum faith, that their city Rome, and Greece, had brought forth many fingular men, of which it is to be believed, none arrived to fuch a height nift Deo juvante, but by the help of God. And after he tells us, that Nemo vir magnus fine alique offlatu Divino unquam fuit, No excellent man was ever made fo but by fome divine afflation. And Pythagoras in his golden verfes exhorts men to pray unto God for aflitance in doing what becomes them.

> ----- αλλ' έςχεν έπ' έςγον Θεοίσιν έπευξάμεν@- τελέσαι.

And *Hierocles* (with whom I confess my felf to enamoured, that I can fcarcely ever forbear to prefent my reader with his excellent fayings, when there is occasion;) He, I fay, upon this clause of *Pythagoras*, hath a discourse, concerning the necessfity of our eudeavours after virtue

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on the one hand, and of the divine bleffing to make them fuccefsful on the other, which I have often admired. And even Seneca himfelf, very unlike a Stoick, faith, Bonus vir fine deo nemo eft,  $\mathfrak{Sc}_c$ . No man can be made good without God; for can any one raife up himfelf without his help?

But none of these could have offurance, that God would not deny his special affistance to any that ferioufly seek after it ; especially since men have brought themfelves into a flate of imbecillity and great impotence, through their own default. But this, I fay, the Gofpel gives all men very ferious offers of, and affures them, if they be not wanting to themselves, they shall obtain. Hence our Saviour faith, Ask, and it Shall be given unto you : feek, and you shall find : knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receivelb ; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. If a fon shall ask bread of any that is a father, will he give him a stone ? or if he ask a fish, will be for a filb give him a ferpent? or if he ask an egg, will be offer him a scorpion? if ye then being evil, know how to give gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy spirit unto them that ask him? Luke xi. 9, Sc. And the fame thing is told us by St. James, in thefe words, Chap. i. 5. If any of you lack wifdom, let him afk it of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. Autoninus the philosopher puts men upon praying for a good mind above all things, but all the encouragement he could give was, " Dewees Ti giverai, and see what will come of it.\*

Thirdly, We have other doctrines made known to us by the Gofpel, which no man could ever without divine revelation in the kaft have *dream*'d of. As,

First, That God hath made miferable finners, the objects of fuch tranfcendent kindnefs, as to give them his only-begotten Son. And there are these five doctrines implied in this, which are each of them very strong motives and incentives to holinefs, viz.

1. That God Almighty hath made fuch account of us, and fo concerned himfelf for our recovery out of that wretched condition we had by finning against him plunged our felves into, as to fend his own Son from heaven, to fhew us on what terms we may be recovered, and alfo in his name even to (q) pray and befeech us to comply with them. That he thould fend no meaner a perfon than one who was the (r) Brightnefs of his glory, and the express image of his perfon by whom alfo be made the worlds, upon this errand, is fuch a motive to holinefs as one would think no finner could be able to ftand out against. That God should fend an ambaffador from heaven to affure us that he is reconcileable, and bears us good will, notwithftanding our high provocations of him, and to lay before us all the parts of that holinefs which is neceffary to reftore our natures to his own likenefs, and fo to make us capable of enjoying bleffednets; and most pathetically moreover to entreat us to do what lieth in us to put them in practice, that fo it may be to eternity well with us; and that this ambaffador fhould be fuch a one also as we now faid, never was there fo marvellous an expression of the divine love;

(q) 2 Cor. v. 20.

(r) Heb. i. 2, 3.

\* Lib. 9. Sect. 40.

and therefore one would *conclude* it perfectly irrefiftible by all perfons that have not extirpated out of their natures all ingenuity.

2. That this Son of God conversed upon equal terms with men, and was incarnate for their fakes (s). Great is the mystery of Godlines, God manifested in the flesh. That he thould become the fon of man, submit to be born of a woman, is a demonstration that God is so far from having calt off humane nature, that (as much as it is depraved) he beareth a very wonderful good will still to it, and hath a real defire to re-advance and dignifie it : even this fimply confidered, and without joyning with it the confideration of the defign of it, might make us conclude this : feeing Chrift's taking our nature is the bringing of it to near to the divine, as to lodge it within one and the felf-fame perfon. And therefore, befides the motive to holinefs drawn from God's infinite love therein expressed, this doctrine containeth another very powerful one, viz. That it must needs be the vilest thing to difhonour our nature by fin and wickedness, and far more fo, than it was before the incarnation of Jefus Chrift; in that it may now be properly faid, that it is in his perfon advanced above even the nature of angels; for him who is invefted with it do they themfelves worthip. And how can any Christian while he confidereth this, be able to forbear thus to reason with himself? Shall I by harbouring filthy lufts debafe that nature in my own perfon, which God hath to fuch an infinite height exalted in his Son's? God forbid. What an additional motive is this, to do as Pythagoras advifed his fcholars, in these words, Above all things revere and fland in awe of thy felf \*. Do nothing that is difbecoming and unworthy of fo excellent a nature, as thine is.

3. That this Son of God taught men their duty by his own example, and did himfelf perform among them what he required of them. Now that he should tread before us every step of that way, which he hath told us leadeth to eternal happinefs, and commend those duties which are most ungrateful to our corrupt inclinations, by his own practice; our having to brave an example is no fmall encouragement to a chearful performance of all that is commanded. For how honourable a thing must it needs be to imitate the only begotten Son of God, and who is God himfelf. How glorious to follow fuch a pattern! Those who have any thing of true generofity, cannot but find themfelves by the confideration hereof, not a little provoked to abandon all fin, and to fet themfelves very heartily to the performance of whatfoever duties are required of them. And as for those, which we are so apt to look upon as unworthy of us, and too low for us (fuch as meek putting up of affronts, and condescending to the meaneft offices for the ferving of our brethren) how can his fpirit be too lofty for them, that confiders Chrift's was not. Now thefe are all fuch motives and helps to holinefs, the like to which none but those who have the Gospel, ever had.

4. That this Son of God was an explatory factifice for us. We have already thewn what cogent arguments to all holy obedience are herein contained.

5. That this Son of God being raifed from the dead, and alcended into heaven is our high prieft there, and ever lives (as the author to the Hebrews faith) to make interceffion with his Father for us (t). The Heathens,

(5) 1 Tim. iii. 16. • Πάντων δε μάλις' αιχύνιο σαύτον. (1) Chap. vn.

thens, it is confeffed, had a notion of *deemons* negotiating the affairs of men with the fupreme God; but they could never have imagined in the leaft that they fhould be fo highly privileged, as to have one who is the begotten Son of this God, and infinitely above all perfons dear to him, for their perpetual mediator and interceffor. I need not fay what an encouragement this is to an holy life.

And as the doctrine of God's giving his Son, which containeth the five forementioned particulars, is fuch as the higheft improvement of reafon could never have caufed any thing like it to have entered our thoughts, or that is comparable thereunto for the effectual provoking of men to the purfuance of all holinefs of heart and life: fo,

Secondly, The doctrine of his fending the Holy Ghoft, to move and excite us to our duty, and to affift, chear, and comfort us in the performance of it, may go along with it. How could it have once been thought, without divine revelation, that a perfon indued with the divine nature, with infinite power and goodnefs, fhould take it upon him as his office and peculiar province to affift men's weaknefs in the profecution of virtue? But this doth the Gofpel affure us off; as alfo that thole which do not refift and repel his good motions thall be fure to have always the fuperintendency of this bleffed fpirit, and that he will never forfake them, but abide with them for ever, and carry them from one degree of grace to another, till at length it is confummate and made perfect in glory. And to this I add,

Thirdly, The doElrine of our union with Christ through this spirit : which union, (to speak in the words of the learned Dr. Patrick in his Menfa Mystica) is not only fuch a moral one as is between husband and wife, which is made by love; or between king and fubjects, which is made by laws; but fuch a natural union as is between head and members, the vine and branches, which is made by one /pirit or life dwelling in the whole. The Apostle faith, 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. As the body is one and hath many members; and also the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so alfo is Chrift ; 'for by one spirit are we all baptized into one body. Now fee what use the Apostle makes of both these, I Cor. vi. 15, 19, 20. Know you not that your bodies are the members of Chrift? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. And then he thus proceeds in the 19 and 20 verfes, What, know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own, but ye are bought with a price: therefore glorifie God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. What helps and incitements we have to the perfecting of holinels in the fear of God, from these two dostrines, is inexpressible.

Laftly The doftrine of the unconceivably great reward, that fhall be conferred upon all good and holy perfons, which the Gofpel hath revealed, is fuch as could not poffibly by the mere help of natural light enter into the thoughts of those that were ftrangers to it. We are therein affured not only of another life, and that good men fhall therein be rewarded but likewife that the reward that fhall be conferred upon them, fhall be no lefs than an hyperbolically hyperbolical weight of glory: as are the words of S. Paul, 2 Cor. iv. 17. Those that overcome, are promifed that they fhall fit with Chrift on his throne, even as be overcame and is fet down with bis

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bis Father on bis throne, Rev. iii. 21. In fhort, the happiness that our Saviour will reward all his faithful Disciples with, is so expressed as that we are affured it is inexpressible, and likewise far exceeding the fhort reach of our present conceptions: of which their *fouls* are not only to partake, but their bodies also, they being to be made (as vile as, they are in this flate) (u) like the glorious body of Jesus Christ, and though fown in corruption and diffeonour to be raised in glory, 1 Cor. xv.

Now though, as we faid, the learned Heathens did many of them, by the exercise of their reason, make it probable to themselves that their fouls were immortal, and that in another world virtuous perfons fhall be richly rewarded; yet no reafoning of theirs could ever enable them fo much as to conjecture, that this reward shall be fuch an immenfely great one, as that the Gofpel affures us of; there being a wonderful disproportion betwixt the best fervices that the most virtuous perfons are in a poffibility of performing, and fuch a reward as this: and it being alfo impoffible that fo great a felicity as that of the foul only, thould be a neceffary and natural refult from the higheft degrees of holinefs that are attainable in this low and impefect flate. But yet it is too well known to be concealed, that the Pythagor and Platonifts do speak very great things of the happiness of heaven; and those of them that difcourse intelligibly concerning it, do give in the general the Gofpel-notion of it. I have found Simplicius fomewhere, in his comment on Epistetus, calling it an eternal rest with God. And the Pythagor can verfes conclude with these two.

> "Ην δ' απολείψας σώμα ές αιθές ελεύθεου έλθης, "Εσσεαι αθάνα] Θ Θεός, αμβροίο, θα έτι θνητός.

When from this body thou'rt fet free, Thou fhalt mount up to th' fky: And an immortal God fhalt be, Nor any more fhalt die.

Whereby [Thou shalt be an immortal God] the commentator Hierocles understands, thou shalt be like to the immortal gods, and by them he meaneth, as appears by his comment upon the first verse, those excellent (pirits that are immediately fubordinate to their Maker the fupreme God, and the God of gods, as he calls him; by which he feemeth to understand the fame with those called in the Scripture arch-angels; for I find that he gives the name angels to an order next below them. So that, according to him, it was the Pythagor an doctrine, That good men shall, when they go to heaven, be made in state and condition like to those that are likest to God Almighty. But how they should learn this, by mere natural light, is unimaginable. That which is most probably conjectured, is, that they received these with several other notions from the ancient traditions of the Hebrews. But as for their owna avyoesdis, and "Oxnua wreunalixor, the Splendid body, and Spiritual vehicle they talk of, they mean not that glorious celestial \* body, which

(u) Phil. iii. 21.

\* This notion of a fine body did Tertullian retain his belief of, after he was converted to Christianity, and took it for the inner man, spoken of in Scripture.

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which the Apofile tells us this *terrefirial* one fhall be changed into, but, a thin fubtile body, which they fay the foul even while it is in this grofs one is immediately inclosed in: and which being in this life well purified from the pollution it hath contracted from its cale of fleth, the foul taking its flight from thence with it, enjoyeth its happinels in it. But, I fay, the change of this *vile* into a *glorious* body they were perfectly ftrangers to.

Now what an unfpeakable encouragement to *boline/s* is the happinefs which the Gofpel propofeth to us, and gives us *affurance* of alfo, that the now mentioned, or any of the philofophers could never by the beft improvement of their intellectuals have conceived to be fo much as likely to be attainable by mankind! and who would fill ferve their filthy lufts, and in fo doing be the vileft of flaves here, that look to reign with the King of the world for ever hereafter? He that bath this *hope in him*, faith S. John *purifieth himfelf even as he is pure*, I John iii. 3.

And what hath been spoken of the greatness of the reward which is promifed in the Gofpel to obedient perfons, may be faid alfo of the punishment it threatneth to the disobedient. It would make, one would think, an heart of oak, and the most hardened finner to tremble and fhake at the reading of those expressions it is fet forth by. Some of the philosophers do speak very dreadful things concerning the condition of wicked men in the other world; but they fall extreamly (hort of what the Gofpel hath declared. But I confess a discourse on this head will not very properly come in here. For mere reason might make it exceedingly probable, that fo highly aggravated fins as those which are committed against the Gospel are, shall be punish'd as feverely, if impenitently perfifted in, as is declared by our Saviour and his Apoftles they shall be. But however it is no small awakening to us Christians, that we have fuch an undoubted affurance from God himfelf, what we must expect if we will not be prevailed upon by all the means afforded us for our reformation, but shall notwithstanding them perfevere in the neglect of known duties, and in the allowance of known wickednefs.

#### C H A P. XV.

That the Gofpel containeth far greater Helps for the effecting of the Defign of making Men inwardly righteous, and truly holy, than God's most peculiar People, the Ifraelites, were favoured with. Where it is shewed,
That the Gofpel is incomparably more effectual for this Purpole than the Mosfaical Law was. 2. And that upon no other Accounts the Jews were in Circumsfunces for the obtaining of a thorow Reformation of Life and Purification of Nature, like to those our Saviour hath bleffed bis Difciples with.

N the fecond place, it is the cleareft cafe, That the Gofpel of I gour Saviour containeth far greater helps and advantages for the effecting of the great work of making men really righteous and truly holp,

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boly, than God's most peculiar people, the Israelites, whom he knew and favoured above all the nations of the earth, were partakers of.

First, Nothing is plainer than that the Gospel is incomparably more effectual for this purpole, than the Mofaical law was. For indeed that was directly deligned only to reftrain those that were under the obligation of it from the more notorious fins. It was added, faith the Apofile, because of transgreffion, till the seed should come, &c. Gal. iii. 19. Justin Martyr faith particularly of the facrifices, that the end of them was to keep the Jews from worthipping idols, which Trypho alfo, though a Jew that greatly gloried in the law, acknowledged. They were an extreamly carnal and vain people, exceedingly prone to be bewitched with the superstitions of the Gentiles; God gave them therefore a pompous way of worthip that might gratifie their childifh humour, and fo keep them from being drawn away with the vanities of the Heathens among whom they dwelt : and he gave them, withal, fuch precepts inforced with threatnings of moit fevere and prefent punifhments, as might by main force hold them in from those vile diforders, immoralities and exorbitances that had then overfpread the face of the woefully depraved and corrupted world. It is certain that the law of Moles, strictly fo called, did properly tend to make them no more than externally righteous; and whofoever was fo, and did those works it enjoyned (which they might do by their own natural strength) was esteemed according to that law, and dealt with, as just and blamelefs; and had a right to the immunities and privileges therein promifed. But much lefs was it accompanied with grace to indue the obfervers of it with an inward principle of holinefs.

And the Apoftle S. Paul expressent this as the great difference between that law and the gospel, in calling this the spirit, and that the letter, as he feveral times doth. Not that God, who was ever of an infinitely benign nature, and love it felf (as S. John deferibes him) was wanting with his grace to well-minded men under the Old Teftament; or that the Jews were all destitute of an inward principle of holinefs; nothing lefs: but the law which Mofes was peculiarly the promulger of, did not contain any promifes of grace, nor did the obligation thereof extend any farther than to the outward man. But there ran, as I may fo express my felf, a vein of Gospel all along with this law, which was contained in the covenant made with Abraham and his feed, by virtue of which the good men among the Jews expected juftification and eternal falvation, and performed the fubstance of those duties which the New Teftament requireth, and which were both by Moles and the Prophets, at certain times, and upon feveral occasions, urged upon them.

But as for this law of Moles confidered according to its natural meaning, it is called a law of a carnal commandment, Heb. vii. 16. And the fervices it imposed, weak and beggarly elements, Gal. iv. 9. And a law which made no man perfect, Heb. vii. 19. Its promises therefore were only temporal; upon which account the author to the Hebrews faith, that the Gospel is established on better promises. Nor was justification before God obtainable by it, as S. Paul frequently sheweth; and therefore did account the righteousness of it very mean and vile in compari-

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fon of that which the Gospel indued men with. No man could be acguitted by the feverest observance of this law from any other than civil punishments, nor were its facrifices able to make the offerers perfect as pertaining to the conscience, Heb. ix. 9. And though it be true (as Mr. Chillingworth observeth in his fermon on Gal. v. 5.) That the legal facrifices were very apt and commodious to shadow forth the oblation and fatisfaction of Christ; yet this use of them was so mystical and reserved, so impossible to be collected out of the letter of the law; that without a special revelation from God, the eyes of the Ifraelites were too weak to ferve them, to pierce through those dark clouds and shadows, and to carry their observation to the substance. So that, proceeds he, I conceive these facrifices of the law in this respect are a great deal more beneficial to us Christians : for there is a great difference between facraments and types : types are only useful after the antitype is discovered, for the confirmation of their faith that follow. As for example, Abraham's offering of Isaac by faith did lively reprefent the real oblation of Chrift; but in that respect was of little or no use till Christ was indeed crucified; it being impossible to make that history a ground-work of their faith in Christ. The like may be faid of the legal facrifices.

And for a clear understanding of the direct use of this law, I refer the reader to that fermon : where it is fully, and, in my opinion, as judiciously discoursed as I have ever elsewhere met with it.

Secondly, Nor were these special favourites of heaven upon any other accounts in circumstances for the obtaining of a thorow reformation of life, renovation and purification of nature, comparable to those which our Saviour hath bleffed his difciples with. For though they had, as we faid, for the fubstance the fame spiritual precepts which are enjoyned in the Gospel over and above the Mofaical law; yet these were inforced by no express promifes of eternal happiness, or threatnings of eternal milery: nor was to much as a life to come otherwife than by tradition, or by certain ambiguous expressions (for the most part) of their inspired men, or by fuch fayings as only implied it, and from which it might be rationally concluded, discovered to them : as for instance, in that place particularly, where God by his reprefentative, an angel, declared himfelf to his fervant Mofes to be the God of Abraham, the God of Ifaac, and the God of Jacob (x); from whence our Saviour inferred that doctrine for this reason, That God is not the God of the dead, but of the living (y). And that the notices they had hereof were not very plain and clear, is apparent, in that there was a fect among them, viz. the Sadduces, that profeffed to difbelieve it; and yet, notwithflanding, were continued in the body, and enjoyed the privileges of the Jewish Church. But that one forecited affertion of the Apostle, 2 Tim. i. 10. putteth this out of all question, viz. That Christ hath brought life and immortality to light through the Go/pel. From whence we may affuredly gather thus much at least, viz. That in the Gospel is manifestly revealed life and immortality which was never before made known fo certainly.

I add moreover, that the Ifraelites were required to keep at fuch a diffance from all other nations, that they could not but be by that means greatly inclined to morofity, felf-conceitednefs, and contempt of their fellow-creatures: and were ever and anon employed in fuch fervices

(x) Exod. iii. 6.

() Matth. xxii. 32.

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fervices as naturally tended, through the weakness of their natures, to make their spirits too angry and fierce, not to fay cruel. As for inftance, that of deftroying God's and their enemies, and fometimes their. innocent children too, and the cattle that belonged to them. And feveral connivences and indulgencies they had (as in the cafes of divorce and polygamy and revenge) which did not a little conduce to the gratifying of fenfuality, and the animal life; all which are taken away by our faviour Chrift. These things, with diverse others, made it in an ordinary way impossible for those people to arrive at that height of virtue and true goodness, that the Gospel designeth to raife us to. And though we find fome of them very highly commended for their great fanctity; we are to understand those encomiums for the most part, at least, with a reference to the dispensation under which they were; and as implying a confideration of the circumftances they were in, and the means they enjoyed.

And thus have we fhewed what a most admirably effectual course our bleffed Saviour hath taken to purifie us from all filthines both of the flefh and spirit, and to make us in all respects righteous and holy: and how much the Christian dispensation excellent others as to its aptness for this purpole. And from what hath been faid we may fafely conclude, That neither the world, nor any part of it was ever favoured by God with means for the accomplishment of this work, comparable to those which are contained in the Christian religion.

So that, well might S. Paul call the Golpel of Chrift the power of God to falvation (z), that is, both from mifery and the caufe of it. Well may the weapons of the Christian warfare be faid not to be carnal and weak, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of firong holds, and casting down imaginations and every bigh thing that exalteth it felf against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chrift (a). Great reason had Clemens Alexandrinus to call our Saviour arbeunornto. wardayoyo, the instructor and school-master of humane nature \*; and to fay, as he doth in the following words, That he bath endeavoured to fave us by using with all his might, all the instruments of wildom, or all wife courfes, and draws us back by many bridles from gratifying unreasonable appetites. And Justin Martyr, speaking of the Gospel. had caufe pathetically to break out as he did, in these words, & wather Dewar proyadeolingion, &c. + O thou expeller and chafer away of evil affections! O thou extinguisher of burning luss! This is that which makes us not poets or philosophers or excellent orators, but of poor mortal men makes us like fo many immortal gods, and translateth us from this low earth to those regions that are above Olympus. And well, again, might the fame good Father, having throughly acquainted himfelf with the Stoick and Platonick philosophy, (by which latter he thought himself to have gained much wifdom) and at laft by the advice of an old man a ftranger, having fludied the Gospel, thus express himself, ταύτην μόνην φιλοσοφίαν ευρισκον ασφαλή n' oungogor, &c. t I found this alone to be the fafe and profitable philosophy. and thus and by this means became I a philosopher.

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Simplicius

(z) Rom. i. 16. (a) 2 Cor. x. 5. Pædag. p. 120. † Oratio ad Græcos, p. 40. ‡ Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 225.

## The Defign of Christianity.

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\* Simplicius faith thus of Epistetus his Enchiridion, That it hath  $\varpi o \lambda \partial z \partial \delta z \pi \delta \partial z \pi$ 

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### C H A P. XVI.

An Objection against the wonderful Efficacy of the Christian Religion for the Purpose of making Menholy, taken from the very little success it hath berein, together with the prodigious Wickedness of Christendom. An Answer given to it in three Particulars, viz. 1. That how ill soever its Success is, it is evident from the foregoing Disours, that it is not to be imputed to any Weakness or Inefficacy in that Religion. The true Canses thereof affigned. 2. That it it is to be expected that those should be the vorse for the Gospel, that will not be bettered by it. 3. That there was a Time when the Gospel's fuccess was greatly answerable to what hath been faid of its Efficacy. And that the Primitive Christians were People of most numbered and holy Lives. The Gosflicks improperly called Christians in any fence. The Primitive Christians proved to be Men of excellent Lives, by the Testimonies of Fathers contained in their Apologies for them to their Enemies; and by the Acknowledgments of their Enemies themselves. An Account given in particular of their meek and fubmilfive Temper, out of Tertullian.

DXXS F it be now objected against what we have faid of the admirable I & efficacy of the Christian religion for the purpole of making men holy, That there is but very little fign of it in the lives of those that profess to believe it : for who are more woefully loft as to all true goodnefs, who are more deeply funk into fenfuality and brutifhnefs, than are the generality of Christians? Nay, among what fort of men are all manner of abominable wickedneffes and villanies to be found to rife, as among them? Upon which account the name of Chriftian flinks in the noftrils of the very Jews, Turks and Pagans. Beaftly intemperance and uncleanneffes of all forts, the most fordid covetousnels, wretched injustice, oppressions and cruelties; the most devilith malice, envy and pride; the deadlieft animofities, the moft outragious feuds, diffentions and rebellions; the plaineft and groffeft idolatry, higheft blasphemies and most horrid impieties of all kinds are in no part of the world more obferable than they are in Christendom; nor most of them any where so observable. And even in those places where

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where the Gospel is most truly and powerfully preached, and particularly in this our nation, there is but little more to be taken notice of in the far greater number, than the name of Christians; nor any more of religion, than infignificant complementings of God, and a mere bodily worship of him. But what abominable vice is there, that doth not here abound? Nay, where doth the highest and most daring of impieties, viz. Atheifm it felf, fo boldly fhew its head as it doth here? And as for those among us that make the greatest pretences to Christianity, belides a higher profession, a more frequent attendance on ordinances, and a mighty zeal for certain fruitless opinions they have taken up, and little triffes which fignifie nothing to the bettering of their fouls, and carrying on that which we have thewed is the Defign of Chriftianity; there is little to be observed in very many, if not most, of them, whereby they may be diffinguithed from other people. But as for the fins of covetoulnels, pride and contempt of others, dilobedience to authority, fedition, unpeaceablenefs, wrath and fiercenefs against those that differ in opinion from them, cenforioufnefs and uncharitablenefs; it is too obvious how much the greater part of the fects we are divided into are guilty of most, if not all of them. And that which is really the power of godiine/s doth appear in the conversations of but very few.

God knows, the wickednefs of thofe that *enjoy* and profefs to believe the Gofpel, is an extremely fertile and copious theme to dilate upon; and is fitter to be the lubject of a great volume (if any one can perfwade himfelf fo far to rake into fuch a noyfome dunghil, as fure none can, except enemies to Chriftianity) than to be difcourfed by the bye, as it is here. Nor can there be any eafier tafk undertaken than to fhew, that not a few mere *Heathens* have behaved themfelves incomparably better towards God, their neighbour, and themfelves, than do the generality of thofe that are called *Chriftians*. Nay, I fear it would not be over-difficult to make it appear, that the generality of thofe that never heard the Gofpel, do behave themfelves in feveral refpects better than they do.

But I have no lift to entertain my felf or reader with fuch an unpleafant and melancholy argument, but will betake my felf to anfwer the fad objection which is from thence taken against the truth of our last difcourfe.

1. And, in the first place, let the Gospel have never so little success in promoting what is designed by it; whoever confiders it, and what hath been faid concerning it, cannot but acknowledge that it is in *it felf* as fit as any thing that can be imagined for the purpose of throughly reforming the *lives*, and purifying the *natures* of mankind: and also incomparably more fit than any other course that hath ever been taken, or can be thought of. So that we may certainly conclude, That the depravedness of Christendom is not to be ascribed to the inefficacy of the Gospel, but to other causes: namely, men's unbelief of the truth of it: as much as they *profess* faith in it: their inexcusable neglect of confidering the infinitely powerful motives to a holy life comtained in it; and of using the means conducing thereunto preferibed by it. And these are inseparable concomitants, and most effectual promoters of each other. Every man's inconfideration is proportionable

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to his incredulity, and his incredulity to his inconfideration : and how much of carelefnefs is vifible in mens lives, fo much of unbelief doth poffels their hearts; and fo on the contrary. Upon which account to believe and to be obedient, and not to believe and to be difobedient, are fynonymous phrases, and of the same fignification in the New, and likewise in the Old Teftament. Now it is a true faying of Tertullian, Pervicaciæ nullum opposuit remedium Deus, God hath provided no remedy, that is, no ordinary one, against wilfulness. And though the Gospel hath fuch a tendency as hath been thewn, to work the most excellent effects in men, yet it doth not operate as charms do, nor will it have fuccefs upon any without their own concurrence, and co-operation with it. The excellent rules of life laid down in the Golpel must neceffarily fignifie nothing to those, that only hear or read them, but will not mind them. - Its promifes or threatnings can be exciting to none, that will not believe or confider them : nor can the arguments it affordeth to provoke to affent, be convincing to any but those that impartially weigh them; its helps and affiftances will do no good, where they are totally neglected. And though there be preventing as well as affifting grace going along with the Golpel, for the effectual prevailing on mens wills to use their utmost endeavour to fubdue their lufts, and to acquire virtous habits; yet this grace is not fuch as that there is no poffibility of refusing or quenching it. Nor is it fit it thould, feeing mankind is indued with a principle of freedom, and that this principle is effential to the humane nature.

I will add, that this is one immediate caufe of the unfuccefsfulnefs of the Gofpel, to which it is very much to be attributed; namely, mens ftrange and unaccountable miftaking the defign of it. Multitudes of those that profess Christianity are fo grofly inconfiderate, not to fay worfe, as to conceive no better of it than as a fcience and matter of speculation : and take themselves, (though against the clearest evidences of the contrary imaginable) for true and genuine Chriftians, either becaufe they have a general belief of the truth of the Christian religion, and profess themselves the Disciples of Christ Jesus in contradistinction from Jews, Mahometans, and Pagans; and in and through him alone expect falvation : or becaufe they have fo far acquainted themfelves with the doctrine of the Gospel, as to be able to talk and dispute, and to make themselves pals for knowing people : or because they have joyned themfelves to that party of Chriftians which they prefume are of the purest and most reformed model, and are zealous sticklers for their peculiar forms and diferiminating fentiments; and as ftiff oppofers of all other that are contray to them. Now the Gofpel must necessarily be as ineffectual to the rectifying of fuch mens minds, and reformation of their manners, while they have fo wretchedly low an opinion of its defign, as if it really had no better: and fo long as they take it for granted its main intention is didagai, & Bexliwoan, to make them orthodox, not virtuous, it cannot be thought that they should be ever the more holy, nay, 'tis a thousand to one but they will be in one kind or other the more unholy for their Chriftianity.

And laftly, There are feveral unioward opinions very unhappily infilled into profeffors of Christianity, which render the truths of the Gofpel

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Gospel they retain a belief of, infignificant and unfuccessful as to the bettering either of their hearts or lives, as infinitely apt and of as mighty efficacy as they are in themfelves for those great phrposes.

2. Secondly, Whereas it was faid alfo, that the generality of heathens live in diverse respects better lives, than do multitudes, and even the generality, of those that profess Christianity; it is so far from being difficult to give a fatisfactory account how this may be without difparaging our excellent religion; that it is to be expected that those people fould be even much the worfe for it, that refuse to be bettered by it. It is an old maxim, that Corruptio optimi of peffima : the best things being spoiled, do prove to be the very worft : and accordingly, nothing lefs is to be looked for, than that degenerate Chriftians fhould be the vileft of all perfons. And it is alfo certain, that the beft things, when abused, do ordinarily ferve to the worst purposes; of which there may be given innumerable inftances. And fo it is, in this prefent cafe. St. Paul told the Corinthians, that he and the other apostles were a a favour of death unto death, as well as of life unto life (b). And our Saviour gave the Pharifees to understand, That for judgment he was come into the world; that those that see not, might see; and that those that see, might be made blind (c); that is, That it would be a certain confequent of his coming, not only that poor ignorant creatures should be turned from darkness to light, but alfo that those which have the light, and thut their eves against it, thould be judicially blinded. And the forementioned Apostle. in the first Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, faith of those that held the truth in unrighteousness, that would not fuffer it to have any good effect upon them through their clofe adhering to their filthy lufts, that God gave them up to the most unnatural villainies, permitted them to commit them by with-holding all reftraints from them; and likewife gave them over is ver adoximor, to a reprobate mind, So that, from the just judgment of God it is, I fay, to be expected, that depraved Christians thould be the most wicked of all people : and therefore it is fo far from being matter of wonder, that those that will not be converted by the Golpel, thould be fo many of them very horribly prophane; that that it is rather fo, that all those which, having for any confiderable time lived under the preaching of it, continue difobedient to it, fhould not be fuch. In the pureft ages of the church, were degenerated Chriftians made in this kind most fearful examples of the divine vengeance : And fo utterly forfaken of God, that they became, (if we may believe Irenœus, Tertullian, and others of the ancient Fathers) not one whit better than incarnate devils. Nor were there to be found in the whole world in those days, and but rarely fince, fuch abominable and most execrable wretches as they were. I have fometimes admired that humane nature should be capable of such a monstrous depravation, as feveral stories recorded of them do speak them to have contracted: But.

3. Thirdly, If we must needs judge of the efficacy of the Gospel for the making men holy, by its fuccefs herein; let us caft our eyes back upon the first ages of Christianity, and then we shall find it an easie matter

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(b) 2 Cor. ii, 16.

(c) John ix. 39.

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ter to fatisfie our felves concerning it, though we should understand no more of Christianity, than the effects it produced in those days.

For though there were then a fort of people that fometimes called themfelves *Ciriflians*, that were (as was now faid) the most defperately wicked creatures that ever the earth bare; yet these were effected by all others that were known by *that name* as no whit more of *their* number, than the *Pagans* and *Jews* that defied Chrift. And their religion was a motly thing that confifted of *Chriftianity*, *Judaifm* and *Paganifm* all blended together; and therefore in regard of their mere profession they could be no more truly called *Chriftians* than *Jews* or *Pagans*. Or rather (to fpeak properly) they were of no religion at all, but would fometimes comply with the *Jews*, and at other times with the *Heathens*, and joyned readily with both in perfecuting the *Chriftians*; And, in fhort, the *Samaritans* might with les impropriety be called *Jews*, than these *Gnosticks*, *Chriftians*.

'Tis also confessed that the orthodox Christians were calumniated by the heathens as flat Atheifts, but their only pretence for fo doing was their refusing to worthip their Gods. And they likewife accused them of the beaftlieft and most horrid practices; but it is sufficiently evident that they were beholden to the Gnoflicks for those acculations; who, being accounted Chriftians, did by their being notorioufly guilty of them give occasion to the enemies of Christianity to reproach all the professors of it, as most filthy and impure creatures. I know it is commonly faid that those calumnies proceeded purely from the malicious invention of their enemies, but it is apparent that those vile hereticks gave occasion to them, but that the Christians were fo far from being guilty of fuch monstrous crimes, that they did lead most inoffenfive and good lives, doth abundantly appear by the apologies that diverfe of the Fathers made to the heathen emperors, and people in their behalf. Justin Martyr in his apology to Antoninus Pius hath this faying, nuéregov iv egyov, &c. It is our interest that all persons should make a narrow inquisition into our lives and dostrine, and to expose them to the view of every one. And he afterwards tells that emperor, That his people had nothing to lay to their charge truly, but their bare name, Christians. And again, that they which in times pass took pleasure in unclean practices, do live now (that they are become converts to Chriftianity) pure and chafte lives : they which used magical arts, do now confectate and devote themselves to the eternal and good God : They which preferred their money and posselfions before all things elfe, do now caft them into the common flock; and communicate them to any that fland in need; They which once hated each other, and mutually engaged in bloody battles, and (according to the cuftom) would not keep a common fire, webs res six opoquass, with those that were not of the fame tribe, now live lowingly and familiarly together; that now they pray for their very enemies : and those which perfecute them with unjust hatred they endeavour to win to them by perfivations, that they alfo, living according to the honest precepts of Christ, may have the same hope, and gain the same reward with themselves from the great governour and lord of the world.

Athenagoras in his apology, faith thus to the Emperors Aurelius Antoninus, and Aurelius Commodus; As very gracious and benign as you are to all others, you have no care of us tubo are called Chriftians; for you fuffer

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us who commit no evil, nay, who (as shall bereaster appear) do behave our felves of all men most piously and justly both towards God and your government, to be vexed, to be put to flight from place to place, and to be violently deale with. And then he adds some lines after; If any of you can convist us of any great or small crime, we are ready to bear the most severe punishment, that can be inflisted upon us. And speaking of the calumnies that some had fallened upon them, he faith, If you can find that these things are true, spare no age, no sex; but utterly root us up and destroy us, with our wives and children, if you can prove that any of us live like to beasts, &cc.

And there is very much to the fame purpose in Tertullian's apology : Where he tells the Roman governours, that they dealt otherwise with the Chriftians, than with any other whom they accounted malefactors; for whereas they tortured others to make them confess the faults they were accused of they tortured these to make them deny themselves to be Christians ; and that having no crime befides to lay to their charge which carried the least shew of truth, their professing themselves to be no Christians would at any time procure for them their abfolution. And to this objection, that there are fome Christians that do excedere à regula disciplinae, depart from the rules of their religion, and live diforderly; he returneth this answer, Definunt tamen Christiani haberi penes nos : but those that do so, are no longer by us accounted Christians. And, by the way, let me recite Rigaltius his short note upon this paffage, At perseverant hodie in nomine & numero Christianorum, qui vitam omnem vivunt antichristi : but those now adays do retain the name and fociety of Christians, which live altogether Anti-christian lives. And (proceeds he) Tolle publicanos, &c. Take away publicans and a wretched rabble which he musters together, & frigebunt bodiernorum Ecclefiæ Christianorum; and our present Christian Churches will be lamentably weak, Small and infignificant things.

From these few citations out of the apologies of the forementioned Fathers, to which may be added abundance more of the fame nature both out of them, and others, we may judge what rare fuccels the Golpel had in the first ages, and what a valt difference there is between the Chriftians of those, and of these days; that is, between the Christians that were under perfecution, and those that fince have lived in ease and prof-When the Chriftian Religion came to be the religion of naperity. tions, and to be owned and encouraged by emperors and rulers, then was the whole vaft Roman empire quickly perfwaded to march under its banner; and the very worft of men for falbions-fake, and in expectation of temporal advantages, came-flocking into the Church of Chrift. Nay, the worfe men were, and the lefs of confcience they had, the more forward might they then be fo to do, the more hafte they might make to renounce their former religion, and take upon them the profession of Chriftianity. And no fooner was the Church fet in the warm funfhine of worldly riches and honours, but it is apparent the was infenfibly over run with those noifom vermine, which have bred and multiplied ever fince, even for many centuries of years.

If any fhall doubt whether the forementioned Fathers might not give too good a character of the Chriftians whofe caufe they pleaded; I defire them to confider whether this be imaginable, feeing their enemies, to whom they wrote their defences of them could eafily, they living, among among them, have difcovered the fality of their commendations. And we find them frequently appealing to the heathens own conficiences, whether they themfelves did not believe that true which they faid of them: and moreover we have them ever and anon triumphing over them, and provoking them to fhew fuch effects of their *philo/ophy* and *way of religion*, as they themfelves could witnefs were produced by the *Galpel* of Chrift.

Nay, and we have their adversaries themselves giving them a very high character. Tertullian in his forementioned apology faith, that Pliny the fecond (who was a perfecutor of Christians) wrote thus to the emperor Trajan from the province where he ruled under him, viz. \* That, befides their resolute refusing to offer factifice, he could learn nothing concerning their religion, but that they beld meetings before day to fing praises to Christ and God, and to engage their fest in folemn leagues; fortidding murther, adultery, deceit, disfoyalty, and all other wickednesses.

And in a now extant Epiftle of his to that emperor, we find him giving him this information, viz. + That, fome that had renounced . Christianity, and now worshipped his image, and the statutes of their Gods, and curfed Chrift, did affirm, 1 That this was the greatest fault or error they were guilty of, that they were wont upon a fet day to affemble together before it was light, and to fing a hymn to Christ as to a God; and to bind them/elves by a Sacrament, not to any wickedness, but that they would not commit thefts, robberies, adulteries; that they would not be worfe than their words, that they would not deny any thing intrusted in their hands when demanded of them : which done, it was their cuftom to depart, and to meet again, ad capiendum cibum promiscuum, tamen & innoxium, to eat a common but innocent and harmless meal, which was doubtless the Agape or feast of charity, which was in the primitive times in use among the Chriffians, after the celebration of the Lord's Supper. This was an excellent account of them, and much too good to be expected from apoftates, fuch having been ordinarily obferved to be of all others, the most deadly enemies of Christianity and the professor of it.

But to return to our author, he a few lines after adds, that he put two maid-fervants upon the rack, to extort from them as full a difcovery, as he could of the Chriftians crimes; § but he could not find any they were guilty of, except obflinate and exceffive fuperfittion: So he called their confant perfeverance, and diligence, in obferving the precepts of their molt excellent religion.

|| And the emperor Antoninus Pius, as much an enemy of Chri-

tians

\* Præter obstinationem non facrificandi, nibil aliud se de sacramentis eorum comperiste, quàm cætus antelucanos ad canendum Christo & Deo, & ad confæderandam Disciplinam : homicidium, adulterium, sraudem, persidiam, & cætera scelera probibentes.

+ Lib. 10. Epist. 97. Edit. ult.

Affirmabant autem, hanc fuisse fummam vel culpæ suæ, vel erroris, quod efsent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire; carmenque Christo, quasi Deo, dicere secum invicem, seque, Sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne surta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem sallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent, Ge.

§ Sed nibil aliud inveni, quàm Superstitionem pravam & immodicam, § Justin Martyr. Apolog. ad Antoninum Pium. CHAP. XVI.

tians as he was, writes thus in an Epiftle to the people of Afia, (which is to be seen in Justin Martyr, and affixed to the apology he directed. to him) viz. That they could make no proof of the erimes they laid to the Christians charge, and they overcame them by chufing to lay down their lives rather than to do the things they required of them : And that he thought it fit to advertise them, that the Christians, when earthquakes happened, were not under fuch dreadful fears as they were; and that they were ivwagenoia-Foregos webs & Osdy, indued with a firmer confidence and truft in God. And there next followeth another Epiftle of the emperor Antoninus Philolophus to the Senate and people of Rome; wherein he gave them an account of an imminent danger that he and his army were in, in the heart of Germany, by the fudden approach of nine hundred and feventy thoufand Barbarians and enemies : And how that finding his ftrength to oppofe them very finall, he commanded all those to appear before him who were called Chrislians, (as fuspecting, 'tis like, either their fidelity or courage) and perceiving there were a great number of them, very tharply inveighed against them : Which (faith he) I ought not to have done in regard of the virtue which I after found to be in them; where-by they began the fight not with darts and weapons and found of trumpets, Sc. Wherefore (proceeds he) it is meet that we should know, that those whom we suspect for Atheists, Deor Exeriv automalor is Ti, ourerdinger TETELX 10 pueror, have God willingly inclosed, or of his own accord inhabiting, in their confcience : For laying themfelves flat upon the earth, they prayed not only for me, but alfo for my whole army, which was then prefent, that they might be a means of folace and comfort us, in our prefent hunger and thirst, (for we could not come by any water for five days together :) But as foon as they were profirate upon the ground, and prayed to a God whom I knew not, immediately there fell rain from beaven, upon us, very cool and refreshing, but upon our adversaries xahaga wvewons, a fiery hail-ftorm : And their prayer was infantly accompanied with the prefence of God, as of one invincible and insuperable. Therefore let us permit these people to be Christians, left they praying to have the like weapons imployed against us, they should obtain their desire. And a few lines after, the emperor declared it his will and pleafure, that whofoever accufeth a Christian as fuch, for the time to come, he shall be burnt alive.

What better fatisfaction can we defire, concerning the truth of the forementioned Father's account of the Christians that lived in their days, than that which the pens of these their enemies have given to us?

There is one thing more I will add concerning the primitive Chriftians, viz. That the moft calm, meek, peaceable, gentle and fubmiflive remper recommended in the Gofpel, did mightily difcover it felf in them: And thereby we may judge what kind of people they were as to the other parts of Chriftianity; it being impoffible that fuch an excellent fpirit fhould be alone, and unaccompanied with the other virtues. Though they were for the moft part very forely perfecuted, yet, as Tertullian faith (in his book ad Nationes, Nunquam conjuratio erupit, there was never any uproar or hurly-burly among them. And having, in his apology, afk'd the two emperors, and the reft, this queffion, If we are commanded to love our enemies, whom have

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we then to hate? He thus proceeds: How often do you your felves rage against the Christians who are obedient unto you, and moreover suffer them to be floned and burnt by the rout of common people; but yet what revenge did ye ever observe them repaying for the injuries done unto them, as flout-hearted as they are even to death it self?

If it be objected, as it is by fome, that this might be attributed not to their good temper, but to mere neceffity, feeing they knew themfelves too weak to fucceed in any rebellious or violent attempt: let the fame Tertullian give an answer; and he doth it in the very next words. In one night, faith he, with a few firebrands, they could revenge themselves sufficiently upon you, if they thought it lawful to render evil for evil. Nay, and not only fo, but he tells them plainly, that they were in circumfances to manage the parts of bostes exerti, open enemies against them, as well as of vindices occulti, fly and fecret revengers; and that they could raife an army, if it pleafed them, numerous and powerful enough to cope with them; and withal he thus proceeds: Hefterni fumus, & vestra omnia implevimus, Sc. Though we are but as it were of yesterday, yet you have no place but is full of us; your cities, your islands, castles, towns, council-houses; your fortresses, tribes, bands of souldiers, palace, senate, court, Sola vobis relinquimus templa, Your temples only are empty of us. And he goes on, Cui bello non idonei, &c. What battles are not we able to wage with you, who are so willingly flain by you? but according to the laws of our religion we efteem it better to be killed than to kill. Nay, he next tells them, Potuimus inermes nec rebelles, Sc. We need not take arms and rebel to revenge our felves upon you, for we are fo great a part of the empire, that by but departing from you, we should utterly destroy it, and affright you with your own folitude, and leave you more enemies than loyal fubjects. And fo far were they from making use of the advantages they had to deliver themfelves by the way of violence, That (as not long after he faith to them) they prayed for the emperors, and those in authority under them, for peace and a quiet state of affairs among them : and, as somewhere he adds, very ready alfo to give them affiftance against their enemies.

\* Origen also tells Celfus, that he or any of his party were able to fhew wide scarses degree, nothing of fedition, that the Chriftians were ever guilty of: and yet what Tertullian faid of the Roman empire in general, this father elfewhere in the fame book fpeaketh of Greece and Barbary, wiz. That the Gospel had fubdued all that country and the greater part of this, and had brought over to godlinefs fouls innumerable.

Thus you fee how far the primitive Chriftians were from the tumultuous, fiery, and boilterous fpirit, that Chriftendom above all other parts of the world, hath been fince infefted with. And thus we have flown that there was once a time (God grant that the like may be again) when the fuccefs of the Chriftian religion in conquering mens lufts, and rectifying their natures, was greatly anfwerable to the efficacy that it hath for this purpofe. And fo we pafs to the fecond Inference.

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# C H A P. XVII.

#### The fecond Inference.

That we understand from what hath been faid of the Defign of Chriftianity, how fearfully it is abufed by those that call themselves the Roman Catholicks. That the Church of Rome hath by feveral of her Dostrines enerwated all the Precepts and Motives to Holine's contained in the Gospel. That the bath rendred the Means therein preferibed, for the Attainment thereof, extremely ineffectual. That she bath also as greatly corrupted them. Divers Instances of the Papists Idolatry. Their Image Worthip one Instance. Their praying to Saints departed another. Other Impieties accompanying it, mentioned. Some Account of their Blasphemies, particularly in their Prayers to the Bleffed Virgin. Their worthipping the Host the third, and großess Instance of their Idolatry. Some other of their Wicked und most Antichristian Dostrines.

FXX DECONDLY, by what hath been faid concerning the Defign S of the Christian religion, we eafily understand how fearfully it is abufed by those that call themselves the Roman Catholicks. Nor need we any other argument to prove popery to be nothing lefs than Chrifianity belides this, viz. That the grand defign of this, is to make us holy; and also aimeth at the raising of us to the most elevated pitch of holinefs, and is admirably contrived for that purpofe: but the religion of the Papifts, as fuch, doth most apparently tend to carry on a defign most opposite thereunto : to ferve a carnal and corrupt interest ; to give men fecurity in a way of finning; and pretendeth to teach them a way to do. at one and the fame time effectually, the most contrary and inconfistent things. That is, to deprave their natures, and fave their fouls ; and even in gratifying their wicked inclinations to lay a firm foundation for eternal happinels. So that, if this (as they pretend it alone is) be the Christian religion, we must needs ingenuously acknowledge, that what we faid in the introduction was by Celfus and Julian charged upon it, is no calumny, but an acculation most just and well deferved. For as the Church of Rome hath rendred diverse excellent precepts of holiness very ineffectual, by making them counfels only, not commands; and also not a few of its prohibitions unnecellary, by her diffinction of fins into mortal and venial; understanding by venial fins fuch as for the fake of which no man can deferve to lofe the divine favour; and therefore making them really no fins : fo hath the enervated all the evangelical commandments, both politive and negative, and made them infignificant by a great many doctrines that are taught by her most darling-fons, and decreed or allowed by her felf. That one Popish doctrine of the non-neceffity of repentance before the imminent point of death ; and that (though the Church requireth it upon holydays, yet) no man is bound by the divine law to it until that time, is of it felf, without the help of any other, fufficient to take away the force of all the holy precepts of our Saviour, and to make them utterly unfuccelsful to the embraces of it : and this other goeth beyond that in aptneſs

nefs for this purpole, viz. That mere attrition, or forrow for fin for fear of damnation, if it be accompanied with confeffion to the prieft, is fufficient for falvation. For, as the former maketh a death-bed repentance only neceffary, fo this latter makes that repentance alone fo, which is far from deferving to be fo called, and which wants the principal ingredients of that grace, viz. Hatred of fin, and love to God and geodnefs; and confequently works no change in the nature of the finner, nor makes him partaker in the leaft meafure of true holinefs.

The threats of hell have they made a mere fcare-crow by their doctrine of purgatory; and the fear of this too have they taken a notable courfe to fecure men from by that of penances, and the indulgences granted by their Popes very ordinarily for doing certain odd triffes and idle things; but which by money can never fail to be procured. Nor are the moft horrid impieties thut out from having their thare in his holinefs his indulgences; as more than fufficiently appears by the tax of the Apylolical chancery; whereto those that will pay the price, abfolutions are to be had for the moft abominable and not to be named villainies, nay, and licences alfo, for not a few wickedneffes.

I may add to the forementioned, their doctrine of the meritorious fupererogations of the faints, which, being applied to others, they teach to be available for their pardon; which befides its moft impious making many co-faviours with  $\int e_{fus}$  Chrift, doth infinitely encourage to carelefsnefs and loofe living.

The religion of the *means* prefcribed in the Gofpel, have they done what lay in them to make both extremely ineffectual, and highly irreligious. I fay,

Firft, Most ineffectual: for they will have the bare faying of prayers without the leaft minding of what is faid, to be acceptable to, and prevalent with, Almighty God: and congruoufly to this fine doctrine, their church enjoyns them to be faid in a tongue that is unknown to the generality of her children. Though the Papiss cannot, for fhame, but acknowledge it a good thing to give attention to what is faid in the worship of God, yet, I fay, it is well known that they deny it to be neceffary fo to do; and make the mere opus operatum, the work done, fufficient; and that in all acts of devotion whatfoever. And befides their divine fervice is made by them an idle and vain piece of pageantry, by the abundance of foppish ceremonies it is burthened with. Nay, Secondly, it is made as wicked as ineffectual: it being accompanied

Secondly, it is made as *wicked as inefficitual*: it being accompanied with fo great immoralities as *grofs idolatries*, together with other very impious practices: whereof

First, Their worshipping of images is a notorious inflance: they making pictures of Chritt and his crofs, and even of the holy Trinity, and giving (as they themfelves profess to do) larria or divine honour to them. And as for what they have, by firetching their wits upon the tenters, invented to defend themfelves from the guilt of *idolatry* in those actions, it will do the Heathens as much fervice as themfelves, and no lefs fuccefsfully clear and acquit them from that foul imputation. Celfus in defence of their idol, faith, That they are not gods, but Oiw arabharla, gifts conferrated to them. And the Heathens in Lastantius are brought in faying, Non tpfa timenus finulachra, &c. We fear, or worship not the images

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images themfelves, but those whose representatives they are, and to whose names they are conferrated. And feveral other citations might be produced to thew, that the divine honour that was by the Heathens beflowed on their images, was relative only (as the Papils fay theirs is, and think they get a main matter by fo faying) and not abfolute. But as for their worfhip of the image of the cross, it is groffer idolarry than I believe can be fhewn the wifer fort of Pagans were ever guilty of. For the cross it felf is the ultimate term of their divine adoration, and the image is worfhipp'd relatively, as it represents the cross. In fhort, their image-worfhip is as expelly forbidden by the fecond commandment as words can do it, and one may conclude that they themfelves are not a little confcious of it, in that that commandment is left out of their offices of frequent ufe.

Secondly, another plain inftance of their idolatry is their praying to faints departed. And whereas they pretend that they do not pay them any divine honour, and that they only pray to the faints to pray for them ; this pretence is but a pitifully thin cob-web to hide the idolatry of that practice. For befides that their invocations of them, and of the fame faints too in innumerable places at vaft distances each from other, do imply an opinion of fuch an exceellency in them, (viz. fuch a knowledge as can hardly be at all fhort of Omniscience) as we can no where find God Almighty hath vouchfafed to any creature ; they likewife make their prayers to them with professions of confidence in them, and with all the rites of invocation, in facred offices, and in places fet a part for divine worship; and moreover they fet particular faints over whole cities and countries (one fingle one over this, and another over that) and put up petitions to them for their help and fuccour. And the Roman Catechifm made by the decree of the council of Trent, and published by the Pope's command, doth give them encouragement thus to do (as the late Bifhop of Down sheweth in the former part of his Diffiuative from Popery) in these words; the faints are therefore to be invocated, becaufe they continually make prayers for the health of mankind, and God gives us many benefits by their merit and favour : and it is lawful to have recourfe to the favour or grace of the faints, and to use their help; for they undertake the patronage of us. And he adds that the council of Trent doth not only fay, It is good to fly to their prayers, but also to their aid, and to their help. And he furthermore minds them of this diffich in the church of S. Laurence in Rome (d).

Continet hoc templum fanctorum corpora pura A quibus auxilium fuppleri, poscere cura.

Within this church faints holy bodies lie, Pray them, that they with help would thee fupply.

So that over and above the great *impiety* of their *praying to faints*, difcovered in making them in fome kind equal with Chrift, and in derogating from the fufficiency of his merits, fatisfaction and interceffion; God being prayed to with reliance on *theirs* as well as on *his*, and through *them* as well as *him*, (as may be farther and largely fhewn in their pray-

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ers, and chiefly in those to the bleffed Virgin,) I fay, besides this gross implety of that practice, it can never be juffified from the charge of *idolatry*. And by whatfoever arguments they endeavour therein to prove themfelves no idolaters, it will be no difficult matter by the fame to vindicate the Heathens from that crime in worthipping their *demons*, *beroes* and *deifed* emperors. And for *Hierocles* his part, I cannot find that he alloweth of praying to any one but him whom he calls the *Supreme God*. for, fpeaking of the honour that is due to that order of fpirits which is immediately fubordinate to him, and above the *damons* and *heroes*, all he faith concerning it (e), is, that it confiftent in underftanding the excellency of their natures, and in endeavouring after a likeness to them; whereas he hath afterward a very excellent difcourfs of the neceffary obligation men are under of praying to God.

But I have not yet inftanced in the worst part of the Popi/h prayers to departed faints, the blafphemies contained in those to the Virgin Mary are fuch, as I would not defile my pen with the recital of any of them, did I not know it to be too needful. She is ftiled in their publick prayers, the faviour of defpairing fouls ; the bestower of spiritual grace, and difpenfer of the most divine gifts; one higher than the heavens, and deeper than the earth; and many fuch compellations as are proper only to fome one perfon of the glorious Trinity, are given in them to her. In her an-them fhe is fupplicated for pardon of fin, for grace and for glory. And the forementioned learned Bilhop observeth, that in the mass-book penned A. D. 1538, and used in the Polonian churches, they call the bleffed Virgin viam ad vitam, &c. the way to life, the governess of all the world, the reconciler of finners with God, the fountain of remiffion of fins, light of light: and at last the is there faluted with an ave univerfæ Trinitatis mater, hail thou mother of the holy Trinity. And he adds that the council of Conftance in the hymn they call a Sequence, did invocate the Virgin in the fame manner as councils did use to invocate the Holy Ghost : that they call her the mother of grace, the remedy of the miserable, the fountain of mercy, and the light of the church. And laftly, his lordship alledgeth a platter of our Lady, that hath been feveral times printed at Venice, at Paris and Leipfick, the title of which is, The Pfalter of the Bleffed Virgin compiled by the feraphical Doctor S. Bonaventure, &c. Which confifteth of the Pfalms of David, one hundred and fifty in number : in which the name of Lord is left out, and that of Lady put in, and altered where it was neceffary they should to make fence. Therein, whatfoever David faid, whether prayers or praises of God and Chrift, they fay of the Bleffed Virgin; and whether (faith he) all that can be faid without intolerable blasphemy, we suppose needs not much disputation. Who would not readily conclude it altogether impoffible for any men to invent, or approve, nay, or not to have indignation against, fuch daring and most execrable impieties, that are not utterly bereft of their fenfes, or are but one removed from perfect Atheists? There are diverse other most prodigious fayings concerning the Virgin Mary transcribed out of the approved books of great fons of the Roman Church, in the now cited Diffualive from Popery, to which I refer the reader. And to them I will add fome, which may doubtlefs vie with the worft that we can well imagine were ever uttered, of one 70hannes

bannes Argentus, a prime Catholick youth, which he hath exposed to the view of the world in a right worthy piece, treating of the feven excellencies of the moft Bleffed Virgin. Saith he, Chriftus fervit atque affiduà ministrat Matri sua, Christ ferveth and continually administreth to his Mother: and next thus vents himfelf in a great fit of devotion to her. O fi liceret, quam libenter me illi focium adjungerem, &c. If it might be lawful, Ob, how gladly would I joyn my felf with him as his companion ! How willingly would I learn of him the way of perfectly ferving thy felf, and God ! (the reader will not anon judge his placing the Virgin before God himself, as proceeding from inadvertency,) How willingly would I ease my most fweet Jefus of this his labour ! O Lord Jefu my most lovely Saviour, permit me to perform fome fervice to thy Mother ; but if thou wilt not grant me this, yet at least give me leave, that whilf thou servest thy Mother, I may serve thee. And he tells us afterward, that, God is in other creatures after a threefold manner, by his effence, by his prefence, and by his power; but in the most Blesfed Virgin after a fourth manner, viz. by identity, or being one and the felf fame with her. Who could think that the worft fhould be yet behind ? Let the reader judge whether it be or no. He farther faith, That her feventh degree of excellency confifts in this, quod fit Domina Dei, that the is the Mistress of God. And then a line or two after, as if he had thought he had not yet fufficiently performed the part of a most impudent blasphemer, he adds that fupra ipfum thronum Dei folium fuum collocavit, she hath erected her feat above the very throne of God. This was a fellow that had improved to purpofe the prayers he had learn'd of his holy mother. Surely fhe could not find in her heart to deny fo paffionately devout a worfhipper of the Holy Virgin, a very confiderable fhare in the merits of her fupererogations : or rather may we not think that fhe would judge him fo great a faint, as to ftand in no need of them; and to have of his own to fpare, wherewith to add to the riches of her treasury, for the relief of those who being conscious to themselves of being too dry and cold devotionifts, can be perfwaded to go to the charge of them ?

Have we not now great caufe to wonder, that the *Papifs* fhould take it to very heinoufly at our hands, that we faften upon them the imputation of *idolatry* ! This very wretch would have been fenfible of an unfufferable abufe, fhould one have call'd him *idolater*, as blafphemous a one as he was, and notwithftanding his having even *more than deifted* a mere creature, and advanced her throne *above* her Creator's. Lord ! to what heights of impiety will fuperfition lead men ! and how thick is that darknefs fhe blindeth the eyes of her captives with, that it will not fuffer them to differ that guilt which is no whit lefs evident than the fun at noon. But,

Thirdly, the groffeft inftance of the Church of Rome's idolatry we have yet omitted; and that is their worfhipping the confectated bread, not as God's reprefentative, but (which is far worfe) as God himfelf, in the fatrament of the altar (as they call it) and on other occafions. This is no where to be parallel'd for the fortifhnefs of it, no not among the moft barbarous and brutifh nations; it being founded upon the moft abfurd, contradictious, portentous and monftrous conceit, that ever entered the head of any mortal; as they have had it, to the confusion of their faces, proved to them by a multitude of learned perfons of the reformed reli-

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gion: who have alfo fo fully, and with fuch mighty and irrefiftible ftrength made good the forementioned charge of *idolatry*, and of other impious practices and principles againft them, that it is unimaginable how it hould be pofiible, that any who are not ftark-blind, or refolved that they will not fee, fhould not acknowledge them. And as for the elaborate tricks whereby they endcavour to juffife themfelves from thofe accufations, they may doubtlefs, whenfoever they fhall have a mind to it, devife others no lefs plaufible with as little pains, to make forcing of virgins no rape, lying with other folks wives no adultery, cutting of purfes no theft, robbing of churches no facrilege; and, in one word, they may with as little exercife of their brains invent ways to do whatfoever is moft flatly forbidden in the Ten Commandments, without being guilty of tranfgreffing any one of them.

I might proceed to inftance in very many other doctrines of the Romifb Church, which by what we have faid of the Christian religion we may be perfectly affured are anti-christian; but I will only add two or three more. As, their afferting the infufficiency of the holy Scriptures for men's falvation, and denying them to be the fole rule of faith, and joining with them their own paltry traditions as equally neceffary to be believed; and this against the express words of S. Paul to Timothy, 2 Epist. 3 Chap. where he tells him, that the holy Scriptures are able to make him wife unto falvation, through faith which is in Christ Jefus. And that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteonfuels; that the man of God may be perfect, throwly furnifhed unto all good works. And their teaching that the Gospel is obscure and difficult to be underftood even in things necessary to be believed and practifed. Which, as it makes it greatly inefficacious for the purpose which we have proved it is defigned for, fo doth it open a gap for vile interpretations of any part of it, and exposeth it to the power of heriticks, and especially of the Romish ones, to make it a mere nose of wax: which none can doubt, that confider alfo therewith their doctrine of implicit faith; and that other upon which it is grounded, viz. That of the infallibility of their Church : which as the, Jesuits define, is feated in the Pope's chair. But whether it be afferted that the Popes have an unerring faculty, or they and their general councils together, this doctrine being received (without the least ground) as unquestionably true, doth greatly hazard, nay, and even necessitate the betraying of men to the very worst both of opinions and practices, whenfoever this pretended infallible guide fhall be pleas'd to propose them. And whosoever believes it, must (to use the words of Mr. Chillingworth) be prepared in mind to effeem virtue vice, and vice virtue, Chriftianity anti-chriftianism, and anti-chriftianism, Christianity, if the Pope shall fo determine. And this doctrine, without doubt, is that which caufeth those of the Papi/ts to flick fo fast in filthy mire, and to perfift fo obftinately in their foul errors, who are not detained therein by the love of gain (with which their Popes, and other ecclefiafticks by the means of diverfe of them are mightily enriched) or by the dear effection they bear to other lufts, which they are exactly fitted Their doctrines being very many of them fo rifor the fatisfaction of. diculoufly abfurd, plainly falfe, and of fuch dangerous confequence; I fay, nothing elfe, certainly, could hold the fincerer fort of Papifis in the belief of

of them, but this confideration, that any one of them being let go, their great *Dagon* of the Churches *infallibility* must necessarily to the ground with it.

I might also inftance in their doctrine of the difpenfableness of the most folemn oaths, which is no lefs deftructive to humane fociety, than it is to piety. And in that of the Pope's power to abfolve fubjects from their allegiance to their lawful fovereigns: and to them add a great number of maxims of the moft famous order among them, the fefuits, and refolutions of cafes of confcience, which are as wicked and deftructive of a holy life, as the devil himself can well devise. But to be employed with Hercules in emptying the augean ftable, would be as acceptable a work as flirring fo far in this nafty fink. Whofoever thall peruse the mystery of jefuitifm, may find more than enough to turn his stomach, though it thould be none of the most fqueamifh and queazy, and to make him ftand aftonifhed, and blefs himself, that ever fuch loathforme and abominable ftuff should come from perfons that derive their name from the holy fefus.

But to haften to the conclusion of this chapter, the most pure and holy religion of our Saviour hath the Church of Rome defiled with as impure and unholy opinions and practices; and hath taken the most effectual courfe not only to render it a feeble and infignificant thing for accomplifhing the defign for which it was intended by the bleffed founder of it, but also to make it unhappily fuccessful in ferving the directly contrary. The great mystery of godliness hath the transformed into a grand mystery of iniquity: and by that means mightily confirmed its profeffed enemies, the Fews and Mahometans, in their enmity against it. And for my own part, I should not stick to fay, as did Averroes (when he observed that the popish Christians adored that they ate) Sit anima mea cum philosophis, Let my foul take its fate with the philosophers, did I think Christianity to be such a religion as fhe makes it. As much as I admire it now, I should then prefer that of Socrates, Plato and Cicero far before it. Though I abhor fo far to imitate the Papists in their devilish uncharitableness, as to pronounce them all in a flate of damnation, yet I dare affert with the greateft confidence, that all that continue in communion with that degenerate. and apostate Church, run infinite hazards : and moreover that it is impoffible, any fincere perfons fhould give an explicit and understanding affent to many of her doctrines; but wholoever can find in his heart to practile upon them, can be nothing better than a fhamefully debauched, and a most immoral wretch. Nor is it conceivable what should induce any to exchange the reformed for the popifs religion (as too many have of late done) that have but a competent understanding of both, belides the defire of ferving fome corrupt intereft. And we plainly fee, that the generality of those that turn apostates from the Church of England to that of Rome, are fuch people as were a fcandal to her, while they continued in her : and that Atheifm and Popery are the common fanctuaries to which the most vicious and profane of this age do betake themselves.

### C H A P. XVIII.

#### The third Inference.

That these two Sorts of Persons are extremely fottish. I. Such as expect to have their Share in the Salvation of the Gospel without true Holiness. 2. Such, much more, as encourage themselves by the Grace of the Gospel in Unboliness.

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First, Those that expect to have their share in the falvation of the Gospel without true holinefs. I fear that fuch people are not confined within the limits of the Romifb church ; but that a great number of Protestants also may be defervedly accused upon this account. But by fo much more fottish are these than the Papists, by how much better things their religion teacheth them than the Papifts doth. Though I must likewife with fadnefs acknowledge, that too many opinions have been unhappily foifted into it, that give too great encouragement to a carelefs life. But that those which promise to themselves an interest in the falvation purchased by Jefus Chrift, either from their baptifin, and partaking of certain Chriftian privileges, or from their being of fuch or fuch a fect and mode of profeffors, or from their fuppofed orthodoxy and good belief, and zeal against erroneous doctrines, or from their imagining Christ's righteoufnefs theirs, and applying the promifes to themfelves, or from their abftaining from the groffer and more fcandalous fins, or from their doing fome externally good actions, and have in the mean time no care to be intirely obedient, to mortifie every luft, and to be indued with an inward principle of holinefs; that those, I fay, which thus do, are guilty of most egregious and stupid folly, is manifest from what hath been difcourfed of the Defign of Christianity.

For we have fhewn, not only that reformation of life from the practice, and purification of heart from the liking of fin, are as plainly as can be afferted in the Gofpel to be abfolutely neceffary to give men a right to the promifes thereof; but alfo that its great falvation doth even confif in it: that, falvation from fin is the grand defign of the Chriftian religion, and that from wrath is the refult of it. I will inftance in two more Scriptures for the farther proof of this. The Apoftle S. Paul faith, Ephof. ii. 5, &c. Even when we were dead in trefpaffes and fins, bath he quickned us together with Chrift, (by grace ye are faved) and bath raifed us in the ages to come he might flew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindnefs towards us through Chrift Jefus. For by grace ye are faved, through faith, (or by the means of believing the Gofpel) and that not of your felves, it is

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the gift of God. Where, by the falvation which the Ephefian Christians are faid to have obtained, and in the bestowing of which the exceeding riches of God's grace appeared, is plainly to be underftood their deliver rance from their former heathenish impieties and finful practices; and fo is it interpreted by our best expositors. Again it is faid, Titus iii. 5. Not by works of righteoufness which we have done, but according to his mercy he faved us (how faved us ? it follows) by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoft. Our Saviour giveth eafe to our fin-fick fouls by recovering them to health : and his falvation first confisteth in curing our wounds, and fecondarily in freeing us from the finart occasioned by them. S. Peter tells the Christians, that by his stripes they were healed, I Pet. ii. 24. It being a quotation out of Ifaiah liii. 5. Clemens Alexandrinus, Stromat. lib. ii. pag. 391. hath this faying to the fame purpofe, ή συγνώμη δε έ κατά άφεσιν άλλα κατά ϊασιν συνίς alai, pardon doth not fo much confift in remisfion, as in healing; that is, the pardon of the Gofpel doth chiefly difcover it felf in curing men of their fins; in delivering finners from the power of them, rather than from the mere punishment due to them. By which words that learned father declared that he looked upon the fubduing of fin as a more eminent act of grace, than the bare forgiveness of it. Now, would that man be accounted better than an ideot, who being forely hurt, fhould expect from his furgeon perfect eafe, while he will not permit him to lay a plaister on his wound? Or that being deadly fick, would look that his phyfician fhould deliver him from his pain, when he will not take any of his medicines for the removal of the caufe of it ? But of far greater folly are all those guilty, who will not be perfwaded to part with their fins, and yet hope for the falvation of their fouls. He that looketh for this, expects that which implieth a most palpable contradiction, and is in its own nature impossible. It hath been fully enough fhewn that mere deliverance from milery, cannot poffibly be without deliverance from fin; and, much lefs eternal bleffednefs in the enjoyment of God.

Secondly, but how mad then are those, which turn the grace of God declared in the Gofpel into wantonnefs, and take encouragement from the abundant kindness and good will therein expressed to finners, with the more fecurity and boldness to commit fin ? We read of such in the epiftle of St. Jude; and God knows there are too many fuch in these our days. But feeing it is fo grofly foolifh for men to hope to be faved, notwithftanding their living in the allowance of known fins, what defperate madnefs is it to be imboldened in ungodly practices, by the offers Chrift makes of pardon and falvation to them. These declare that they look upon the Defign of Christianity not only as different, from what it hath been demonstrated to be, but also as directly opposite, and perfectly contrary thereunto. These must not only think their Saviour to be no friend to holinefs, but to be even its greatest enemy, and a minister of fin and wickednefs. They make him the chief fervant of the devil, inftead of coming to destroy his works (a). They make the Christian religion more vile by far than that of Mahomet ; and fuch a religion, as those who are not the very work of men, must needs abominate. Shall we fin (faith the Apostle) that grace may abound? God forbid! (b). Those that think Bb3 they

(a) 1 John iii. 8.

(b) Rom. vi.

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they can magnifie the free-grace of God in Chrift by thus doing, or that they may take encouragement from it to continue in fin, do make this grace unworthy of mens acceptance, and therefore no grace at all. Nay, they make Almighty God the greatest enemy to mankind in fending his Son Fefus and his Gospel among us. For fin being so evidently the greatest of evils, it can be no other than the most fignificant expression of hatred to us, to encourage us to the commission thereof. It is fo far from being part of our Christian liberty, to be delivered from our obligation to all or any of the laws of righteoufnefs, that fuch a deliverance would be the most unsupportable yoke of bondage. If any man can be fo filly as to object that of the Apostle, Rom. vi. 14. Ye are not under the law, but under grace : let him give himfelf an answer by reading the whole verfe, and then make ill use of that passage if he can tell how. The words foregoing it are these : fin shall not have dominion over you, and these words are a proof hereof, for ye are not under the law, but under grace : that is, as if he fhould fay, It is the most inexcufable thing for you to, continue under the dominion and power of fin, because ye are not under the weak and inefficacious pædagogy of the law of Moles, but a difpenfation of grace, wherein there is not only forgivenels allured to truly repenting finners, but frength afforded to enable to the fubduing and mortification of all fin. Our Saviour hath told us expresly, that he came not to destroy the law, (that is, the moral law) but to fulfill it (c): and that heaven and earth shall sooner pass away, than that one jot or tittle thereof should fail. And it is abfolutely impoffible, that our obligation thereunto fhould ceafe, while we continue men. All the duties therein contained being most neceffary and natural refults from the relation we stand in to God and to one another, and from the original make and constitution of humane fouls.

But it is too great an honour to the doctrine of *libertini/m* to fpend two words in confuting it; it being fo prodigious, fo monstrous a doctrine, that it would be almost uncharitable to judge that a professor of Christianity not to have fuffered the lofs of his wits who can have the leaft fayour for it; fuppoling him to have but the leaft fmattering in the Chriftian religion. It is an amazing thing, that fuch a thought fhould be entertained by fuch a one, while he is not utterly forfaken of his intellectuals : our Saviour's Gofpel being wholly levelled at the mark of rendering us obedient to the laws of God. Let me speak to such as so shamefully abuse our incomparable religion, as to take liberty from thence to be in any kind immoral, in the words of St. Paul, Rom. ii. 4, 5. Defpifeft thou the riches of God's goodness and forbearance and long suffering, not knowing that his goodness leadeth thee (or defigneth the leading of thee) to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up to thy felf wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Sc.

(c) Matt. v.

CHAP. XIX.

#### C H A P. XIX.

#### The fourth Inference.

That a right Understanding of the Defign of Christianity will give us the true Notion, 1. Of Justifying Faith, 2. Of the Imputation of Christ's Righteou[nefs.

CXX OURTHLY, from what hath been faid of the Defign of F & Chriftianity may be clearly inferred the true Notion of Justifying Kan Faith, and of the Imputation of Chrift's Righteoufnels.

First, Of justifying faith. We thence learn, That it is fuch a belief of the truth of the Gospel, as implies a sincere resolution of obedience unto all its precepts; or (which is the fame thing) implys true holinefs in the nature of it : and moreover that it justifieth as it doth fo. For furely the faith which intitles a finner to fo high a privilege as that of justification, must needs be fuch as complieth with all the purpofes of Chrift's coming into the world, and efpecially with his grand purpose; and it is no lefs neceffary that it fhould justifie as it doth this; that is, as it receives Christ for a Lord, as well as for a Saviour. But I need not now diffinguish between these two, there being but a notional difference between them in this matter. For Chrift (as was fhewn) as he is a Saviour, defigneth our holinefs : his falvation being chiefly that from the worft of evils, fin ; and principally confifting in deliverance from the power of it.

I have fcarcely more admired at any thing, than that any worthy men especially should be fo difficultly perfwaded to embrace this account of justifying faith; and should perplex and make intricate fo very plain a doctrine. If this be not to feek knots in a bulrufh, I know not what is. I wish there were nothing throughout the Bible less eafily intelligible than this is, and I fhould then pronounce it one of the plaineft of all books that ever pen wrote. For feeing the great end of the Gofpel is to make men good, what pretence can there be for thinking, that faith is the condition (or I'll use the word [instrument] as improper and obscure as it is) of justification, as it complicth with only the precept of relying on Christ's merits for the obtaining thereof, especially when nothing is more manifeft than that obedience to the other precepts must go before obedience to this; and that a man may not rely on the merits of Chrift for the forgivenels of his fins, (and he is most prefumptuous in fo doing, and puts an affront upon his Saviour too) till he be fincerely willing to be reformed. And befides fuch a reliance is ordinarily to be found among unregenerate, and even the very worft of men. And therefore how can it be otherwife, than that that act of faith must needs have a hand in justifying; and the special hand too, which distinguisheth it from that which is to be found in fuch perfons. And I add, what good ground can men have for this fancy, when our Saviour hath merited the pardon of our fins for this end, that it might be an effectual motive to forfake them? And can any thing in the world be more indifputably clear, than, if the only direct fcope that Chriftianity drives at be the fubduing of fin in us, and our

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our freedom from its guilt or obligation to punifhment be the confequent of this (as I think hath been demonfrated with abundant evidence; that faith invefts us with a title to this deliverance no otherwife than as dying to fin, and fo confequently living to God, are the products and fruit of it ? And feeing that, one end, and the ultimate end too, of Chrift's coming was to turn us from our iniquities, if the nature of faith confidered as jufifying muft needs be made wholly to confift in recumbence and reliance on bim, he fhall be my Apollo that can give me a fufficient reafon why it ought only to confift in reliance on the merits of Chrift for the pardou of fin, and not alfo on his power for the mortification of it. In fhort, is it poffible that faith in Chrift's blood for the forgivenefs of fin fhould be the only act which juftifieth a finner, when fo many plain texts affure us, that he died alfo to make us boly, and that his death was defigned to deliver us from dying in order to a farther end, namely to this, that we fhould live unto him who died for us.

I will never more truft any faculty at reafoning, I can pretend to, no not in the plaineft and most undoubted cafes, if I am mittaken here. And will take the boldnefs to tell thofe who are difpleafed with this account of *jufifying faith*, that (in my opinion) it is impofible they fhould once think of any other, if they ever ferioufly weighed and well confidered the *Defign of Chriftianity*. I the more infift upon this, becaufe thofe perfons explication of this point hath been greatly liable to be ufed to ill purpofes by infincere perfons; and hath given infinite advantage to the dangerous error of *Antinomianifm*. And, for my part, I muft confefs that I would not willingly be he that fhould undertake to encounter one of the champions of that *foul* caufe, with the admiffion of this principle, *That faith jufifith, only as it apprehendeth the merits and righteoufnefs of Jefus Chrift*: I muft certainly have great *luck*, or my adverfary but little cunning, if I were not forced to repent me of fuch an engagement.

Secondly, and as for the other doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteou[nefs; we learn from the Defign of Christianity that this is the true explication of it : namely, That it confifts in dealing with fincerely righteous perfons, as if they were perfectly fo, for the fake of Chrift's righteoufnefs. The grand intent of the Gofpel being to make us partakers of an inward and real righteousness, and it being but a fecondary one that we should be accepted and rewarded as if we were completely righteous; it is not poffible that any other notion of this doctrine fhould have any truth in it. For, as from thence it appeareth, that there can be no fuch imputation of Christ's righteousness offered in the Gospel, as ferveth to make men remifs in their profecution of an inward righteoufnefs; fo it is manifest likewife, That that doctrine is defigned for a motive to quicken and excite men in their endeavours after fuch a righteoufnefs as this is. So far is it from tending to caufe in us an undervaluing and flight efteem of it, that, as fure as that the ultimate defign of Christianity is to endow us with it, it must be intended for no other purpose but to farther and promote that business: and it is effectual thereunto in that manner, that we shewed the exceeding great and precious promiles of the Gospel are.

### CHAP. XX.

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But becaule both these points are discussed in the free discourse, I have faid to little of the former, and will proceed no farther on this; but refer the reader thither, and to other much more elaborate discourses for his fuller fatisfaction. And indeed it was enough for me in this place to shew, That the notion laid down in that book of each of these doctrines, doth evidently follow from the proposition which is the subject of this Treatile.

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#### C H A P. XX.

#### The fifth Inference.

That we learn from the Defign of Christianity the great Measure and Standard, whereby we are to judge of Doctrines. How we are to judge of the Truth of Doctrines.

F of Chriftianity, what is the great measure and standard whereby we are to judge of doctrines; both whether they are true or false, and in what degree necessfary to be received or rejected.

First, we understand how to judge of the truth of doctrines. We may be certain that, feeing the design of Christianity is to make men holy, whatfoever opinions do either directly, or in their evident confequences, obftruct the promoting thereof, are abfolutely false ; and with as great preremptorinefs and confidence as they may be by fome that call themfelves Christians obtruded upon us, they are not of Christ, nor any part of his religion. And those which do appear to us to discourage from ferious endeavours after piety and true goodnefs, we ought for that reafon, while we have fuch an opinion of them, most vehemently to fufpet them. For it being the business of our Saviour's coming into the world, or of his bleffed Gofpel, effectually to perfwade us to use our utmost diligence in fubduing our lufts, and qualifying our fouls by purity and holinefs for the enjoyment of God, and to make our endeavours fuccefsful for that purpole; we may be affured that he hath not either by himfelf immediately, or by his apoftles, delivered any thing that oppofeth this defign. If (faith St. Paul) I build again the things that I destroyed, I make my felf a transgreffor (d): and no man that hath in him the leaft of a Chriftian, will once fufpect, that the perfectly wife as well as hely Jefus fhould fo manage the bufinefs he hath undertaken, as what he builds with one hand, to pull down with the other; and frustrate that defign by fome doctrines which he promoteth by others.

Those doctrines, on the other hand, which in their own nature do evidently tend to the ferving of this defign of Christianity, we may conclude are most true and genuine: and for those which, upon our ferious sonfidering of them, we are perfwaded do fo, we ought upon that ac-

#### (d) Gal. ii.

count to have a kindnefs, and to believe them of an higher than *bumane* original. And therefore those which give the most honourable accounts of God, his nature, and dealing with the fons of men; that most magnifie his grace, and best vindicate his holinefs, justice, and goodnefs, do commend themselves to our belief with infinite advantage: because the *most worthy* conceptions of the deity are exceedingly *belpful*, and also *ne-ceffary* to the loving of God, and ferving him as becometh us, and have a mighty influence into the ordering and regulation of our whole man; as might be largely fhewn.

Those doctrines, again, that most discountenance all fins both against the first and fecond table, and best enable to answer all pleas and pretences for fecurity and careless, that are most agreeable to the innate distates of our minds, and least gratifie and please our carnal part; we may from the confideration of the *defign of Christianity* be greatly perfwaded of the *truth* of them.

And, on the contrary, those which are apt to inftil into men's minds any unlovely notions of the divine nature, that disparage his holinefs, or leffen his kindnefs and good will to his creation, and the obligations of the generality of the world to him and his Son Fefus, and fo make his grace a parrow and fcanty thing, or that naturally caft any difhonourable reflections on any perfon of the most Holy Trinity, must needs be falle. As also those that make religion to be a mere pallive thing, wholly God's work, and not at all ours; or that cramp men, and perfwade them that they are utterly void of the least ability to co-operate with the grace of God, or to do any thing towards their own falvation; or any way whatfoever difcourage them from the diligent profecution of holinefs; or deprive us of any help afforded us towards our gaining, and growth in grace, either by putting a flur upon the written word, in advancing above it the light within men, and in enthusiastical pretences to immediate revelations, &c. or elfe by teaching men to flight any one ordinance of the Gofpel, &c. or fuch doctrines as tend to introduce confusion into the Church of Chrift, and to deprive it of all government and order, or in fhort, that give countenance to any immorality whatfoever: I fay, as fure as the Christian religion is true, and that what we have proved to be the defign thereof, is fo, fuch doctrines as thefe must needs be falle.

What our Saviour faith of falfe prophets, is as true of most doctrines, by their fruits you *fhall know them*: we may underftand whether they have any relation to Christianity or no, by the defign they drive at, and their evident confequences.

And I may add, that we may make a fhrewd guefs what those particular ways and modes of religion are (which the various fects we are cantonized into have efpoused to themfelves, and are fo fond of) by the proper and most diftinguishing effects of them. If we perceive that they make the great flicklers for them, to differ from others chiefly in unconcernednefs about the most important and fubftantial duties of morality, and in laying the greatest weight upon certain little trifles, and placing their religion in mere externals; or that the things whereby they are most peculiarly difcriminated from other folk are fpiritual pride, and fond conceitednefs of themfelves, and a fierce or fcornful behaviour towards those that approve not of their way; uncharitablenefs, morofity, and peculinnefs,

#### CHAP. XXI.

nefs; a feditious, ungovernable and untameable fpirit, &c. I fay, if we obferve fuch as thefe to be the most diffinguishing effects of their feveral modes and forms, we have fufficient reason from thence alone greatly to prefume, that they have not the ftamp of *jus Chriflianum* upon them, that they are not of Chrift, but of their own invention. The wifdom that is from above is quite another thing, and begets perfectly other kind of fruits; as fhall be fhewn hereafter.

But to return, the defign of the Gofpel is (as was faid) the great flandard by which we are to judge of the truth of opinions: those that feem to us to oppose this defign, we are bound to fulpest, because they do to; but those which apparently do this, we must with heartieft indignation reject. And though we should meet with fome places of Scripture that at first fight may feem to favour them, we may not be flumbled upon that account, but be confident that whatsoever is their true meaning, as fure as they have God for their author, they cannot possibly patronize any fuch doctrines.

And, laftly, in examining which of two opinions is true, that oppofe each other, and do feem to be much alike befriended by the holy Scriptures, it is doubtlefs a very fafe courfe to confider as impartially as we can, which doth tend most to ferve the great end of Christianity, and to prefer that which we are perfwaded doth fo.



#### C H A P. XXI.

How we are to judge of the Necessity of Dostrines, either to be embraced or rejected. A brief Difcourfe of the Nature of Points Fundamental. How we may know whether we embrace all fuch, and whether we hold not any deftructive and damnable Errors.

S whereby we are to judge, as of the truth, to also of the neceffity of doctrines, either to be embraced or rejected.

First, we may thereby understand, in what degree we ought to effecem those *necessary to be by all received*, which we our felves are convinc'd of the *truth* of; or, which of fuch are *fundamental points* of the Christian faith, and which not.

Firft, it is plain, That in the general thofe and thofe only are primarily and in their own nature fundamentals, which are abfolutely neceffary to accomplifh in us that defign. Such, as without the knowledge and belief of which, it is impofible to acquire that inward righteoufnefs and true holinefs which the Chriftian religion aimeth at the introduction of. It is in it felf abfolutely neceffary, not to be ignorant of, or difbelieve, any of thofe points, upon which the effecting of the great bufinefs of the Gofpel in us doth neceffarily depend. The particulars of thefe I thall not itand to enumerate, becaufe (as will appear from what will be faid anon) it is not needful to have a juft table of them : and, befides, any one

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one that understands wherein the nature of *true bolines* lieth, may be able fufficiently to inform himself what they are.

Secondly, it is as evident, That those points of faith are fecondarily fundamental, the difbelief of which cannot confift with true holinefs, in those to whom the Gospel is fufficiently made known; although they are not in their own nature fuch, as that holinefs is not in fome degree or other attainable without the belief of them. And in the number of thefe are all fuch points as are exprest with indisputable clearness. Now the belief of these, though it is not in it felf any more than in higher or lower degrees profitable, yet it is abfolutely neceffary from an external caufe, viz. in regard of their being delivered with fuch perfpicuity, as that nothing can caufe a man to refuse to admit them, but that which argueth him to be ftark nought, and to have fome unworthy and bafe end in fo doing. But we must take notice here, that nothing worded at all doubtfully, can be of equal neceffity to be received by all Chiftians: because that in regard of the diversity of men's capacities, educations, and other means and advantages, fome things may be plainly perceived by one to be delivered in the Scriptures, which cannot be fo by another.

And in the fecond place, what hath been faid of *fundamental truths*, is applicable by the rule of contraries to the opposite errors, as I need not thew.

Now then, would we know whether we embrace all the fundamentals of Chriftianity, and are guilty of no damnable and deftructive errors; among the great diverfity and contrariety of opinions that this kingdom abounds with (I think I may fay) above all other parts of Chriftendom; our only way is to examine our felves impartially after this manner.

Am I fincerely willing to obey my Creator and Redeemer in all things commanded by them? Do I entertain and harbour no luft in my breaft? Do I beartily endeavour to have a right understanding of the boly Scriptures, and chiefly of the Gofpel, and to know what doctrines are delivered there in order to the bettering of my foul by them, and the direction of my life and actions according to them?

If we can answer these questions in the affirmative; whatsoever mislakes we may labour under, they can be none of them fuch as will undo us ; because we may conclude from thence, that the Design of Christianity is in fome good measure accomplish'd in us. And whatsoever tenets may be accompanied and confist with the true love of God, and a folicitous care to keep a conference void of offence towards him and men, we may be certain from the pass discourse of the design of the Gospel, that they belong not to the catalogue of fundamental errors. This obedient temper is the most infallible mark (of any I know) of an orthodox man; he that is endowed with it, though he may err, cannot be an Heretick.

But there will be an occafion of fpeaking more anon to this argument.

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CHAP. XXII.

#### C H A P. XXII.

#### The fixth Inference.

#### That the Defign of Christianity teacheth us what Dostrines and Prastices we ought, as Christians, to be most zealous for or against.

JXXLIXTHLY, we confequently learn what doctrines and practices S 🖉 we ought, as Christians, to be most zealous for or against. Thofe, Six furely, that are most available to the begetting and encrease of true holinefs, it is our duty to concern our felves most for the defence of : and those which have the greatest tendency towards the endangering of it. to fet our felves with the greatest industry and vigour against. The reason is plain, because the former do most promote the design of the Gospel, and the latter do it most differvice. St. Jude exhorts in the third verse of his epiftle, to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the faints; that holy doctrine which was first delivered by our Saviour, and unanimoufly by his apoftles after him; which is perfectly contrary to the wicked and abominable doctrines taught by the prophane crew he speaks of in the next verse (and were more than probably the Gnosticks) which were crept in unawares, who were before ordained to this condemnation, (or whose impostures first, and then the vengeance which should be taken of them, were formerly written of or foretold both by Chrift and his apostles) ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lascivious/ness, and de-nying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jefus Christ. And we ought to contend against whatfoever is defigned to overthrow and make ineffectual that most bleffed doctrine, more or lefs, according as it more or lefs tends fo to do. Our zeal fhould be altogether employed for the promoting of perfonal and real holinefs, and mostly for the effential parts of it, and the neceffary means and helps to it. But doubtlefs it cannot be worth our while to lay out any confiderable matter of our heat, either for or against doubtful opinions, alterable modes, rites and circumstances of religion : they are not things on which much weight may be warrantably laid; for they are too weak to bear it, in regard of their being fo little ferviceable or differviceable to the Defign if Christianity. I fay, eager defending or oppofing of fuch kind of things, is (to use the fimilitude of an excellent perfon) like the apes blowing at a gloe-worm, which affords neither light nor warmth. Nay, it is no lefs injurious to the Defign of Christianity, than unferviceable and ufelefs, as we have been effectually taught by very woful experience. And nothing doth more harden Atheiffically-difposed perfons, than their observing the contention of Christians about matters of that nature; for thereby do they take a measure of our whole religion. And befides an eager concernedness about them is too ordinarily accompanied with a luke-warm, or rather frozen indifference, concerning the most important points of Christianity. It is too visibly apparent to be denied, That those which have such a fcalding hot zeal either for or against things of no certainty and no necessity, are many of them (as their predeceffors the Pharifees were) in the very other extreme as to not a few of the weightiest matters of religion.

C H A P.

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#### C H A P. XXIII.

#### The feventh Inference.

That the Defign of Christianity well confidered, will give us great Light into the just Bounds and Extent of Christian Liberty. Of complying with the Customs of our Country, and the Will of our Governours. The great Difference between the Mofaical Law and the Gospel, as to its preceptive Part.

**EVENTHLY**, we may be greatly fatisfied, by confidering **S** the Defign of Chriftianity, concerning the juft bounds and extent of *our Chriftian liberty*. For that being to make men boly, it may fafely be prefumed, that fuch things as have neither directly, nor confequentially, any tendency to the depraving of our fouls, are left free to us by our Saviour, either to do them or not to do them, as we fhall fee caufe. Whatfoever doth neither promote nor hinder this defign, we have reafon to believe is neither enjoyn'd upon us Chriftians, nor forbidden to us.

Whatever things are any way neceffary to the furtherance of it, muft needs be matter of ftrict duty; and what are fo profitable thereunto, that the omiffion of them doth make the effecting of this defign more difficult, cannot but be ordinarily fo alfo. Whatfoever is in its own nature, or by reafon of fome circumstance, infeparably adhering to it, a neceffary occasion of gratifying fome one or other corrupt affection, and that, by the doing of which we fhall certainly defile our own fouls, or the fouls of others, either by drawing them thereby to, or hardening and encouraging them in any fin (which is that our Saviour means by offending or fcandalizing little ones, and is fo feverely forbidden by him, and alfo by the Apoftle in the eighth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians) can be no other than abfolutely unlawful: and whatfoever is forefeen to be a probable occasion of any one of these mifchiefs, muft alfo be carefully avoided by us. But those things which are none of all these, cannot be otherwise than perfectly indifferent under the Gospel.

And therefore whatfoever of fuch are commended by the cuftom of the places we live in, or commanded by fuperiors, or made by any circumstance convenient to be done; our Christian liberty confists in this, that we have leave to do them. And, indeed, it is fo far from being a fin to comply with our country-men and neighbours in their plainly innocent usages and harmless customs, or with the will of our governors when they command us fuch things; that it would be fo, to refuse fo to do. For our refusing to comply with either of these can hardly proceed from any thing better than a proud affectation of fingularity, or at beft from superstitious scrupulosity; which, in calling it superstitious, I intimate to be evil, as much of confcience as there may be in it. For fuperstition implieth a frightful or over-timorous apprehension of the Deity, and confequently an unworthy conception thereof, as the Greek word Ausidauporia fignifieth. That which makes men fuperstitious, is fuch an opinion C,

## CHAP. XXIII.

opinion of God as reprefents him a very angry and captious Being, but yet fuch a one too as may be atoned and pacified by a great care and exactnefs in certain little matters, in performances and abstinences of an infignificant and very trivial nature.

Now the ancient author of the epiftle to *Diognetus* acquaints him, that the primitive Chriftians were no fuch fqueamifh or conceited people, as to live in a different way from those among whom they inhabited; and faith that they diffinguish'd themselves from their neighbours and other folk, #re \$\$\psi\_1\$ and \$\$\psi\_1\$ and \$\$\psi\_2\$ and

I defign not here to tedious a work, as that of examining particulars by the rule we have given, but only to fhew in the general that we may be fatisfied concerning the extent of our Christian liberty by well weighing the Defign of Christianity, and may understand what kind of things must needs be free to us under the Gospel-dispensation, and what not ; leaving it to the reader to make application, and confider the nature of particulars by comparing them with this rule. But I prefume I need not mind him, that I suppose all this while that whatsoever is plainly commanded and forbidden in the Gofpel, must be done and forborn by him, though he fhould not be fagacious enough to difcern how every thing there commanded is ferviceable, or forbidden is injurious, to the defign of holinefs : for furely none can doubt, but that they ought to underftand me, in what I have afferted, to have this meaning only, viz. That, as to those things which the Gospel speaketh nothing in particular and clearly, concerning the best course we can take in order to our knowing to what heads to refer them (whether to that of things commanded, or to that of forbidden, or to that of indifferent things) is to examine them by this general rule, viz. The Defign of Christianity.

But to conclude this, the great difference between the Mofaical law, and the Gofpel, as to its preceptive part, is this, That by the former a vaft multitude of perfectly indifferent things were imposed, and many fuch also prohibited: but by the latter, only those things are injoyned that are in their own nature of indifpenfable neceffity, or fuch as are means and helps towards them: and there is nothing thereby forbidden, but it is fo, becaufe it is evil; and is not therefore evil only becaufe forbidden. There is nothing either commanded or forbidden in our Saviour's religion, but, as it is in order to our good, fo is it in order to fuch a good too as confifts in the reformation and renovation of our lives and natures.

So that, I fay, our pass discourse concerning the Defign of Christianity may give us great light as to the knowledge of what kind of things, we that are under the Gospel-dispensation, mult do, and are matter of neceffary duty; mult not do, and are matter of fin; and may do or leave undone without fin.

# C H A P. XXIV.

#### The eighth Inference.

That it is the most unaccountable thing to do that which is effentially Evil, in defence of the Christian Religion, or of any Opinions prefumed to be Dostrines relating thereunto. The Pope and Church of Rome most highly Guilty in this Particular. And not a Few of those that profess Enmity against Popery too liable also to the fame Charge.

CXX IGHTHLY, it may be plainly inferred from what hath been E & faid of the Defign of Christianity, That it is the most strangely un-CXXI accountable thing for men in defence or favour of that way of religion, which they take to be most truly the Christian, or of any opinions that are prefumed by them to be doctrines thereunto belonging, to do that which is effentially and in its own nature evil. For these act quite contrary to the Design of the Christian religion, and fo confequently, do what lyeth in them to spoil it, and render it a vain and infignificant thing by the course they take for the advancement thereof. The Pope and Church of Rome are horribly guilty of this madness; they doing the most plainly vicious and immoral actions imaginable, to promote the interest (as they pretend) of that which they call the Catholick faith. For, their impoling of their own fences upon the word of God, and then perfecuting, burning and damning men for not fubscribing to theirs as to God's words, can be no better than an act of devilish pride and barbarous cruelty. It is fo of the former, in that it is a compelling men to acknowledge their wifdom to be fuch as may not be fuspected in the least measure, no not in the determination of points that are the most doubtful and disputable : nay, neither in fuch opinions and practices of theirs, as most plainly contradict abundance of texts of holy Scripture.

And moreover in endeavouring to force all men to act and think as they do in matters of religion, they with *Luciferian* arrogance usurp the empire of Almighty God, and sway that fcepter over mens confciences which is his peculiarly.

And I need not fay, that they are therein no whit lefs *cruel* than *proud*. For what greater cruelty can there be, than to inflict upon people the faddeft of calamities and the horrideft tortures (whereof the initances are innumerable) for fuch things as they have no caufe to think they are able to help; and which they have allo the greateft reafon to conclude they are not at all blame-worthy for ? I fay, what can be greater cruelty than this? except their defigning thereby to terrifie men to the owning of doctrines and doing actions perfectly againft the cleareft fence of their minds, and expressed their conficiences; which is an exercife of no lefs cruelty towards their *fouls*, than the other is towards their *bodies*.

And what villanies have the Pope and his party fluck at for the propagation of their religion? Such as exciting fubjects to take arms againft their lawful fovereigns; poyfoning and ftabbing of princes: the moft most barbarous malfacres that any history can give account of. In short, what frauds and perfidiousness, what treachery, what impostures, what perjuries, what cruelties and horrid out-rages, have they thought too wicked to be undertaken and perfished in, for the fake of HOLY CHURCH?

But I would I could fay, that of all that are called Chriftians, the Papists only are liable to this charge; but, alas, it is too manifest to be denied, or diffembled, that not a few of those that profess enmity to popery are fadly guilty, though not equally with the Papists, in this parti-But there is nothing more felf-evident than that to be of a percular. fecuting fpirit, to be wrathful and furious, to backbite and flander, to be false and perfidious, to be ungovernable, to be uncharitable, or in any kind whatfoever unjuft, upon any account whatfoever, is most inexcufable and intolerable. For if upon any account fuch things could be lawful, religion would be the most useless thing in the world; and if they were lawful upon the account of religion only, it would not be a more useless and unprofitable than a mischievous thing. And therefore it would be too little a thing to fay, that the Christian religion it felf would be unworthy of our efteem, as great things as have been faid of it, if it gave us leave to allow our felves in any immorality.

But there are none, it more abfolutely or with greater feverity forbiddeth than fuch as the fore-mentioned. Who is a wife man and endowed with knowledge among you? (faith S. James). Let him flew out of a good converfation his works with meeknels of wifdom; but if ye have bitter envyings and firife in your bearts, glory not, and lie not againft the truth, (that is, do not boaft of your Chriftian wifdom, nor play the hypocrites in pretending to be fpiritual) this wifdom defcendeth not from above (is not zeal kindled from heaven) but is earthly, fenfual, devilife: for where envy and firife is, there is confufion and every evil work. But the wifdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easie to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrifie : and the fruit of righteousfies is fown in peace, of them that make peace. James iii. 13. to the end.

And S. Paul tells the Galatians, chap. iv. 22, 23. That the fruit of the fpirit is love, joy, peace, long-fuffering, gentlenefs, goodnefs, faith, meeknefs, temperance. And he reckoneth among the works of the fleft, verfe 19, 20, 21. not only adultery, fornication, uncleannefs, lafciviou/nefs, idelatry, witcheraft, berefies, murthers, drunkennefs, revelling: but allo, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, ftrife, feditions, envyings: and faith, that they which do fuch things (fuch as thefe as well as the former) fhall not inherit the kingdom of God. And adds, verfe 24. That they which are Ghriff's, have crucified the flefth with the affections and lufts, that is, the forcgoing, and all other.

And it appeareth from what hath been faid of the Defign of Chriftianity, that the gratification of any of thefe affections is to far from becoming lawful, or more warrantable, by being yielded to for the fake thereof, that it is rendred the more wretchedly foolifh and unaccountable by this means. For thus to do, is to be *irreligious* to promote religion, to be un-chriftian to do fervice to Chriftianity; and therefore to go the directeft way to deftroy it, by the means us for its prefervation. And Vol. VI. Cc

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we do our particular opinions and forms of religion more mifchief, in alienating the minds of others from them, by fuch wild exprefions of zeal, than their adverfaries will be able to do, by all their attempts againft them. And laftly, thus to do is to oppose the interest of our *religion* to that of our *fouls*, and to cash *thefe* away in the defence of *that*: as appears from our difcourfe in the second Section. But what madness is like to this?

#### C H A P. XXV.

#### The Ninth Inference.

That it is a most unwarrantable Thing for the Ministers of Christ to prefer any other Defign before that of making Men really righteous and holy. That this ought to be the whole Defign of their preaching. That it is of as great Concernment that they promote the fame Business by their Conversations, as that they do it by their Dostrine. Infinite Mischer Conversations, as that they do it by their Dostrine. Infinite Mischer configurations, as that they do it by their Ostrine. Infinite Mischer configurations, as that they do it by the Goster Dostrine. The Mischer configuration the loss of Ministers. Several Instances of Practices extremely blame-worthy in Preachers of the Gostel. That they ought to have a Regard to the Weakness of Persons for far as lawfully they may. That the Promoting of Holiness ought to be the only Defign of ecclessful Discipline.

2000 IN THLY, feeing our Saviour's grand defign was to make men really righteous and boly, it must needs be a most unwarrantable thing for those that are his ministers to prefer any other before this, for those that are intrusted with the care of fouls to concern themselves about any thing fo much as this.

It is plainly their duty to fubordinate everything they do, by virtue of their facred function, hereunto; and to imitate their great Master, all they can, in the difcharge of it; to promote holine/s, as much as lyeth in them, both by their doctrine and converfations: with all perfpicuity and plainnels to inftruct their people in the indifputable doctrines of Chriftianity above any other; and to have a fpecial care to fhew them the aptnefs that is in them, to the furtherance of holinefs of heart and life: and most to inculcate those upon them which have the greatest and most manifest and immediate tendency thereunto: to inform them of their whole duty relating to God, their neighbour and themfelves impartially; to prefs them to the performance of them with the greatest affection and fervency; and to back on their exhortations with the most prevalent and inforcing motives; the most rational and convincing arguments; courageoufly, but with a difcovery of tendereft compassion to finners, to reprove all fins without exception ; and faithfully to fhew the danger of living in any one whatfoever. And to do thus, not only in publick, but, as there is occasion, in private also, and readily to embrace all opportunities for that purpofe.

Thus (as hath been fhewn) did our bleffed Saviour spend his time,

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and that it is the duty of his minifters to come as near as they can, in their practice, to him, is out of queftion: and thus alfo did his immediate fucceffors, the apoftles, employ themfelves; as might be largely made to appear. They preach'd the word, were *inftant both in feafon and out of feafon, they reproved, rebuked and exhorted with all long-fuffering and dottrine*; according as S. Paul charged Timothy to do, in the moft folemn and fevere manner: even before God, and the Lord Jefus Chrift, who fhall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and his kingdom. And that charge, by parity of reafon, muft concern the whole Clergy as well as that Bifhop.

And as Chrift and his apoftles taught men by their lives, as well as doctrine, and encouraged them to the performance of whatfoever duties they injoyned them, by their own example; fo it cannot but be of infinite concernment that all that have the conduct of fouls committed to them should do the like. S. Paul exhorted Timothy first to take heed to bimfelf, and then to the doctrine (e); and the former advice was of no whit lefs neceffity and importance than was the latter. For (as woeful experience affureth us) a minister of a careless and loose life, let his parts and ability in preaching be never fo great, nay, though he fhould behave himfelf never fo faithfully in the pulpit, and be zealous against the very vices he himfelf is guilty of (which would be very strange if he should) must needs do more hurt incomparably, than he can do good. And tho' (as fome of them will tell them) it is the peoples duty to do as they fay, and not as they do; yet is there nothing more impossible than to teach them effectually that leffon. Mankind (as we had before occasion to fhew) is mightily addicted to imitation, and examples (efpecially those of governours and teachers) have a greater force upon people ordinarily than have instructions; but chiefly bad examples (in regard of their natural pronenels to vice) than good instructions. Had not the apostles expressed as great a care of what they did, as of what they faid, how they lived as how they preached, Christianity would (without doubt) have been so far from prevailing and getting ground as it hath done; that it could not have long furvived its bleffed Author, if it had not bid adieu to the world with him. Most men, do what we can, will judge of our fermons by our converfations, and if they fee thefe bad, they will not think those good; nor the doctrines contained in them practicable, feeing they have no better effect upon those that preach them. And besides no man will be thought to be ferious and in good earneft in preffing those duties upon others, which he makes no confcience of performing himfelf.

Nay, every man's judgment in divine things may warrantably be fulpected, that is, of a wicked and vicious life. And those that are confcious to themfelves that they are not able to pass a judgment upon doctrines, may not be blamed if they question their minister's orthodoxy, while they obferve in him any kind of immorality, and fee that he lives to the fatisfaction of any one luft. For, the promife of *knowing the truth* is made only to fuch as *continue in Chrift's words*, that is, that are obedient to his precepts.

And I add, that fuch a one's talk of heaven and hell are like to pre-

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· (e) 1 Tim. iv. 16.

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vail very little upon his auditors, or to be at all heeded by the greateft part of them, while they confider that the preacher hath a foul to fave as well as they. And therefore the love that they bear to their lufts, with the devil's help, will eafily perfwade them, that either these things are but mere fictions, or elfe that the one may be obtained, and the other escaped, upon far easier terms than he talks of. But as for those few in whom the fence of true virtue and piety have made fo deep an impreffion, as that they have never the flighter opinion of the necessity thereof, in regard of their minister's wicked example ; the prejudice that they cannot but conceive against him, renders his discourses insipid and unaffecting to them, and fo they ordinarily take all opportunities to turn their backs upon him, and at length quite forfake him. And then, if they, are not as understanding as well-meaning people, are too eafily drawn away from all other churches, when they have left their own, and become a prey to fome demure and fairly pretending fectary. And I am very certain from my own observation, that no one thing hath so conduced to the prejudice of our church, and done the feparating parties fo much fervice as the fcandalous lives of fome that exercise the ministerial function in her. The late excellent Bishop of Down and Connor hath this memorable paffage in a fermon he preached to the univerfity at Dublin : If ye become burning and shining lights, if ye do not detain the truth in unrighteoufne/s, if ye walk in light and live in the fpirit, your dostrine will be true, and that truth will prevail : but if you live wickedly and fcandaloufly, every little schifmatick will put you to shame, and draw disciples after him, and abuse your flocks, and feed them with colocynths and hemlock, and place herefie in the chair appointed for your religion. But to haften to the dispatch of this unpleafant topick : wicked ministers are of all other ill-livers the most fcandalous, for they lay the greateft flumbling block, of any whatfoever, before mens fouls; and what our Saviour faid of the Scribes and Pharifees, may in an efpecial manner be applied to them, viz. that they will neither enter into heaven themselves, nor yet suffer them that are entring to go in: fo far are they from faving themfelves and those that hear them. But I would to God, fuch would well lay to heart those fad words of our Saviour, Luke xvii. 1, 2. It is impossible but that offences will come; but woe unto him through whom they come: it were better for him that a milftone were hanged about his neck, and he caft into the fear, &c. And those words are not more effectual to fcare them, than are these following of a Heathen, viz. Tully, concerning vicious philosophers to shame them, into a better life : faith he in his Tusculan questions, the second book, Quotusquisque philosophorum invenitur, qui sit ita moratus, &c. What one of many philosophers is there, who so behaves himself, and is of such a mind and life, as reason requireth; which accounteth his doctrine not a boast of seience but a law of life; which obeyeth himfelf, and is governed by his own precepts? We may fee fome to light and vain, that it would have been better for them to be wholly ignorant, and never to have learned any thing : others fo covetous of money, thirfly of praise and honour, and many fuch flaves to their lufts, ut cum corum vità mirabiliter pugnet oratio, That their lives do marvelloufly contradiet their doetrine. Quod quidem mihi videtur effe turpiffimum, &c. Which to me feems the most filthy and abominable thing. For as he which profelling himself a grammarian speaks barbarously, and who being desirous to be accounted accounted a multician fings feurvily, is fo much the more fhame-worthy for his being defective in that the knowledge and skill of which he arrogates to himfelf; fo a philosopher in ratione vite peccans, milcarrying in his manners, is in this respect the baser and more wortched creature, that in the office of which he will needs be a masser, he doth amils; attemq; vitæ proteflus delinquit in vità, and professing the art of well-living, or of teaching others to live well, is faulty and milcarrieth in his own life. Could this excellent Heathen thus inveigh against wicked philosophers, what fatyr can be tart and fevere enough for ungodly ministers of the glorious and most holy Gospel of the bleffed Jefus? I will add one more faying of our Saviour's which he fpake to his disciples, whom he was training up for the ministery, Matt. v. 13. Ye are the falt of the earth; but if the falt hath loss is favour, whereavith shall it be falted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cass out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Well, I fay that the defign of our Saviour and his Gospel being to make men holy, those behave themselves infinitely diffecoming his minifters and the preachers of the Gofpel, that live unholily; and fo do all fuch alfo (as was at first intimated) as do not above all things endeavour the promoting and furtherance of that defign. And of that number are those that are ever affecting to make people stare at their highflown and bombaft language, or to pleafe their phancies with foolifh jingles and pedantick and boyifh wit, or to be admired for their ability in dividing a hair, their metaphysical acuteness and scholastick subtility; or for their doughty dexterity in controverfial fquabble. And among fuch may those also, and those chiefly, be reckoned, that feek to approve themfelves to their auditors to be men of mysteries, and endeavour to make the plain and easie doctrines of the Gospel as intricate and obscure as ever they are able: thefe are fo far from endeavouring above all things to advance the Defign of the Gofpel, that it hath not any greater enemies in the whole world than they are. And to them I may add fuch as preach up free-grace and Chriftian privileges otherwife than as motives to excite to obedience, and never fcarcely infift upon any duties except those of believing, laying hold on Chrift's righteoufnefs, applying the promifes (which are really the fame with them) and renouncing our own righteoufnefs, which those that have none at all to renounce have a mighty kindnefs for. All which rightly underftood, may, I grant, and ought to be preached; but to make the Christians duty to confift either wholly or mostly in those particulars, and especially as they are explained by not a few, is the way, effectually to harden hypocrites, and encrease their number, but to make no fincere converts.

These again do nothing lefs than chiefly promote the bufiness of boliness, that are never in their element, but when they are talking of the irrespectiveness of God's decrees, the absoluteness of his promifes, the utter difability and perfect impotence of natural men to do any thing towards their own conversion, &c. and infift with great emphasis and vehemence upon such like false and dangerous opinions. And these may well accompany and be joyned with the foregoing, that are of such narrow, and therefore unchristing foirits, as to make it their great bufiness to advance the petty interest of any party whatfoever, and concern themselves more about doing this, than about promoting and carrying on that wherein C c 3

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confifts the chief good of all mankind; and are more zealous to make profelytes to their particular fects than converts to a holy life; and prefs more exact and rigid conformity to their modes, than to the laws of, God, and the effential duties of the Chriftian religion.

Such as all the forementioned have, doubtlefs, little caufe to expect a *well done good and faithful fervant*, from the mouth of their Saviour at the laft day; their practice being fo very contrary to that of his (whofe minifters they profefs themfelves to be) when he was in the world; and they making Christianity fo perfectly different a thing from what he made it.

And furthermore, it is unqueftionably the duty of all the flewards of the mysteries of God to take special heed that they do not by over-fevere infifting on any little matters, and unneceffary things, give their people a temptation to conclude that they lay the greateft weight upon them; but fo to behave themfelves towards them, as to give them affurance that there is no interest fo dear to them as is that of the falvation of their fouls. And laftly, to be fo felf denying as to have a regard to the weakneffes of perfons, fo far as lawfully, and without difobeying authority they may, to prevent their departure from communion with the church they belong to; and to use all fair and prudent ways to perfwade those back again thereunto, which there is any the leaft reafon to hope are not irrecoverably gone away. It being very much the interest of their fouls not to continue in feparation : and not of theirs only but of others too, in that ftrifes and contentions, envyings and animofities are like to be kept alive, and greatly to increase, while men keep at a diftance from one another; and where these are (as it was faid S. James hath told us) there must needs be confusion and every evil work.

And this is no other than what the great S. Paul thought it no difparagement to him to be exemplary to us in. For, faith he, I Cor. ix. 19, &c. Though I be free from all men, yet have I made my felf a fervant to all, that I might gain the more : and unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law (or observe not the law of Mofes,) as without law, that I might gain them that are without law : to the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak ; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means fave fome. The fum of which words amounts to this, That he denied himfelf in the ufe of his liberty to gain those who were not acquainted with the extent of it, and dealt with all forts of men in that way which he thought most probable to convert them to Christianity, and keep them in the profession of it. Not that he fneaked and diffembled, and made weak people think he was of their mind, and fo confirmed them in their miftakes and follies; or had any regard to the humours of unreafonable merely captious people that will be finding faults upon no ground at all : this must needs be unworthy of an Apostle; for it is fo of all inferiour ministers, and of every private Christian too.

And our paît difcourfe affures us alfo, that the promoting of holinefs in men's hearts and lives ought to be the only defign of ecclefiaftical difcipline and church cenfures : and 'tis eafie to fhew, that if the laws of all Christian churches were framed and the execution of them directed

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only or above any other, to the fervice of this defign; or that no intereft did fway fo much with their chief governours, as that which we s (and ftill is) moft dear to the great Founder and King of the church whom they reprefent; and if they were willing to lofe in their little and petty concerns, that they might gain in this grand one, we fhould quickly fee Chriftendom in moft lovely and bleffed circumftances. All people that have any thing of fincerity, would quickly unite and agree together, and as for factious hypocrites, they would be with eafe fuppreft, and put out of all capacity of doing mifchief. This, I fay, might be eafily fhewn, and plainly demonstrated; but it needs not, there being nothing in the world more undeniably evident.

## C H A P. XXVI.

#### The tenth Inference.

That an obedient Temper of Mind is an excellent and neceffary Qualification to prepare Men for a firm Belief and right Underflanding of the Gofpel. That it is fo by Virtue of Chrift's Promife. That it is fo in its own Nature. This flowed in three Particulars, viz. in that, 1. It will belp us to judge without Prejudice concerning the Doctrines contained in the Gofpel. 2. It will give Satisfaction concerning the main Doctrines of Chriftianity far excelling any that can arife from mere Speculation. 3. It will fecure from the Caufes of Error in those Points that are of weightieft Importance. Six Caufes of fuch Errors laid down; and an obedient Difposition of Mind flowed to fecure from each of them.

2XX&ENTHLY, We learn what is the best temper and disposition of mind T & to bring to the study of Christ's Gospel, in order to our firm belief Six and right understanding of it. Seeing its design is to make men entirely obedient, and truly holy, it is evident that a defire fo to be is the most excellent and necessary qualification for that purpose. Our Saviour faith, John vii. 17. 9in wouss if any man will do his will (or is willing to do it) he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of my felf; that is, in the first place, he shall be throughly fatisfied concerning the truth of the Gofpel, shall be abundantly convinced that the Christian religion is no imposture, that the author of it came from heaven, as he declared he did, and was fent by God to reveal his will. Such a one, when it comes to be fufficiently propofed to him, fhall heartily embrace the Gospel as containing the true, the only true religion. And therefore observe what he faith, John viii. 47. He that is of God, heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God: That is, as if he fhould fay, He that is of an obedient temper, and ambitious of doing the will of God, fhall receive the doctrine which in his name I preach to him ; and the reason why you Jews, for your parts, refuse to to do, is, because you are infincere and hypocritical.

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It is faid, All xiii. 48. That as many of the Gentiles as were  $\tau s \tau \alpha \gamma \mu i \nu \sigma_1$ , (which is doubtlefs in this place to be rendred) diffoled, or in a ready preparednefs for eternal life, believed; that is, thole which were profelytes of the gate, who were admitted by the Jews to the hope of eternal life, and to have their portion in the age to come, without fubmitting to their whole law, or any more than owning the God of Ifrael, and obferving the feven precepts of Noah (as mafter Mede hath learnedly fhewn,) thefe being defirous to live godlily, and not prejudiced againft the Chriftian religion as the Jews generally were, did then at Antioch receive the Gofpel upon its first being made known to them. And of this fort was Cornelius, whole conversion to Chriftianity we read of before in the tenth chapter.

Secondly, and confequently, this fence is also implied in the first cited words of our Saviour, viz. That, as he which is willing to do God's will, fhall know that Chrift's doctrine came from him, fo he fhall rightly understand that doctrine too. For it would be to no purpose for him to believe the Gofpel to be true, if his faith be not accompanied with an ability to pass a right judgment on the fence of it. And therefore he must needs be able to diffinguish between the doctrine of Christ, and that which is falfly imposed at any time upon the world, as his, and fathered upon him by ungodly hereticks; as well as fatisfied that what he delivered in the general is the will of God. S. John to this fame purpose expresseth himself, I Epistle iv. 6. He that knoweth God (that is, practically, or is obedient) heareth us; he that is not of God (or is not willing to obey him) heareth uot us; hereby know we the fpirit of truth and the (pirit of error : that is, by this obedient temper we are capable of diffinguifhing betwixt thefe two fpirits. And, I fay, from the defign of the Golpel, that being to make men holy, it may be prefumed, that wholoever confidereth it with a defire of being fo, must needs both believe it to have come from God, and also be inlightned in the true knowledge of, at leaft, all the neceffary points of it; and be enabled to give a particular, explicite and understanding affent to them : fo that it shall not lie in the power of any fubtile feducer to rob him of his faith, or to infect him with any principles that are directly deftructive to it, or are fo plainly in their confequences fo, as that he fhall fee it, and make that ill ule of them as to be perfwaded by them to let go his hold of any fundamental article of the Christian religion.

For our Saviour having fo concerned himfelf for the deftroying of fin in us, and to make us partakers of his holinefs, as to aim at this above all things. in all he did and fuffered in the world, and to make it the whole bufinefs of his Gofpel; we may be certain that those *honeft* fouls that come to the fludy of it, with a defire of reaping *this* advantage by it, cannot be left defititute of Chrift's grace and blefling to make it fuccefsful to them for that purpofe; which it is impossible it fhould be without a thorow-belief of it, and a right understanding of, at leaft, all its abfolutely neceflary and effential parts. This we might be affured of from that confideration, though there were no promife extant of that his grace to fuch well disposed people, as there are divers others befides that which we have produced.

But befides this, a fincere defire of being obedient and holy, muft

needs

needs of it felf very greatly difpole us for the belief and fufficient underftanding of the Golpel, and be very neceffary in order thereunto alfo. For,

First, it will help us to judge without prejudice concerning it, and the particular doctrines therein contained. He whole hearty defire it is to pleafe God in doing his will, will be unbyaffed in his judgment in enquiries after it. He knows that he cannot make that to be truth by thinking one way or other, which was not before to; and that truth will be truth whatfoever he thinks of it: and therefore doth not with that this or that may be fo, and then endeavour to perfwade himfelf that it is fo; but will only examine what is fo, that he may not entertain an erroneous perswasion. He will bring his mind to the Gospel, and not wrest the Gofpel to his mind. But vice and fin, being allowed and predominant in the foul, must needs warp the judgment, and clap a heavy byafs on it, that will draw it to favour, as much as may be, their intereft in all matters it is concerned in. And therefore a man of wicked and depraved affections, cannot but be exceeding unapt to fludy a book whofe defign is fuch as the Gofpel's is. But the obediently-difpofed will bring free ingenuous and candid fpirits to this work, and therefore are very fitly prepared to do it with good fuccefs.

Secondly, this honeft and fincere temper of mind will help a man to evidence for his fatisfaction concerning the main doctrines of the Gofpel, far excelling any that can arife from mere fpeculation; namely, that of fence and experience. The man that is indued with it, shall know of the doctrine, that it is of God, he shall not only believe it according to the strict notion of that phrase. There is an inward sweetness in holy truths that a good foul will relifh, and favour, but the vitiated palats of those that are in love with any luft cannot tafte it. How [weet (faid David) are thy words unto my take, yea, fweeter than honey unto my mouth. Now naked demon/trations give but very poor and flight fatisfaction in comparison of that knowledge that arifeth from fence and experience; and this latter alone will remove from us all doubt and uncertainty. Therefore that was fo far from being a weak and foolifh, that it was a most worthy and laudable speech of the honest martyr, Though I cannot dispute, I can dye for Chrift. No one that hath tafted honey, can at all doubt of its fweetnefs, though he may want cunning enough to answer the arguments whereby a fophifter may attempt to prove it bitter. We fay, Seeing is believing. And the great evidence that our Saviour proved himfelf to be the Meffins by, was that of fence. But this was Thomas his incredulity, as very ftrong as it was, immediately overcome. And the bodily fences are not more infallible than is the purified fence of the foul.

Thirdly, The aforefaid temper of mind will fecure, from the caufes of error, in those points that are of weightieft importance. It is certain that mistakes about these cannot possibly arise from the obscurity of that book, it being as plain as heart can wish in all matters of absolute necessity; as hath been shewn in the free difcourfe. Therefore errors that are of a damnable nature must necessially proceed from vicious causes, such as, t. Gross importance, but 'tie not possible to find the in any foul that is

r. Groß ignorance; but 'tis not possible to find this in any foul that is funcerely defirous to obey God.

2. A too high opinion of our parts and reason : by which is often occafioned

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fioned a rejection of whatfoever they are not able to comprehend. But the honeft foul can have no fuch conceits of *bis* reafon; he knows nothing more undoubtedly than that he is a weak and fhallow creature. He knows that the moft contemptible infect, and common weed, are able to pofe and put him to a *non plus*; and that it would therefore be the higheft of arrogances in him to believe nothing revealed to him, but what is an adequate object of his underftanding. This man will fubmit his reafon to divine revelation, and not divine revelation to his reafon. 'Tis true he cannot, though he would never fo fain believe that which doth manifeftly *contradist* the reafon of his mind, and the innate fenfe of his foul; but therefore it is certain that no fuch things are to be found in the Gofpel, nor can be a matter of divine revelation.

3. Proud affectation of being thought wifer than other folk. This was a great thing which made the first heriticks that the Church of Chrift ever knew, as appeareth by the arrogant tile they affumed to themfelves, and diffinguished the fect by, viz. Gnoflicks. But that temper of mind that makes men unfeignedly defirous of piety and virtue, is inconfistent with all fuch ambitious and afpiring thoughts.

4. Licorifh curiofity and wantonnefs of fpirit. When people are glutted with those wholefom truths which they have for many years been entertained with, and will be hunting after novelties; when they grow weary of their honeft teachers, and will be following every upflart that fets himself in opposition to them; it can hardly otherwise be but that they muft fall into dangerous errors. The Apostle faith, 2 Tim, iv. 3. that, The time will come when they will not endure found dostrine, but after their own lufts will they heap to themselves Teachers: (But how comes it to pass that they will do thus? It followeth) having itching ears. But the obediently-inclined foul will be careful to keep in that good way, which by experience he hath found to be fo, and to avoid all by-paths. Nor will he be running after feducers, but fhun them all he can, as being confcious of his own weaknefs, and his aptnefs without the grace of God to be milled.

5. The love of, and being wedded to any one luft whatfoever, will certainly endanger men's falling into the worft of herefies. When men have fome beloved fins or fin, which they are refolved they will not part with, and are as a right eye (i) or right hand to them, they are eafily perfuaded to entertain fuch principles as will allow them to live in them, and to abandon those that will not; and therefore to wrest the Scriptures (as those the Apostle speaks of, 2 Pet. iii. 16.) to their own destruction, and put them upon the rack to make them fpeak fuch things as may confift with the interest of their corrupt appetites. Quod volumus, facile credimus, that which we would have to be true, we eafily believe is fo; and what we defire fhould be false, we are with little difficulty perswaded to difbelieve. This, therefore, hath had fo fearful an influence on not a few, as to caufe them at length to throw away their BIBLES, to deny the immortality of their fouls, and difbelieve as much as they can even the being of of a deity, becaufe they are fenfible that while they continue in their fins, it is infinitely their intereft that the holy Scriptures fhould be falfe, that there

(i) Mat. v. 29, 30.

there fhould be no other life, and no God. But I need not fay, that the honeft, obedient perfon is one that is not devoted to any luft.

6. The just judgement of God upon these and the like accounts, is the last cause I shall mention of men's diffelieving the Gospel, and renouncing any of the effentials of Christianity. Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, (that is, to acknowledge him in their practice) God gave them up to a reprobate (or an adulterate, corrupted) mind, Rom. i. 28. Because them wise received not the love of the truth, that they might be laved; God shall fend them interview which, strength of delussion, that they fould believe a lye; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness, 2 Thess. it. I.o. The forementioned particulars do of themfelves lead to the most dangerous errors, how much more then must they needs fo do, when they are backed with the divine vengeance? But if honess and an obedient temper of foul will fecure from the other causes of error and feduction, it will, in fo doing, fecure from this lass.

So that it is manifest that a fincere defire of righteoufness and true holinefs, will not fail to help men to a thorow-belief, and fufficient underflanding of that book which is only defigned to indue them with it : and that nothing can occafion the contrary, but a wilful adhering to fome one or other immorality; and that this hath a very great aptnefs fo to do. So that it is not the leaft matter of wonder, to fee men of excellent wits, and brave accomplishments, either fall into gross errors, or even into a flat difbelief of the Christian religion. As strange as this may feem to fome, it appears from our past discourse, that there is not any real cause of administration in it. For other endowments, of as excellent use as they may be when accompanied with that of an obedient temper, must needs do more hurt than good to the fouls that are adorned with them, when feparated from it, and occafion those vices that may well make way for herefies. And it is certain that an acute wit, when it hath not a purified fence going along with it, is fo far from being a fufficient prerequifite to the right understanding of evangelical truths, that it is as notable an engine as the grand deceiver can defire to make use of, in order to the bringing about his mifchievous defigns upon the perfon that is mafter of So that indeed, it is, on the contrary, rather matter of wonder, that it. any man that hath a naughty will, fhould have a good judgement in evangelical truths, though both his natural and acquired parts fhould be never fo great. And again, we may without the leaft breach of charity prefume, that whofoever, to whom Christianity is fufficiently made known, doth either difbelieve it, or any of the fundamentals of it, his beart is much more in fault than his bead, and that he hath darkened his difcerning faculty, and greatly dimmed the eye of his foul, by entertaining fome filthy luft that fends up a thick fog and midft of vapours to it. If any man teach otherwife (faith S. Paul, I Tim. vi. 3.) and confent not to wholforne words, even the words of our Lord Jefus Chrift, and to the dostrine that is according to godlines; he is proud, &c. not he is weak and cannot, but he is wicked and will not underftand the truth. And, by the way, this difcourfe may conduce to the no finall encouragement of the weaker fort: let fuch be but heartily folicitous about doing God's will, and having the defign of the Gospel effected in them, and they need not fear that their weaknefs will betray them into the wrong way to bleffednefs.

CHAP.

#### CHAP. XXVII.

#### The last Inference.

That we are taught by the Defign of Christianity, wherein the Effence, Power and Life of it confifteth. Inflances of what Kind of Things it doth not confift in. For what Ends the feveral Exercises of Piety and Devotion - are injoined. How God is glorified by men, and by what means. Whom it is our duty to effeem, and carry our felves towards, as true Christians. That by following the Example of Chrift, and making his Life our Pattern, zwe shall affure our felves that the Defign of Christianity is effected in us, and that we are indued with the Power thereof.

\*\*\*\* ASTLY, We learn from the doctrine of the Defign of Chrifti-L anity, wherein the Effence, Power and Life of it confifteth, viz. In a good flate and habit of mind, in a holy frame and temper of foul, whereby it effeemeth God as the chiefeft good, preferreth him and his Son Jefus before all the world, and prizeth above all things an intereft in the divine perfections; fuch as juffice and righteoufnefs, univerfal charity, goodnefs mercy and patience, and all kinds of purity. From whence doth naturally proceed a hearty compliance with all the holy precepts of the Gofpel; and fincere endeavours to perform all those actions which are agreeable to them, are neceffary expressions of those and the like virtues, and means for the obtaining and encrease of them and to avoid the contrary.

The kingdom of God (or Christianity) is not meat and drink, but righteoufnels, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; as S. Paul tells us, Rom. xiv. 17. That is, it doth not confift in any merely external matters, or bodily exercifes, which (elfewhere he faith) do profit but little (k). And, not in fuch as he there meaneth, viz. things of an indifferent nature, and neither good nor evil; fo neither in fuch as are very good and laudable for the matter of them. It is only their flowing from an inward principle of holinefs, that denominateth any whatfoever Christian actions. But fuch as are only occasioned by certain external inducements and motives, and proceed not from any good temper and disposition of mind, be they never fo commendable in themfelves, fpeak not him that performeth them a true and fincere Christian. He is not a Jew, faith the fame Apofile, that is one outwardly, neither is that circumcifion that is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, that is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the fpirit, and not in the letter, whole praife is not of men but of God, Rom. ii. 28, 29. That is, he only is a true child of Abraham, who in the purity of the heart obeyeth those substantial laws which are imposed by God upon him. And if no one that doth not thus, might properly be called a Jew or child of Abraham, much lefs can the name of a Chrifian and a Disciple of the holy Jesus be due to him. He (it is evident) is only fo, in whom the Defign of Christianity is in some measure accomplifh'd. And it appears from what hath been faid, that its defign is primarily

(k) 1 Tim. iv. 8,

marily and immediately upon the nature; which, being rectified and renewed, will certainly discover it felf to to be throughout the whole life. For a good tree will not bring forth corrupt fruit, nor a corrupt tree good fruit (1), as our Saviour hath faid. Were it poffible (as it is not) that we thould forbear all outward acts of fin, and yet our fouls cleave to it, we could not but be deftitute of the life and power of Christianity. And should we abound never fo much in the exercise of good duties, if our defign in fo doing be to gratifie any luft, and ferve fome carnal intereft, they will be fo far from Christian actions, that they may be most truly and properly called fins. There is no one duty more affectionately recommended in the Gofpel than is alms giving; but to give alms to be feen and praifed by men, is no better than base hypocrifie (as Chrift hath told us) fo far is it from an expression of Christian charity. And whatsoever materially virtuous actions proceed not from the principle of love to virtue. though I cannot fay that all fuch are hateful to God, yet they want that degree of perfection that is requifite to make them truly Christian. And it is a plain cafe, that he is not the Christian, that is much imployed in the duties, hearing God's word, reading the bible and other good books, &c. but he that difcovereth a good mind in them, in whom the end of them This is the bufinefs for the is effected, and who is the better for them. fake of which prayer is enjoined. We are therein to acknowledge God's infinite perfections, and our obligations to him, that we may express our hearty fense of them, and in order to our being the more affected with thole, and our having the more grateful refentments of thele. We are in that duty to address our felves to the divine Majesty, in the name of Chrift, for what we want; that we may by this means both express and encrease our dependance on him, and trust in him for the obtaining thereof. And to confefs and bewail our fins, to exercise godly forrow and contrision of foul; and that by fo doing we may be fo much the more deeply humbled for them and have the greater averfenefs in our wills against them. The communion which we are to enjoy with God in prayer, is fuch as confifteth in being enamoured with the excellencies that are in him, and in receiving communications of his nature and fpirit from him.

Therefore also are we commanded to hear and read God's word, that we may come thereby to understand, and be put in mind of the several duties he requires of us, and be powerfully moved to the doing of them.

And the like may be faid concerning all the other exercises of piety and devotion, the end of them is more and more to difpofe our hearts to the love, and our wills to the obedience of our bleffed Creator and Redeemer. And bufying our felves in any of them without this defign, may well be counted in the number of the fruitless and unaccountable actions of our lives. Thus to do is prodigally to wafte and mispend our time; as the Jews were upbraided by one of their adversaries, with doing, upon the account of their Sabbath, faying, That they loss of heaven, both in the publick and private worship of him, if they go into his prefence with the entertainment and allowance of any finful affection, they have never the more of the divine approbation upon that account. If I regard faith David, Iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. God efteemeth no better

(1) Mat. vii.

#### The Defign of Christianity.

SECT. III.

better of fuch as do fo, then as hypocritical fawners upon him, and falsehearted complimenters of him; and hath declared that their facrifices are an abomination to him. The generality of the Jews were fuch a people : God by his prophet Ifaiah fpeaks thus concerning them. They feek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteoufnefs, and forfook not the ordinance of their God. They afk of me the ordinances of Justice, they take delight in approaching to God. They were a people that loved to fast and pray, and afflict their fouls, and to make their voice to be heard on high : but giving liberty to themfelves in plain immoralities, God declared that all this was even hateful to him : as may be feen in the fifty eighth of Ifaiah. And he there likewife telleth them, that the fast which he took pleasure in, confisteth in loosing the bands of wickedness, in undoing the heavy burdens; and letting the oppressed go free; in breaking every yoke; in dealing their bread to the hungry; and bringing the poor that are caft out, to their houfes ; in covering the naked; and the exercise of ftrict juffice, mercy and kindnefs. And in the first chapter, he afks them, To what purpose the multitude of their facrifices were (though they were no other than he himfelf by the law of Moles required) and charged them to bring no more vain oblations to him; told them that their incenfe was an abomination to him, their new-moons and fabbaths, and calling of affemblies he could not away with, that their folenn affembly was iniquity, that their new-moons and appointed feasts his foul hated, and that he was weary to bear them. And all this becaufe thefe were the only or main things they recommended themfelves to him by; their religion chiefly confifted in them; and they gave themselves leave to be unrighteous, cruel and unmerciful, as may there be feen.

God abhors to fee men come cringing and crouching before him, beflowing a great heap of the beft words up him, and the worft upon them 4 felves, and with dejected countenances bemoaning themfelves', and making lamentable complaints of their wickedness to him, imploring mercy and favour from him, &c. when they refolvedly perfift in difobedience. So far are fuch things as thefe from being able to make amends for any of their fins, that God accounts them no better than additions to their most heinous impieties; as by the fixty fixth of Ifaiah, it further appeareth: it is faid there, He that killeth an ox, is as if he flew a man; he that facrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dogs neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered fivines blood; he that burneth incense, as if he bleffed an idol. And how came this to pass? it follows : they have have chosen their own ways, and their foul delighteth in their abominations. So that if he had fuch an opinion of the goodlieft and most acceptable facrifices, when offered by difobedient and immoral perfons, under the Law; it is impoffible that he fhould have one jot a better of the most affectionate devotions of those that take no care to be really and inwardly righteous, under the Golpel. And in being fo, confifts (as was faid) the foul and life of Christianity.

Not that a *true Chriftian* can have undervaluing and flight thoughts of the external worfhip and fervice of God; nor that he can contemn or neglect praying to him, finging his praifes, hearing or reading his word, &c. Nothing lefs: for by the ferious and diligent performance of thefeand the like duties, he comes to acquire and encrease that good temper of foul that gives him the denomination of fuch a one, through the affiftance

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#### CHAP. XXVII.

ance of the divine Grace. He is one, to fpeak in the words of Hierocles, as σπυδάζει à εύχεται, ε) εύχεται à σπυδάζει, joyns endeavours to prayers, and prayers alfo (with the other parts of divine worfhip) to his other endeavours.

And befides, the folemn acknowledgments of God, both in publick and private, are expressions of natural justice. Quid aliud eft pietas (faith Tully) quam justitia adversus deos? What is piety or devotion but justice towards God? And each of the fignifications of it, whether natural or pofitive, they are payments of a due to him; fo that men cannot be fo much as boneft, and omit the honouring of the divine Majefty by them. But it is certain that these performances do him no honour at all, any otherwise then as they proceed from a good and fincere foul. And to this purpofe our often cited philosopher hath this other excellent faying, viz. The greatest abundance and profusest costliness of oblations bring no honour to God. except they are offered with a divine Mind: for the gifts and facrifices of fools are but food for the fire\*. Sacrifices in ancient times were called the food of Almighty God, as being provision made for his house; but (faith the philosopher) when they proceed from fools (or wicked men) they are at best but the fire's meat : they fignific nothing to God, and are merely thrown away.

And indeed the beft intelligible and moft fignificant honour that our devouteft fervices bring to God, is by their being a means of making us more like to him. And as I shewed, out of the learned master Smith's treatife, how God most glorifieth himself, fo I think it not amifs to transcribe more lines of that worthy perfon, wherein he excellently fheweth how we must glorifie God; and they immediately follow the former. Saith he, pag. 409. As God's feeking his own glory in respect of us is most properly the flowing forth of his goodness upon us; so our seeking the glory of God is most properly our endeavouring a participation of his goodness, and an earnest unceffant purfuing after divine perfection. When God becomes fo great in our eyes, and all created things fo little, that we reckon upon nothing as worthy of our aims or ambitions but a ferious participation of the divine nature, and the exercife of divine virtues, love, joy, peace, long-fuffering, kindnefs, goodnefs, and the like : when the foul beholding the infinite beauty and lovelinefs of the divinity, and then looking down and beholding all created perfection mantled over with darkness, is ravished into love and admiration of never-setting brightnefs, and endeavours after the greatest refemblance of God in justice, love, and goodness, when conversing with him is noux inapy, by a fecret feeling of the virtue, fweetness and power of his goodness, we endeavour to affimilate our felves to bim : then we may be faid to glorifie him indeed. God feeks no glory but his own, and we have none of our own to give him. God in all things feeks himfelf and his own glory, as finding nothing better than himfelf; and when we love him above all things, and endeavour to be most like him, we declare plainly that we count nothing better than he is.

See more to the fame purpole, pag. 141, 142, 143. And this fame excellent notion the Pythagoræans (however they came by it) did alfo teach. It was one of their fayings, Thou wilt best glorifie God, by affimilating and making thy mind like to God +.

And

\* Η τῶν ϖροσφιρομίνων τολυτίλεια τιμή εἰς Θιὸν ἐ γίνεται, εἰ μετά τῦ ἐνθίω φρονήματος ϖροσάγοιτο. Δῶρα γὰρ κὶ θυηπολίαι ἀφρόιων τυρός τροφή. pag.25. † Τιμήσεις τὸν Θςὸν ἄριςα, ἐὰν τῶ Θιῷ τῆν διάνοιαν ὅμοιώσης. And I will trouble the reader with one more of our philosopher's fayings, which is no less worthy of his observation than any of the past recited ones, viz. Thou can't not honour God in giving ought to him, but by becoming a meet and worthy perfor to receive from him\*.

And the great oracle of truth, our bleffed Saviour, hath affured us, that, herein is his Father glorified, that we bear much fruit (k); that we are fruitful in all holinefs. And we learn from St. Paul, Phil. i. II. That they are the fruits of righteoufnefs, which are by Jefus Chrift (or the effects of his grace and Holy Spirit) which redound to the praife and glory of God. And then do we praife him moft fignificantly and effectually, when we are filled (as there he prays the Philippians may be) with thefe fruits: when righteoufnefs takes polfefion of our fouls, grows and encreafes in them, and exerts it fell in our lives (as it muft needs do wherefoever it is) and our whole convertation fhine with it.

In fhort; circumcifion is nothing, and uncircumcifiou is nothing, (neither any opinions, nor performances, nor forbearances, that have no influence upon the foul and fpirit, are any thing ;) but the keeping the commandments of God: this is all in all. In Chrift Jefus nothing at all availeth but fuch a faith as works by love (di drams everympion, or is perfected by charity) and a new creature. And if any man be in Chrift, he is a new creature : and whofoever is a new creature, is in Chrift or a true Chriftian. All which St. Paul hath plainly taught us, in I Cor. vii. 19. Gal. v. 6. 2 Cor. v. 17. Those in whom the defign of the Gospel hath taken good effect, are indeed Christians, and none but fuch; in the fuccess of that must needs lie the power of Chriftianity, and in nothing elfe. And therefore whofoever they are in whom the genuine effects of righteoufnefs and true holinefs are confpicuous, we ought to look upon them as living members of that body whereof Chrift is the head. Whoever are ready to profess their faith in God and Chrift and the Holy Spirit in all Scripture phrases (without perverting their manifest and apparent fense) and lead a life answerable (for ought we can difcern) to the clear intimations of our Saviour's will, and all the rules plainly laid down in his holy Gofpel, (though it fhould not be their fortune to concur with us in all our fentiments) it is our duty to judge them to be indued with all the effentials, and integral parts of Chriftianity, and accordingly to carry our felves towards them: or we shall offer them too great a temptation to suspect, that we our felves are ignorant wherein they confift, and for all our great profession are void of them.

There is one thing more which I cannot forbear to add concerning the weighty and moft important point we are now difcourfing, and which contains the fum of all that need to be faid about it, viz. That it is impoffible we fhould not have the *Defign of Chriftianity* accomplified in us, and therefore that we fhould be defitiute of the power thereof, if we make our Saviaur's moft excellent life (a fhort account of which we have been in this tractate prefented with) the pattern of our lives; if we write after that fair copy he hath therein fet us, if we tread in his bleffed fteps, and be

Ου γαζε τιμήστις του Θιον διδάντι αυτώ, άλλ' άξιος το λαθιώ τα ακαζ' ίκείνα γενόμενος. Comment, in Aur. Carm. pag. 22.

(k) John v. 18.

# CHAP. XXVII. The Design of Christianity.

be fuch, according to our measure and capacity, as we have underflood he was in this world. Those that fincerely and industriously endeavour to imitate the holy Jefus in his fpirit and actions, can never be ignorant what it is to be truly Christians; nor can they fail to be fo. And if the history of his life were more perused and minded, and that he defigned to be therein our example (as both he and his apostles have often enough affured us he did) were more feriously confidered, it could not possibly be that the defign of his Gospel, and that wherein confists the power of godlines and foul of Christianity, should be by fo many fo miferably mistaken, as we fee it is.

#### The Conclusion.

W greateft concern, betake our felves to find that, which hath been proved to be the *defign of Chriftianity*, accomplifh'd in our hearts and lives.

That we endeavour above all things, to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called; and that our conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ: and by that means make it appear to our felves and others, that we are not in the number of those wretched fouls, on whom the knowledge of the most incomparable religion is thrown away, and beflowed to very ill, or to no purpose.

That we place the kingdom of God not in word, but in power; and our Christianity not in letting our tongues loose, but in bridling both them and our exorbitant affections.

That we make lefs noife, be lefs *difputatious*, and more *obedient*; That we *talk* and *cavil* lefs, and *be* and *live* better: as well knowing, that an objecting, quarrelfome and wrangling humour, ferves to no better end, than eating out the heart and life of all true religion.

Let us exercife our felves unto real and fubffantial godlinefs, and in keeping our conficiences void of offence both towards God and towards men; and in fludying the Gofpel to inable us not to *difcourfe*, or only to *believe*; but alfo and above all things to *do well*.

Let us effeem Chriftianity a principle of fuch vigour, fprightlinefs and activity, as to be affured of nothing more, than that it cannot poffibly be where it doth not  $a \alpha$ ; and that the lives of those that are indued with it cannot but bear witnefs to the force of it.

Let us do what lyeth in us to convince our *infidels*, that the religion of the bleffed Jefus is no trick or device; and our *wanton and loofe Chriftians*, that it is no *notional* bufinefs, or *fpeculative* fcience, by letting them fee what it hath produced in our felves: by fhewing them how fober and temperate, how chafte, how feverely juft, how meek and peaceable, how humble, how patient and fubmiffive to the will of God, how loving and charitable, what contemners of this world, and confiders in God, we are enabled to be by the power of it.

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Let us declare that we are not mere profeffors of faith in Chrift Jefus, by doing acts worthy of fuch a faith : that we are not barely relyers on Chrift's righteoufnet's, by being imitators of it, by being righteous as he was righteous : that we do truly believe the Chriftian doctrine, by cheerfully complying with the Chriftian precepts. (1) Hereby let us know that we do indeed know him, that we keep his commandments.

By our care thus to do fhall our minds (as hath been fhewn) be inlightned in all neceffary truth\*. It was by their care to do the will of God, that the primitive Christians obtained the right knowledge of it. And there is no fuch method for the acquiring of all ufeful knowledge as this is.

By this means shall we also be kept constant in the true profession of the faith. The obedient are the only Chriftians that are out of danger even of a total apoftafie; nor can there be any fure hold of any one that is not obedient. He whole great defign is to keep the commandments of God, and his Son Jefus, is the only folid, ftable and fettled man. Our Saviour hath likened him unto a wife man which built his houfe upon a rock, which, notwithftanding that the rain defcended, and floods came, and the winds blew, and all beat upon it, fell not, because it was founded upon a And on the contrary he hath compared those that hear, but do rock (m). not his fayings, to a fooligh man which built his house upon the fands (n); which, when affaulted by a tempeft, fell; and great was the fall of it. 'Tis no ftrange thing to fee a very highly profeffing, if he be not as confcientioufly living a Chriftian, toffed up and down like a wave of the fea, and carried away with every wind of doctrine: but fo will not the obedient perfon be. He may ('tis confeffed) alter his opinion in the lefs weighty and more obscurely delivered points, but those which belong to the main body and fubstance of Christianity, and are plainly revealed, as all fuch are, he will infeparably adhere to.

By this means will our knowledge be fanctified and made ufeful, but without the care of obedience it will be utterly unprofitable, nay, of very hurtful and mifchievous confequence. Whatloever Chriftian knowledge is not impregnated with anfwerable goodnefs, but is unaccompanied with Chriftian practice, is not only an *infpid* and *jejune*, but also a *faculent* thing, that in flead of *nourifbing* is apt to fwell and *puff up* the fouls of men; I mean, to make them proud and highly opinionated of their own worth, cenforious and contemners of other people, and of a conceited and pragmatical, a contentious and unpeaceable behaviour. And there is no man but may obferve too too many of our great pretenders to Chriftianity unhappily exemplifying, and demonstrating by their practices, this fad rruth.

By this means, fhall we convince gainfayers more than by any arguments: but they are never like to be perfuaded that our judgement, are orthodox, while they perceive our conversations to be hereited. Wicked men are a great different to any party they fide with, and do it imighty difference.

(1) John ii. 3.

• Ποιθντις το Βίλημα τω Θιώ το Βίλημα γινάσπομεν. Clem, Alexendrin. Stromat. Lib. 1. pag. 288.

(m) Matt. vii. 24. (n) Verfe 26.

# CHAP. XXVII. The Design of Christianity.

differvice: I with we of the Church of England did not know this by very woeful experience. And on the other hand, a good life cannot but be of exceeding great force to draw diffenters to the embracing of our religion. We fee that mere pretences to great fanctity do ftrangely make profelytes to feveral forms, that have nothing befides to fet them off. And as for obstinate perfons, who are peremptorily refolved that they will by no means be prevailed with to come over to us, they will, however, be greatly difabled from reproaching our religion, when they are convinc'd that it hath excellent effects on the profeflors of it: or at leaft, neither their reproaches, nor any attempts whatfoever against it, could then ever have fuccefs, or be able to do any thing to its confiderable prejudice. Nor would that idle and fenfelefs talk, whereby fome hot people endeavour to prove us an Anti-Christian Church, be by many, if by any, liftened to, could they difcern among us more Christian lives : could they be once fatisfied that we efteem it our principal interest and concernment, to make our felves and others really and fub/tantially good. So is the will of God (faith S. Peter,) that with well-doing ye may put to filence the ignorance of foolish men (o).

By this means shall we pass cheerfully through this fad world; and in the midft of our thoughts within us, will folid comforts delight our fouls. Little do those think what happiness they deprive themselves of, even in this life, that place their religion in any thing more than an universal refpect to their Saviour's precepts. There is no true Christian that needs to be told, that the more careful he is to obey God, the more fweetly he enjoys himfelf: nor, that a virtuous and holy life doth feveral ways bring in a conftant revenue of peace and pleafure ; even fuch as no earthly thing can afford any that deferves to be nam'd with it. Every good man feels that Chrift's yoke is not lefs pleafant than eafie, nor his burthen more light than delightful : and that all his ways are, upon many accounts, ways of pleafantnefs, and all his paths peace. So that, were there no other reward to be hoped for, but what daily attends them, it would be most unquestionably our interest to walk in them, and to forfake all other for them: and there is no one of Chrift's difciples that by experience understands what his bleffed Master's injunctions are, that would be content to be eased, though he might, of them: or that would accept of a Quietus from performing the duties required by him, though he fhould have it offered him, even with the bread [eal of heaven (which is impoffible to be fuppofed) affixed to it.

But, laftly, by this means thall we obtain, when we depart hence, the end of our faith, even the falvation of our fauls, and arrive at a most happy and glorious immortality. By the purfuance of real and univerfal righteoufnets thall we certainly obtain the crown of righteoufnefs, which our righteous Redeemer hath purchafed for us, and God the Righteous Judge (p)will give unto us. An exceeding and eternal weight of glory we thall alluredly reap, if we faint not, and be not weary of well-doing.

Glory, honour and peace (q) are the undoubted portion of every foul that worketh good. And bleffed are they that do his commandments, for they have right to the tree of life, and shall enter through the gates into the city (r).

(a) 1 Pet. ii. 15. (g) Rom ii. 10. i (p) 2 Tim. 4. (r) Rev. xxii 14. But

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But if on the contrary, we foolifhly fatisfie our felves with an ineffectual faith in Chrift, a notional knowledge and empty profession of his religion, or a meerly external and partial righteousness; these will be fo far from intitling us to the exceeding great and precious promifes of the Gofpel, that they (at least the three former) will much heighten our mifery in the world to come, and exceffively aggravate our condemnation.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter : fear God, and keep his commandments (from a principle of love to him and them) for this is the whole of (the Christian) Man.



# APPENDIX.

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# A P P E N D I X.

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CXX IPENIUS in his Bibliotheca realis Theologica; Cave in his L & Hiftoria Literaria; Du Pin in his Nouvelle Bibliotheque; Bray in his Bibliotheca Parochialis; Calmet in his Bibliotheca Sacra; Fabricius, De Bure, Walchius, and a great many others, have published accounts of the principal writers on Theological Subjects ; I have no intention to emulate the labours of these learned Men; but as some of the Clergy have ability to purchase, and many of them inclination to use a Theological Library, I thought it might be of advantage to the younger part of them, if I put down a few of the most approved Books in Divinity, which have come to my knowledge. My chief difficulty in forming this Catalogue, has been to make it a fhort one; for the number of books explanatory of Scripture, which any perfon, who has a tafte for this kind of learning, would with to be poffelled of, not fo much for the fake of perufing, as of confulting them, is very great. Our English writers alone on Scripture Subjects, are exceeding numerous; the reader who wifhes to fee what the number was, above a century ago, may confult a book published at London, 1668, 2d Ed. intitled, - The Catalogue of our English Writers on the old and new Testament, either in whole or in part, whether Commentators, Elucidators, Annotators, Expositors at large or in fingle Sermons.-It might have been expected that I should have given a more fcientific form to this Catalogue, and if I had been making a complete Bibliotheca Sacra, I would have done it; but in the few books which are here enumerated, I thought it as useful to arrange them according to their fize, as to their fubject.

I am fenfible that I have omitted in this Catalogue the mention of many books, which other men would have introduced into it; but fo I fhould have done, though I had made it twice as long as it is; and yet it is fo copious, that, I believe, there are few fubjects in divinity, on which the Student may not find fufficient Information, by confulting fome or other of the Authors here enumerated. It is probable too, that fome may find fault with me for having introduced books which they would have omitted; I mean those books, especially, which maintain Doctrines opposite to the Articles of the Church of England. But I intreat them to confider, whether we were not Members of the Church of Chrift, before we were Members of the Church of England; and again and again to reflect, whether we can promote the interests of the Church of Christ, by stifling the Arguments of those who think, that as the Church of 7erufalem, Alexandria, Antioch and Rome have erred, fo alfo the Church of England hath erred, not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, VOL.VI. \*A but

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but also in matters of faith. If in this point they think amifs, their arguments will be overthrown and produce no effect; but if they think rightly, God grant that they may produce their proper effect — the prevalence of Gofpel Truth,—And whether they think rightly or amifs, can never be fo clearly known, as by encouraging them, on the moft liberal principles, to publish to the world the refult of their critical inquiries into the meaning of Scripture Language.

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# CATALOGUE OF BOOKS IN DIVINITY.

#### FOLIOS.

- V dit Benj. Kennicot S.T.P. Oxonii, 1776-80, 2 vol.— The Auv dit Benj. Kennicot S.T.P. Oxonii, 1776-80, 2 vol.— The Author of this Work certainly polfelled the *qiromonar* of the diffinguithed writers of the laft century: the great utility of this Collation of Hebrew MSS. will beft be known, when the prefent Englifh Tranflation of the old Teftament fhall be *amended* by Authority; an event which many good men anxioufly expect.
- Biblia Hebraica cum Notis criticis et Verfione Latina ad Notas criticas facta; accedunt Libri Græci qui Deutero-Canonici vocantur in tres Claffes diffributi. Auctore Car. Fran. Houbigant, Lutetiæ Parifiorum, 1753. 4 vol.—The opinion of the Integrity of the common printed Hebrew Text is fhewn, in this Edition of the Bible, to be erroneous; Houbigant having, in this point, anticipated, in fome meafure, the labours of Kennicot. The Latin Verfion, from its conformity to the Idiom of the Hebrew Language, is effcemed inelegant; but it may not on that account be less useful.
- The Hebrew Concordance adapted to the Englifh Bible, difpofed after the Manner of Buxtorf, by John Taylor of Norwich, Lond. 1754, 2 vol.—The firft Concordances of the Holy Scriptures were compofed in the 13th Century, and were of the Latin Vulgate. Concordances gave rife to Lexicons and Dictionaries; and the learned Author of this Concordance recommends it, as not merely ferving to find places of Scripture, but as the beft Hebrew Lexicon which is extant. Other Hebrew Concordances are, That by Marius de Calafio, Rome, 1621, 4 vol. A new edition of which was publifhed by W. Romaine, Lond. 1747.—That by W. Robertfon, intitled, *Thefaurus Lingues Sancha five Concordantiale Lexicon Hebres-Latinum-Biblicum*, Lond. 1680.—And that by Buxtorf, which Taylor made the Ground-work of his own, and of which bihop Barlow fays, though it be lefs, yet whether it be not better than Calafio's, *Doili judicent*.
- Vetus Teftamentum Græcum ex verfione LXX Interpretum, ex Antiquiffimo

quiffino MS. Alexandrino, et Ope aliorum Exemplarium, ac prifeorum Scriptorum, præfettim vero Hexaplaris Editionis Origenianæ emendatum atque fuppletum; fumma cura edidit Joan. Erneftus Grabe S. T. P. Oxonii, 1707, &c. 2 vol. An improved Edition of this Work was publifhed by Breitinger Tiguri Helvetiorum, 1730, 4 vol. 4to. A Collation of the MSS. of the Septuagint, as recommended by Dr. Ower, would certainly be very acceptable to the learned World; and I have no doubt in thinking, that the Syndies of the Univerfity Prefs in Cambridge, would lend a very liberal Affiftance to any one, who would undertake to publifh a properly collated Edition of this ancient Verfion.

- Daniel secundum Septuaginta ex Tetraplis Origenis, nunc primum editus e fingulari Chifiano Codice annorum supra 800, Romæ, 1772. The portion of the Chifianus Codex, which is here published, is diffinguished in the MS. itself by this note, Daniel fecundum LXX descriptus est ab Exemplari ejufmodi Notationem habente " depromptus est Tetraplis cum quibus eft recognitus." In all the Editions of the Septuagint, the Book of Daniel is thought to be printed from the Translation of Theodotion, or at least not from the pure Version of the LXX, (see Dr. Owen's learned Inquiry into the prefent State of the Septuagint Verfion), but the Tetrapla of Origen contained the real pure Version of the LXX; and it is this Version of the Book of Daniel which the learned Author has published, after it had been neglected for above 1500 years. A literal English Translation of this real Septuagint Version of Daniel, accompanied with proper Notes, would be a Work of Credit; and I throw out the hint in hopes that fome one amongst ourfelves may have inclination to purfue it.
- Abrahami Trommii Concordantiæ Græcæ Verfibnis vulgo dictæ Septuaginta Interpretum. Amftel. 1718, 2 vol. Taylor, in fpeaking of his Hebrew Concordance, commends this Greek one as a very exact and judicious Work, and points out the manner of uling it to great advantage in conjunction with his own.
- Biblia Sacra Polyglotta complectentia Textus Originales Hebraicum cum Pentateucho Samaritano, Chaldaicum, Græcum; verfionumque antiquarum Samaritanæ, Græcæ LXXII Interpretum, Chaldaicæ, Svriacæ, Arabicæ, Æthiopicæ, Perficæ, Vulg. Lat. quicquid comparari poterat. Edidit Brianus Waltonus S. T. P. Lond. 1657, 6 vol. Other Polyglots of repute are, That published under the Auspices of Cardinal Ximenes at Alcala or Complutum in 1514, &c. 6 vol. That by Arias Montanus at Antwerp, 1569, &c. 8 vol. That which goes under the name of Vetablus, at Heidelberg, 1568, 2 vol. and that by Mich. le Jay at Paris, 1645, 10 vol. of which De Bure, in his Bibliographie Instructive, fays, that Walton's was but a re-impression. The truth is, that every fublequent Polyglot was an improvement upon the preceding; and Walton's, as being the laft, comprehends, together with various Additions, every Thing of Value that is contained in any of the reft. The Prolegomena prefixed to this Polyglot will give much information to the Reader, concerning facred Chronology from the Creation of the World to the Deftruction of Jerufalem by the Romans; concerning the Monies, Weights, and Measures of the Hebrews. A 2 Greeks.

Greeks, and Romans; concerning the Geography of the Holy Land; the Defcription of the City and Temple of Jerufalem; the Origin of Languages; the Verfions and Editions of the Bible, &c.

- Lexicon Heptaglotton Hebraicum, Chaldaicum, Syriacum, Samaritanum, Æthiopicum, Arabicum, et Perficum, digeftum et evulgatum, ab Edvardo Caftello, Lond. 1686, 2 vol. — Caftel affifted Walton in the publication of his Polyglot; he foon afterwards compofed this Lexicon as a neceflary Supplement to that Work. He fays of himfelf, Dies ille tanquam feftus et stiefus vijus eft, in quo tam Bibliis Pelyglottis quam Lexicis hifee provehendis fexaletim aut ofieldecim horas dietim non infudavi: and that for near twenty years together!
- Humfredi Hodii de Bibliorum Textibus Óriginalibus, Verfionibus Græcis, et Latina Vulgata, Libri IV. viz. I. Contra Hiftoriam LXX Interpretum Arifteæ nomine inferiptam Differtatio, &c. II. De Verfione (quam vocant) LXX Interpretum auctoribus veris, eamque Conficiendi Tempore, Modo, et Ratione. III. Hiftoria Scholaftica Textuum Originalium, Verfionifque Græcæ LXX dictæ, et Latinæ Vulgatæ, &c. IV. De cæteris Græcis Verfionibus, Origenis Hexaplis, &c. præmittitur Arifteæ Hiftoria Græcè et Latině. Oxon. 1705.
- Novum Teftamentum Græcum, cum Lectionibus variantibus MSS. Éxemplarium, Verfionum, Editionum, SS. Patrum et Scriptorum Ecclefiafticorum; et in eafdem notis. Accedunt Loca Scripturæ Parallela, aliaque exegetica. Præmittitur Differtatio de Libris N.T. et Canonis Confitutione, et S. Textus N. Fæderis ad noftra ufque Tempora Hiftoria. Studio et Labore Joan. Millii S. T. P. Collectionem Millianam recenfuit, meliori ordine difpofuit novifque acceffionibus locupletavit Ludolphus Kufterus. Roterodami, 1710. The Edition of this Teftament, publifhed at Oxford in 1707, is preferable to this for the largenefs of the Type; another Edition, with Kufter's Additions, was publifhed at Leipfic, 1723.
- Novum Teffanientum Græcum Editionis receptæ, cum Lectionibus variantibus Codicum MSS. Editionum aliarum, Verfionum, et Patrum, nec-non Commentario pleniore ex Scriptoribus veteribus Hebræis, Græcis et Latinis Hiftoriam et vim Verborum illuftrante. Opera et Studio Joan. Jacob. Wetfleinii, Amftel. 1751-2, 2 vol. The Author, in the *Prolegomena* to this Work, treats of the Manuferipts, Verfions, and moft of the noted Editions of the Greek Teffament which were publifhed before his own, which he reckons to have been 19 or 20, beginning with that publifhed at Complutum in 1514. "Sunt autem Editiones principes N. T. (neglečtis iis editionibus, quæ priorem aliquam \*aræ moða exprimunt) in univerfum viginti aut novendecim." The Prolegomena were publifhed feparately in 1730, and again by Semler, Halæ Magdebriæ, 1764; with fome Additions and an Appendix concerning the ancient Latin Verfions.
- Novi Teftamenti Jefu Chriffi Græci, hoc eft Originalis Linguæ Tameion, aliis Concordantiæ, Opera Eraf. Schmidii, Lipfiæ, 1717. This Book was firft publifhed at Wittemberg in 1638, and it is looked upon as a great Improvement of the Concordance of Henry Stephens, publifhed in 1595. This Concordance may be of great fervice in affiling the reader to find out the true meaning of any word, which has been

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ufed more than once by the Writers of the new Teftament; for, by a comparison of the fenses in which it has been ufed in different places, he will be able to investigate the fense it bears in the place in question.

- Harmonia Evangelica, cui fubjecta eft Hiftoria Chriffi ex quatuor Evangeliis concinnata. Accefferunt tres Differtationes de annis Chriffi, de que Concordia et Auctoritate Evangeliorum, auctore Joan. Clerico. Amftel. 1699. and in Englifh in 4to. Lond. 1701.
- An Harmony of the Gofpels, in which the Original Text is difpoted after Le Clerc's general Manner, with fuch various Readings at the Foot of the Page, as have received Wetthein's Sanction in his folio Edition of the Greek Teftament. Obfervations are fubjoined tending to fettle the Time and Place of every Tranfaction, to eftablish the Series of Facts, and to reconcile feeming Inconfistencies. By W. Newcome, D. D. Bifhop of Offory. Dublin, 1778. Many other Harmonies of the Gofpels have been published, but none preferable to this.
- Critici Sacri, five doctifimorum Virorum in SS. Biblia Annotationes et Tractatus. Lond. 1660, et Amftel. 1698. Cornelius Bee, the Printer of this great Work, and who had a Patent for the Sale of it, thus intimates its Value to the Reader. "Hic enim circiter libri nonaginta, iique integri, in novem colerunt, et libræ plus minus quinquagenæ (nuper vix aut ne vix minoris hæc omnia coemifles) jam ad quindenas rediguntur." The prefent Price of this Work is not above two or three pounds. Amongft the 90 Authors whofe Annotations on the whole or on different parts of the Bible are here printed intire, we meet with the names of Munfter, Fagius, Vetablus, Caftalio, Clarius, Drufius, Grotius, Erafinus, Scaliger, Cafaubon, Capellus, Scultetus, Pricæus, &c.
- Synopfis Criticorum aliorumque S. Scripturæ Interpretum. Opera Mat, Poli. Lond. 1669-74, 5 vol. — This Work is a kind of an Abridgment of the preceding, inriched however with many additions. It certainly may be of great use to those who have not the command of many Books; and it is now fold for five and twenty or thirty fhillings. It was reprinted at Utretch in 1684; and fince that time two other Editions of it have been published in Germany: which shews, that, into whatever degree of neglest this Synopsis may have fallen amongst ourfelves, it is much efteemed abroad.
- Hugonis Grotii Opera omnia Theologica in tres Tomos (ufually bound in four Volumes) divifa, ante quidem per partes nunc autem conjunctim et accuratius Edita. Amftel. 1679, 4 vol. Another Edition at Bafil, 1732. — Grotius was of the fame age with Epifcopius, whofe
- Theological Infitutes he fo greatly admired, that he is faid to have always carried them about with him. Calmet affirms, that Grotius' Opinions are very ambiguous as to the Article of Christ's Divinity, and the Doctrine of Original Sin; that his Preface and Explanation of the Canticles are fcandalous; that he weakens or reduces almost to nothing the Prophecies relating to Jefus Christ. Notwithstanding this cenfure, Grotius is defervedly effeemed one of the belt general Commentators on Scripture. Vitringa fays of him, Hugo Grotius w rous μer deguarw w have axguens, fed eruditionis et limati catera judicii refpectu haud

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dubie post Erasinum to tots Belgarum aestots cenfcendus. And with refpect to his dogmata, it ought not, furely, to be concluded, that an Interpreter denies a doctrine, because he does not admit the usual exposition of texts weakly adduced in its fupport. Grotius' notions concerring the Pope's not being Antichrift, and concerning Paul's expectation of living till the General Judgment; are, in the Opinion of many fensible Protestants, far more erroneous than any thing he has faid about the Canticles.

- Mofis Prophetæ Libri quinque ex Translatione Joannis Clerici, cum ejusdem Paraphrafi perpetua, Commentario Philologico, Disfertationibus criticis Tabulisque Chronologicis et Geographicis. Ed. 2da. auctior et emendatior. Amstel. 1710.
- Veteris Teftamenti Libri Hiftorici ex Translatione Joan. Clerici, cum ejusidem Commentario Philologico, Dissertationibus Criticis et Tabulis Chronologicis. Amstel. 1708.
- Veteris Teffamenti Libri Hagiographi ex Translatione Joan. Clerici, cum ejusdem Commentario Philologico in omnes memoratos Libros et Paraphrafi in Jobum ac Pfalmos. Amstel. 1731.
- Veteris Teftamenti Prophetæ ab Efaia ad Malachiam uíque ex Tranflatione J. Clerici, cum ejufdem Commentario Philologico et Paraphrafi in Efaiam, Jeremiam, ejus Lamentationes et Abdiam. Amftel. 1731. Thus we have the Tranflation of all the Books of the old Teftament, and a Paraphrafe and Notes on the greateft part of them, by one of the moft learned and judicious Critics of this Century. The Differtations contained in this work are, I. De Lingua Hebraica. 2. De optimo genere Interpretum S. Scripturæ. 3. De Scriptore Pentatuchi Mole, ejufque in feribendo confilio. 4. De Sodomæ finitimar umque Urbium fubverfione. 5. De Statua Salina. 6. De Maris Idumæi trajectione. 7. A Tranflation into Latin of the three firft Chapters of Selden's Hiftory of Tythes. 8. De Scriptoribus Librorum Hiftoricorum veteris Teftamenti. 9. De LXXII virorum in Republica Populi Hebræi Synedrio. 10. De Lepra Mofaica. 11. A Tranflation into Latin of Smith's Difcourfe on Prophecy. 12. De
- Novum Teftamentum Domini noftri Jefu Chrifti, ex Verfione Vulgata, cum Paraphrafi et Adnotationibus Henrici Hammondi ex Anglica Lingua in Latinam tranftulit, fuifque Animadverfionibus illuftravit, caftigavit, auxit Joan. Clericus. Ed. 2da. Francofort. 1714, 2 vol. All thefe Works of Le Clerc may be met with uniformly bound under the Title of, Clericus in vetus et novum Teftamentum, 6 vol.
- A Commentary on all the Books of the old Testament, excepting the Prophets, by Bishop Patrick, in 3 vol. 1679-94, 4th. Ed. Lond. 1732.
- A Commentary upon the larger and leffer Prophets, being a Continuation of Bihop Patrick, by W. Lowth, D. D. 3d. Ed. Lond. 1730.
- A critical Commentary upon the Book of the Wildom of Solomon, upon Ecclefiafticus, Tobit, Judith, Baruch, the Hiltory of Sulannah, and Bel and the Dragon; to which are added, two Differtations on the Books of the Maccabees and Eldras, being a Continuation of Bp. Patriek and Mr. Lowth, by R. Arnald, B. D. Lond, 1744-52. Thefe five

five Volumes contain the beft Commentary on the old Teftament and the Apocrypha, which we have in the English Language.

- The Theological Works of the learned Dr. Pocock, fometime Profeffor of the Hebrew and Arabic Tongues in the University of Oxford, and Canon of Chrift Church, containing his Porta Mofis and English Commentary on Hofea, Joel, Micah, and Malachi. To which is prefixed, an Account of his Life and Writings, never before printed, with the Addition of a new general Index to the Commentary, by Leo. Twells. Lond. 1740, 2 vol.
- The Works of the reverend and learned John Lightfoot, D. D. late Master of Catharine Hall in Cambridge and Prebend of Ely. Revifed and corrected by George Bright, D. D. Lond. 1684, 2 vol. Another Edition of this Work with a Latin Translation of what Dr. Lightfoot had written in English and some Additions, was published at Rotterdam in 1686.
- A Collection of Polemical Discourses, by Jeremy Taylor, D. D. late Lord Bishop of Down and Connor. 3d. Ed. Lond. 1674. The Tract intitled, The Liberty of Prophefying; in which the Author contends, that none ought to be excluded from Christian Communion who believe the Apoftles' Creed, is effeemed the most valuable in the Collec. tion. It was published in 4to. 1647.
- Commentarius in Librum Prophetiarum Jefaiæ, quo fenfus Orationis ejus fedulo investigatur; in veras visorum interpretandorum Hypothefes inquiritur et ex iifdem facta interpretatio antiquæ Historiæ monumentis confirmatur atque illustratur, cum Prolegomenis, cura et studio Campegii Vitringa. Ed. nova Leovardiæ 1724, 2 vol.
- A Paraphrafe and Commentary on the new Testament, by Dan. Whitby. 5th. Ed. Lond. 1727, 2 vol.-Whitby fays in his Preface, that he found fo many things faid by Le Clerc, in his Animadverfions on Hammond, in favour of the Arians, that he protracted the publication of his Work till he had prepared an Antidote for them. It is but Juffice to him to obferve, that he lived to change his Sentiments upon this fubject, as may be feen in a Tract, called Whitby's last Thoughts. Henry's Exposition of the old and new Testament, in 6 vol. fol. Ift. Ed. 1706. laft in 1772; and Burkit's Exposition of the new Teftament, last Ed. in 1779, are works of great merit; but if I was to mention any other Commentator on the whole Bible, it fhould be Calmet, whofe work, intitled, La Sainte Bible en Latin et en François. avec un Commentaire littéral et critique; which was published at Paris in 9 vol. fol. 1724, and before that in 26 vol. 4to. This is a very excellent Work, containing, befides the Commentary, many learned Differtations on various Subjects. A Collection of the Differtations with many Corrections and Additions was published in 1720, in 3 vol. 4to.
- Bibliotheca Fratrum Polonorum quos Unitarios vocant, instructa omnibus Operibus Faufti Socini Senenfis, Nobiliffimi Itali; Joan. Crellii, Franci; Jonæ Slichtingii a Bucowietz Equitis Poloni, exegeticis; et Joan. Ludovici Wolzogenii Baronis Auftriaci, quæ omnia fimul juncta totius novi Testamenti explicationem complectuntur. Irenopoli poft annum Domini 1656, 8 vol. and with the works of Przicovius and

and Brennius, 9 vol. Piget quidem horum Commentarios Christianorum inter adnumerare, multo magis in Bibliothecam Christianam reponere; quos utinam in æternis fepultos tenebris manere concederetur, fays Dr. Bray: On the other hand, There is, fays Dr. Harwood in his Effay on the Socinian Scheme, " hardly a good Criticifm in all our modern Expositors Mr. Locke, Dr. Clarke, Dr. Benson, Dr. Taylor, Meffrs. Pearce and Hallet, Dr. Sykes, but what is to be found in the Bibliotheca Fratrum Polonorum." Dr. Harwood is not fingular in this opinion, and if it be a true one, these books may be confulted with advantage, by those who do not adopt the particular Tenets of Socinus and the Unitarians, as well as by those who do. It does not become us as Protestants to proferibe the use of any book, merely becaufe it queftions the validity of doctrines which we think true; that is the narrow and illiberal policy of those, who are busied in buttressing up rotten fabrics of hypocrify and fuperflition, by Imprimaturs and expurgatory Indexes. The reader will meet with a lift of various authors who opposed the doctrines of Socinus, in Bishop Barlow's Directions for the Choice of Books in the Study of Divinity.

- Thefaurus Theologico-Philologicus, five Sylloge Differtationum elegantiorum ad felectiora et illuftriora veteris et novi Teftimenti loca a Theologis Protestantibus in Germania feparatim diversis temporibus conferiptarum. Amstel. 1701, 2 vol.
- Thefaurus Novus Theologico-Philologicus, five Sylloge Differtationum exegeticarum, ad felectiora atque infigniora veteris et novi Tefamenti loca a Theologis Proteftantibus maximam partem in Germania diverfis temporibus feparatim editarum. Lugduni Batavorum. 1732, 2 vol. Thefe four volumes may be eafily niet with; I have a fufpicion that two other volumes have been publifhed fince 1732, but I have never feen them. In moft of thefe differtations which I have read, there is more oftentation of learning than inflructive criticifin. They are ufeful however to be confulted.
- Dictionaire Hiftorique, Critique, Chronologique, Geographique et Literal de la Bible, par Augustin Calmet. a Paris, 1730, 4 vol. A tranflation of this truly valuable work, with occasional remarks, was publistic and the start of the start of the start of the start of the start *Bibliotheca Sacra*, or an account of the most celebrated writers on the Scriptures. I with that fome Perfon, who has leisure and ability for the undertaking, would publish this Bibliotheca, with the Addition, under the proper heads, of such books of Merit on Theological Subjects, as have appeared fince the year 1730. Our *English Reviews*, the *Journal des Scavans*, the Azia Eguditorum, and other periodical works, would greatly affish thim, not only in finding out the books which have been published, but in forming, in most cafes, a tolerable judgment of their merit.
- A new Hiftory of the Holy Bible, from the Beginning of the World to the Eftablifhment of Chriftianity, with Anfwers to most of the controverted Queflions, Differtations upon the most remarkable Paffages, and a Connection of profane Hiftory all along. To which are added, Notes explaining difficult Texts, rectifying Mif-translations, and reconciling feeming Contradictions. The whole illustrated with one bundred

hundred and four ufeful and ornamental Maps and Sculptures, engraved by the beft Hands, from original Paintings, by the Rev. Tho. Stackhoufe, A. M. Lond. 1752. The firft Edition of this Book was publifhed in 1742. It is ftill efteemed a very ufeful work and fold at a good price. The Author publifhed a Body of Divinity and other Works.

- An Hiftorical Dictionary of all Religions, from the Creation of the World to the prefent Time, by J. Broughton, A. M. Lond. 1756, 2 vol. The Germans have thought fo well of this Work as to translate it into their own Language.
- The Religious Ceremonies and Cuftoms of the feveral Nations of the known World; reprefented in an hundred Copper-plates, defigned by the famous Picart, together with hiftorical Explanations and feveral curious Differtations, written originally in French, and now publifhed in Englifh, with very confiderable Amendments and Additions, in 6 vol. Lond. 1731. If ever another Edition of this curious Work fhould be attempted, the Religion of the Inhabitants of the newly difcovered Parts of the Globe, will make an important Article in it. Some future Bochart or Bryant will then add another Argument in Favour of revealed Religion, by tracing the Origin of the Inhabitants of New Zealand and Otabeite to the common Stock Noah.
- Thefaurus Antiquitatum Sacrarum complectens felectifiima Clariffimorum virorum Opufcula, in quibus veterum Hebræorum Mores, Leges, Inftituta, Ritus facri et civiles, illuftrantur: Opus ad illuftrationem utriufque Teftamenti, et ad Philologiam facram et profanam utiliffimum maximeque neceffarium, auctore Blafio Ugolino. Venetiis, 1744-69, 34 vol. Many other Books treating of Jewith Antiquities have been publifhed; but thofe who have a taite for fuch fort of reading will find this collection far more ufeful to them, than any other of the kind.
- Samuelis Bocharti Opera omnia; hoc eft Phaleg, Chanaan, feu Geographia Sacra; et Hierozoicon, five de Animalibus Sacra Scriptura, et Differtationes variæ. Edit. nova, auctoris cura Joan. Leuden et Petri Villemandz. Lugd. Bata. 1712, 3 vol. Phyfica Sacra, or the Natural Hiftory of the Bible, adorned with 750 Plates, was publifhed at Aufburg in Germany in 1731, 4 vol. fol. by T. T. Scheuchzer, and it was tranflated into French in 1732, 8 vol. fol. This is a magnificent work, in which the author has made much use of Bochart's Hierozoicon.
- Difcours Hiftoriques, Critiques, Theologiques, et Moraux, fur les Evenemens les plus memorables du vieux et du nouveaux Teftament, par Mr. Saurin, &c. avec des Figures fur les Deffeins de Hoet, Houbraken, Picart. A la Haye, 1735-9, 6 vol. Mr. Vander Marck formed a defign of reprefenting on copper plates, the moft memorable events of facred Hiftory, and he engaged Mr. Saurin to write an explanation of the plates; this gave rife to the difcourfes here publifhed.
- De legibus Hebræorum Ritualibus et earum rationibus Libri quatuor, auctore Joan. Spencero S. T. D. Edidit L. Chappelow, Cant. 1727, 2 vol. In this work the learned author contends, that God introduced into

into the Jewifh Ceremonial a great many Egyptian Rites, and accommodated them to the Prejudices of the Ifraelites, who had lived many years in Egypt. This Notion has been oppofed and defended by various authors; the reader will find it flortly and ably refuted, in a Treatife by Dr. Woodward, intitled, a Difcourfe on the Worfhip of the ancient Egyptians, communicated to the Society of Antiquaries by Dr. Lort in 1775.

- Flavii Jofephi Opera omnia, Gr. et Lat. cum Notis Hudfoni, Præfatione et Commentariis Havercampii. Amftel. 1716, 2 vol. This work has been translated into English by different Authors, particularly by Whiston in 1737.
- Hiftoriæ Ecclessatticæ Scriptores Græci nempe Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, Teodoretus, &c. Gr. et Lat. cum Notis variorum. Cantab. 1720, 3 vol.
- SS. Patrum qui temporibus Apostolicis floruerunt Barnabæ, Clementis, Hermæ, Ignatii, Polycarpi opera edita et inedita vera et supposititia, una cum Clementis, Ignatii, Polycarpi Actis atque Martyriis Opera Cotelerii; accefferunt in hac nova editione notæ integræ aliorum virorum doctorum qui in fingulos Patres memoratos fcripferunt, et quorum nomina in præfatione habentur; item Gulielmi Beveregii Codex Canonum Primitivæ Ecclefiæ vindicatus; Jacobi Ufferii Differtationes Ignatianæ, et Joan. Pearfonii vindiciæ Epiftolarum S. Ignatii, recenfuit et notulas aliquot adspersit Joan. Clericus. Antwerpiæ, 1698, 2 vol. Another Ed. at Amfter. 1724. There is a celebrated work. intitled, Bibliotheca maxima veterum Patrum; 27 volumes of which were published at Lyons, 1677; an Index to the work at Genoa in 1707; and an Apparatus to it at Paris, 1715, 2 vol. making in the whole 30 volumes in folio. The Church of Rome maintains many doctrines for which there is no foundation, except in the writings of the Fathers; the Reformed Churches acknowledge the Bible to be the fole rule of their faith; and hence, amongft them, the Fathers are not to highly effeemed as by the Church of Rome; especially fince the publication of Daille's Book De ufu Patrum, and of Whitby's and Middleton's Sentiments on that Subject. And, indeed, the Members of the Church of Rome itfelf, when not engaged in difpute with Hereticks, fpeak flightingly enough of the Fathers; for one of them, as quoted by Bp. Barlow, tells us, "that if every thing was left out of the Fa. thers which we now believe not, bona pars Scriptorum et Patrum periret." As Interpreters of Scripture they are far inferior to the Moderns, but they may be uleful examples to us in Piety and Zeal. Very good editions of the works of Clement of Alexandria, of Irenæus, Cyprian, Justin, Jerome, Chryfostom, &c. &c. may be frequently purchafed at a low price. He who can afford the expence will purchafe the beft editions of all books; but those who cannot do that, should not neglect the opportunity of furnishing themselves with inferior editions: very uleful libraries, in all fciences, may by this kind of attention be eafily procured.
- Thefaurus Ecclefiafticus ex Patribus Græcis, ordine Alphabetico exhibens quæcunque Phrafes, Ritus, Dogmata, Hærefes, et hujufinodi alia fpectant,

fpectant, opera J. Calp. Suiceri. Amstel. 1612, 2 vol. Another Ed. at Amsterdam in 1728.

- The Works of the learned Jof. Bingham, A. M. containing the Origines Ecclefiafticæ, or Antiquities of the Chriftian Church. A Scholaftical Hiftory of Lay Baptilm. The French Churches' Apology for the Church of England. A Difcourfe concerning the Mercy of God to penitent Sinners. Lond. 1726, 2 vol.
- A new History of Ecclesiaftical Writers: containing a Catalogue and an Abridgment of their Works, and a Judgment of their Style and Doctrine; allo a compendious History of the Councils and all Affairs transacted in the Church, from the Birth of Chrift to the Year 1550, written in French by L. E. du Pin. Lond. 1696-1703, 6 vol. Du Pin was a laborious, and, for a Catholic, a liberal Writer; this work is full of erudition, and may be bought for a trifle.
- Scriptorum Ecclesiafticorum Hiftoria Literaria a Chrifto Nato, ulque ad Sæculum XIV facili methodo digesta, qua de Vita eorum et rebus geitis, de Secta, Dogmatibus, Elogio, Stylo; de Scriptis Genuinis, Dubiis, Suppontitiis, Ineditis, Deperditis, Fragmentis, de variis operum Editionibus agitur. Accedunt Scriptores Gentiles Christianæ Religionis oppugnatores, et cujuívis Sæculi Breviarium. Inferuntur fuis locis veterum aliquot Opuscula et Fragmenta tum Græca tum Latina hactenus inedita. Præmiffa denique Prolegomena, quibus plurima ad Antiquitatis Ecclefiafticæ studium spectantia traduntur opus Indicibus neceffariis inftructum. Auctore Guilielmo Cave S.T.P. accedit ab alia manu Appendix ab ineunte Sæculo XIV ad annum 1517. Lond. 1688, et pars altera 1698. This work is fo well defcribed in the title, that the reader will fully apprehend its ufe, and of great use I conceive it to be; for it has been wifely faid, Scire ubi aliquid posses invenire magna pars eruditionis est. It opens with an account of the Letter to Agbarus, which Cave supposes our Saviour to have written; and it ends with an account of the Writings of Martin Luther. A new edition was published at Geneva, 1720, and another at Oxford, 1740. A kind of Supplement to this and other works of the fame kind, was published at Leipsic in 1722, under the following title, Cafimiri Oudini Commentarius de Scriptoribus Ecclefiæ antiquis illorumque Scriptis, tam impreffis quam Manufcriptis adhuc extantibus in celebrioribus Europæ Bibliothecis, a Bellarmino Poffevino, Philippo Labbeo, Gulielmo Caveo, Ludovico Ellia de Pin, et aliis omiffis ad annum 1460, vel ad artem Typographicam inventam; cum multis Differtationibus in quibus infignium Ecclefiæ auctorum Opufcula atque alia Argumenta notabiliora accurate et prolixe examinantur, tribus Voluminibus cum Indicibus necessariis.
- M. Simonis Epifcopii SS. Theologiæ in Academia Leydenfi quondam Profefforis opera Theologica. Ed. 2da. Lond. 1678. Le Clerc has obferved, that Hammond in his Annotations on the new Teftament borrowed largely from Grotius and Epifcopius, and Tillotfon has been called a Difciple of the latter. Epifcopius acknowledges (Inftitut. Theol. I. iv. cap. 34.) that Jefus Chriff is called in Scripture the Son of God, not merely on the account either of his miraculous Conception, or of his Mediation, or of his Refurrection, or of his Mediation, but

on a fifth account, which, in his opinion, clearly implies his Pre-exiftence; yet he contends, that it is not neceffary to Salvation, either to know or believe this fifth mode of Filiation; because it is not any where faid in Scripture to be neceffary to be either known or believed; because we may have faith in and pay obedience to Chrift without knowing or believing it; because for the three first centuries the Chriftian Church did not efteem a profession of belief in this mode to be neceffary to Salvation. Bp. Bull attacked with great learning this third reason of Episcopius; Le Clerc defended him as to a particular point (in his Hiftoria Ecclessification, p. 636.), and has himfelf been animadverted on, with respect to this point, by Thirlby in his Notes on Ju-Jin's Dialogue with Trypho; to fay nothing of those, on either fide,who have been recently engaged in a fimilar Controverfy.

- Stephani Curcellæi Opera Theologica, quorum pars præcipua Inflitutio Religionis Chriftianæ. Amftel. 1675. Curcellæus was a liberal and acute Divine; we are indebted to him for the edition of the works of Epifcopius; his own were publifhed after his death by Limborch.
- Philippi a Limborch Theologia Chriftiana; accedit Relatio Hiftorica de origine et progreffu Controversiarum in Fæderato Belgio. Amstel. 1715, and at the Hague in 1736. This is an excellent System of Theology, yet the Author of it ingenuoufly preferred Mr. Locke's little Tract of the Reafonableness of Christianity, to this and all other Systems. Systema Theologiæ me scripsiffe nosti: non tamen eo in pretio abud me funt Systemata, ut non hunc exiguum trastatum (Reasonableness of Christianity) multis Systematibus præferam; imo plus veræ Theologiæ ex illo quam ex operofis multorum Systematibus hausisse me ingenue profiteor. Limb. Let. to Locke. After the works of these three foreigners, (to which, but for fear of fwelling the Catalogue, I would have added those of Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Zuinglius, &c.) I will mention a few of the most eminent of our English Divines; and he who will take the trouble of comparing their fentiments, with those of the three foreign ones just mentioned, on any intricate point of Divinity, will certainly (whether they agree or difagree in fentiment) be qualified to form a rational judgment on the fubject.
- The Works of the pious and profoundly learned Jofeph Mede. Lond. 1664. and again in 1677. Modern expositors of the prophecies, contained in the Revelation and in the book of Daniel, have very properly availed themselves of the lights held out to them by this great divine: what he has faid in this work concerning Gospel Demoniacs being Lunatics, properly excited the attention of the learned to that question, which has been very ably argued, on both fides, fince his time.
- The Works of W. Chillingworth, M. A. of the Univerfity of Oxford, containing his Book, entitled, The Religion of Proteftants a fafe Way to Salvation; together with his nine Sermons, preached before the King or upon eminent Occafions, his Letter to Mr. Lewgar concerning the Church of Rome's being the Guide of Faith and Judge of Controverfies, his nine additional Difcourfes, and his Anfwer to fome Paffages in Rufhworth's Dialogues concerning Tradition. Lond 1704. The 10th. Ed. with his Life by Birch in 1742.

An Exposition of the Creed by Bp. Pearson. 12th. Ed. Lond. 1741.

The

- The Works of the learned Isaac Barrow, D. D. (being all his English Works) in three Volumes, published by his Grace Dr. John Tillotfon, late Archbishop of Canterbury. Lond. 1741.
- The Works of the most reverend D. John Tillotfon, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, with the Life of the Author, by Tho. Birch, A. M. 3 vol. Lond. 1752.
- The Works of that eminent and moft learned Prelate Dr. Ed. Stillingfleet, late Bp. of Worcefter, together with his Life and Character, 6 vol. Lond.1710. When I was a young man, I had formed a mean opinion of the reafoning faculties of Bp. Stillingfleet, from reading Mr. Locke's Letter and two Replies to him; but a better acquaintance with the Bifhop's works has convinced me that my opinion was ill-founded; though no match for Mr.Locke in ftrength and acutenefs of argument, yet his Origines Sacra, and other works, fhew him to have been not merely a fearcher into Ecclefiaftical Antiquities, but a found Divine and a good Reafoner.
- Georgii Bulli Opera omnia quibus duo præcipui Catholicæ fidei Articuli de Trinitate et Juftificatione orthodoxe, perfpicue, ac folide explanantur, illuftrantur, confirmantur, nunc demum in unum volumen collecta, ac multo correctiùs quam ante una cum generalibus indicibus edita. Quibus jam accefit ejufdem Tractatus, hactenus ineditus, de Primitiva et Apoltolica Traditione Dogmatis de Jefu Chrifti Divinitate, contra Danielem Zuicherum ejufque nuperos in Anglia Sectatores. Subnexa infuper pluribus fingulorum librorum Capitibus prolixa quandoque Annotata Joannis Ernefti Grabe, cujus etiam præfatio huic volumini eft præmifia. Lond. 1703. This work of Bp. Bull is efteemed by the learned, as one of the main pillars of what is called Orthodoxy: it was tranflated into Englifh, though I have never feen the tranflation, by Fran. Holland, A. M.
- The Works of John Locke, Efq; 3 vol. Lond. 1759. A later Ed. in 4 vol. 4 to. in 1777.
- The Works of Sam. Clarke, D. D. late Rector of St. James, with his Life, by Bp. Hoadley. Lond. 1738, 4 vol.
- The Works of Benjamin Hoadley, Bp. of Winchefter. Lond. 1773, 3 vol. One knows not where to ftop in this enumeration of great Divines; Hall, Jackíon, Beveridge, Scott, Fleetwood, Blackhall, Fiddes, Leflie, &c. &c. all claim attention, and their works ought to find a place in every complete Theological Library.
- A Defence of Natural and Revealed Religion, being a Collection of the Sermons preached at the Lecture founded by the Hon. Robert Boyle (from the year 1691 to the year 1732), with the Additions and Amendments of the feveral Authors and general Indexes, in 3 vol. Lond. 1739. Many of thefe Sermons have been published in feparate volumes, and there is an Abridgment of the whole. If all other Defences of Religion were loft, there is folid Reafoning enough (if properly weighed) in thefe three volumes to remove the Scruples of molt Unbelievers.
- A Prefervative against Popery, in feveral felect Discourses upon the principal Heads of Controversy between Protestants and Papists, written and published by the most eminent Divines of the Church of England, chiefly in the Reign of King James the II. Lond. 1738, 2 vol. A third

vol.

vol. was published foon after. We are indebted to Bp. Gibson for this Collection, if not for that also of the Sermons at Boyle's Lectures; both these works may be very useful to young divines, in fuggesting to them much folid matter for their compositions for the pulpit.

- Theses Theologicæ variis temporibus in Academia Sedanensi editæ et ad disputandum propositæ, auctore Ludovico Le Blanc. Lond. 1683. This work may very properly accompany the preceding, as it is written with great learning and candour, upon the principal subjects of Controvers, between the Roman and the Reformed Churches.
- Petri Danielis Huetii Demonstratio Evangelica. Ed. 3tia. Paris. 1690. This is a methodical work, replete with erudition. A valuable part of it is that in which the author endeavours to prove, Mythologiam Ethnicorum omnem ex codicibus Sacris, facrifque historiis mutatis, diffimulatis, interpolatis, prodiiffe; for, though he may carry his hypothesis too far, of Moses representing, under different names, most of the Gods of the Heathens, yet the deduction of Heathen Mythology from Sacred Hiftory, is a strong proof of the truth of the latter.

Ecclefiaftical Polity by Rich. Hooker. Lond. 1705.

- An Exposition of the 39 Articles, by Bp. Burnet.
- A Commentary on the Book of Common Prayer, by W. Nichols, D.D. 2d. Ed. Lond. 1712.
- The Hiftory of the Reformation of the Church of England, by Gilbert Burnet, 3 vol. Lond. 1679-81. and again in 1715. The author publifhed an Abridgment of this work in one vol. 8vo. in 1682. The work itfelf was to well effeemed that, after the publication of the first part, both houles of Parliament voted thanks to the author and exprefied their wiftes that he would continue it.
- An Ecclefiaftical Hiftory of Great Britain, chiefly of England, from the firft Planting of Chriftianity to the End of the Reign of King Charles the Second, with a brief Account of the Affairs of Religion in Ireland, collected from the beft ancient Hiftorians, Councils, and Records, by Jeremy Collier, M. A. Lond. 1708-14.
- Annals of the Reformation and Eftablifhment of Religion, and other vaaious Occurrences in the Church of England, by John Strype, M. A. in 4 vol. Lond. 1725-31. There is prefixed to the fecond volume, a kind of teftimonial of Mr. Strype's ability for writing an Ecclefiaftical Hiftory of the Church of England, at and after the firft Reformation, and a recommendation of his work, figned by above twenty Bifhops.
- The Church Hiftory of England, from the year 1500 to the year 1688, chiefly with Refpect to the Catholics, being a complete Account of the Divorce, Supremacy, Diffolution of Monalteries, and first Attempts for a Reformation under King Henry VIII. the unfettled State of the Reformation under Ed. VI. the Interruption it met with from Queen Mary; with the laft Hand put to it by Queen Elixabeth. Together with the various Fortunes of the Catholic Caufe during the Reigns of King James I. King Charles I. King Charles II. King James II. Particularly the Lives of the most eminent Catholicks, Cardinals, Bifhops, inferior Clergy, Regulars, and Laymen, who have diffinguished themfelves by their Piety, Learning, or Military Abilities : alfo a diflingt

ftinct and critical Account of the Works of the Learned: the Trials of those that fuffered either on the Score of Religion, or the real or fictitious Plots against the Government; with the Foundations of all the English Colleges and Monasteries abroad. The Whole supported by original Papers and Letters, many whereof were never before made publick. To which is prefixed, a general History of Ecclessifical Affairs under the British, Saxon, and Norman Periods. 3 vol. Bruffels, 1737. The Author's name is not mentioned.

- The Ecclefiastical History of England to the eighteenth Century, by Ferd. Warner, D. D. Lond. 1756. Other Ecclefiastical Historians of our own Country are Bede, Fox, Fuller, Usher, Parker, &c. &c.
- Codex Juris Ecclefiaftici Anglicani, or the Statutes, Conflitutions, Canons, Rubricks and Articles of the Church of England, methodically digetted under their proper Heads, with a Commentary hiftorical and judicial. Before it is an introductory Difcourfe concerning the prefent State of the Power and Difcipline and Laws of the Church of England, and after it an Appendix of Inftruments ancient and modern, by Ed. Gibfon, Bifhop of London, 2d. Ed. revifed and corrected with large Additions by the Author. Oxford, 1761, 2 vol. This is by much the moft valuable work we have on this fubject; it may be proper, however, to read along with it a pamphlet, faid to have been written by Judge Fofter, intitled, An Examination of the Scheme of Church Power, laid down in the Codex Juris Ecclefiaftici Anglicani. Lond. 1726, 3d. Ed.
- Euroducer five Pandectæ Canonum SS. Apoftolorum et Conciliorum ab Ecclefia Græca receptorum, &c. per Gul. Beveregium. Oxon. 1672, 2 vol. Bp. Barlow fays, that this work is of great ufe for a comprehenfive Knowledge of Ecclefiaftical Antiquity. If any one fhould wifh to have a collection of *Councils* in his library, he will find an enumeration of the principal writers on that fubject in Bp. Barlow's Directions, &c. in Fabricus B. G. and in Bray's Bibl. Par. I have added the three following works, for though they do not treat folely of Divinity, yet they will be very ferviceable to a fludent in that fcience.
- Oeuvres diverses de Mr. Bayle, Profession en Philosophie et en Histoire a Rotterdam. Contenant tout ce que cet Auteur a publie sur des Matieres de Theologie, de Philosophie, de Critique, d'Histoire, et de Literature excepté son Dictionaire Historique et Critique. A la Haye. 1727, 4 vol.
- A general Dictionary, Hiftorical and Critical, in which a new and accurate Tranflation of that of the celebrated Bayle is included; the Whole containing the Hiftory of the moft illuftrious Perfons of all Ages and Nations, particularly thole of Great Britain and Ireland, diftinguifhed by their Rank, Actions, Learning, and other Accounts : with Reflexions on thole Paflages of Mr. Bayle, which feem to favour Scepticifm and the Manichee Syftem. By the Rev. John Peter Bernard, the Rev. J. Birch, Mr. John Lockman, and other Hands. With the Life of Mr. Bayle by Mr. Des Maizeaux F. R. S. Lond.1734-41, 10 vol. Thofe who cannot meet with an opportunity of purchafing this Dictionary, may content themfelves with Mr. Bayle's in 4 vol. or with thoe of Moreri and Collier.

Biogra-

Biographia Britannica, or the Lives of the moft eminent Perfons who have flourifhed in Great Britain and Ireland, from the earlieft Ages to the prefent Times: collected from the beft Authorities, printed and manufcript, and digefted in the Manner of Mr. Bayle's Hiftorical and Critical Dictionary. The fecond Ed. with Corrections and Enlargements, and the Addition of new Lives, by And. Kippis, D. D. and F. S. A. with the Affiftance of other Gentlemen. Lond. 1778. Thre evolumes of this work are publifhed; when it is finished it will be one of the moft complete works of the kind that ever appeared in any Language.

#### QUARTOS.

Biblia Hebraica fine Punctis. Accurante Nath. Forfter S. T. B. Oxon. 1750.

- Biblia Hebraica ad optimas quafque Editiones expressiones cum Notis Maforethicis, et numeris distinctionum in Paraschas, et Capita, et Versus, necnon fingulorum Capitum summariis Latinis. Accurante M. Chriftiano Reineccio. Lips. 1739.
- Biblia Hebraica fecundum Editionem Belgicam Everar. Vander Hooght, collatis aliis bonæ notæ Codicibus, una cum Verfione Latina Sebaftiani Schmidii. Lipf. 1740.
- Vetus Teftamentum ex Versione Septuaginta Interpretum, secundum exemplar Vaticanum Romæ editum, accuratissime denuo recognitum una cum Scholiis ejusdem Editionis variis MSS. &c. lectionibus, summa cum cura edidit Lamb. Bos. Franequeræ. 1709, 2 vol.
- Jacobi Guffetii Lexicon Linguæ Hebraicæ, in quo præcipua opera impenditur primario fignificatui vocum phrafiumque accurata inveftigatione definiendo, &c. Lipfiæ. 1743. Ed. 2da.
- An Hebrew and English Lexicon, without Points; to which is added, a methodical Hebrew Grammar, &c. by John Parkhurst, M. A.
- Clavis Hebraica Veteris Teftamenti in qua Themata difficiliora V. T. referantur, &c. auctore J. Leufden. Ultrajecti. 1683.
- Lyra Prophetica five Analyfis Critico-Practica Pfalmozum. Studio Victorini Bythneri Poloni. Lond. 1664. Bythner obferves, that all the Hebrew Radicals in the Bible amount to 1867; and that 564 Verfes, of which he makes mention, in the Pfalms, contain 1184 Radicals. But whether it is moft proper to begin learning Hebrew by perufing the poetical or hiftorical books, let others judge; Leuden's Clavis may be as uleful for thofe who begin with Genefis, as Bythner's Lyra'is for thofe who begin with the Pfalms.
- Edvardi Leigh Critica Sacra, id eft, Obfervationes Philologico-Theologicæ in omnes radices et voces Hebræas V. T. et in omnes voces Græcas N. T. Gothæ, 1735, 2 vol. Ed. 6a.
- Joh. Fran. Buddei Hiftoria veteris Teftamenti ab orbe condito ufque ad Chriftum Natum, variis Obfervantionibus illuftrata. Halæ Magdeburgicæ, 1726, 3 vol. Ed. 3tia.
- The Hebrew Text, or the parallel Prophecies of Jacob and Mofes relating to the twelve Tribes; with a Translation and Notes; and the various Lections of near forty MSS. To which are added, 1. The Sama-

Samaritan-Arabic Verfion of those Paffages, and Part of another Arabic Verfion made from the Samaritan Text; neither of which have been before printed: 2. A Map of the Land of Promise: 3. An Appendix containing four Differtations on Points connected with the Subjects of these Prophecies. By D. Durell, B. D. Oxford, 1763.

- Ifaiah. A new Tranflation with a preliminary Differtation and Notes critical, philological, and explanatory. By Rob. Lowth, D. D. Lord Bifhop of London. Lond. 1778.
- Jeremiah and Lamentations. A new Translation with Notes critical, philological, and explanatory. By Benj. Blaney, B. D. Oxf. 1784.
- A Commentary on the Book of Job, in which is inferted the Hebrew Text and English Translation: with a Paraphrase, &c. By Leonard Chappelow, B. D. Camb. 1752, 2 vol.
- A critical Differtation on the Book of Job: wherein the Account given of that Book by the Author of the Divine Legation of Mofes demonfirated, &c., is particularly confidered; the Antiquity of the Book vindicated; the great Text (Chap. xix. 25.) explained; and a future State flewn to have been the popular Belief of the ancient Jews or Hebrews. By C. Peters, A. M. Lond. 1751, 2d. Ed.
- Annotations on the Pfalms, by James Merrick, M. A. Reading, 1768.
- A Commentary on the Book of Pfalms: in which the literal or hiftorical Senfe, as they relate to King David and the People of Ifrael, is illuftrated, and their Application to Meffiah, to the Church, and to Individuals as Members thereof, is pointed out. By G. Horne, D. D. Oxf. 1776, 2 vol.
- Marci Marini Brixiani Annotationes literales in Píalmos nova Verfione illuftratos, &c. Bononiæ, 1748, 2 vol.
- Phil. D. Burkii Gnomon Pfalmorum. Stutgardiæ, 1760, 2 vol.
- A philofophical and critical Effay on Ecclefiaftes: wherein the Author's Defign is flated; his Doctrine vindicated; his Method explained in an analytical Paraphrafe annexed to a new Verfion of the Text from the Hebrew, &c. By A. V. Defvoeux, Lond. 1760.
- Phil. Dav. Burkii Gnomon in duodecim Prophetas minores, cum Præfatione Bengelii Heilibronnæ, 1753. A Commentary upon the twelve minor Prophets was publifhed by John Markius in 4 vol. 4to, at Amflerdam, 1696, &c. This author (Markius) printed in feveral volumes many ufeful Differtations upon various parts of the old and new Teftament: he was cotemporary with Le Clerc, and differs from him in many of his works.
- Vaticinia Chabacuci et Nachumi, itemque nonnulla Jefaiæ, Micheæ, et Ezechielis oracula, Obfervationibus Hiftorico-philologicis ex Hiftoria Diodori Siculi circa res Sardanapali illuftrata. Auctore R. T. Gottlieb Kaliníky, cum Præfatione Burgii. Vratiflaviæ, 1748.
- Critical Remarks on the Books of Job, Proverbs, Pfalms, Ecclefiaftes, and Canticles, by D. Durell, D. D. Oxf. 1772.
- Poetical Parts of the old Teftament, newly translated from the Hebrew, with Notes critical and explanatory. ByW.Green, M.A. Lond.1781.
- De facra Poefi Hebræorum Prælectiones Academicæ habitæ a Roberto Lowth, M. A. Collegii Novi nuper Socio et Poeticæ Publico Prælectore. Subjicitur Metricæ Harianæ brevis Confutatio, et Oratio Crewiana. Oxon. 1753. This learned work has been defervedly ad Vot. VI. \*B mir

mired both at home and abroad. An edition was published at Gottingen, 1758, to which Notas et Epimetra adjecit *Michaelis*. This laft edition has been printed in Ugolini Thesauro, vol. 31, where the reader will meet with many other tracts on Hebrew Poetry. The laft ed. in 8vo. was printed in 1775.

- Introductio ad Libros Canonicos veteris Teftamenti omnes, præcognita critica et hiftorica ac Auctoritatis vindicias exponens. Adornata fludio D. J. Gottlob Carpzovii. Lip. 1731. Ed. 2da. 2 vol. The reader will here find very learned difquifitions upon every book of the old Teftament, and a catalogue of the most approved writers on each of them.
- Joh. Gottlob Carpzovii Critica facra veteris Testamenti, Parte 1. Circa Textum originalem; 2. Circa Versiones; 3. Circa Pseudo-criticam. Gul. Whistoni, folicita. Lipsix, 1728.
- A critical Hiftory of the old Teffament, in three Books, with a Supploment, being a Defence of the critical Hiftory in Anfwer to Mr. Spanheim's Treatife against it. By Father Simon. Englished by H. D. Lond. 1682.
- D. Joan. Marfhami Eq. Aur. et Bar. Chronicus Canon Egyptiacus Ebraicus, Græcus, et difquifitiones; liber non chronologiæ tantum fed et hiftoricæ antiquitatis reconditifima complexus. Franequeræ, 1696. This learned work was firft publifhed in folio in Lond. 1672, and afterwards in 4to. at Leipfic, 1676, which edition is followed by the author of the following work, which was written in oppofition to an opinion embraced by Sir J. Marfham and others, — That moft of the Jewifh Rites were borrowed from the Egyptians.
- Hermanni Withi Ægyptiaca five de Ægyptiacorum facrorum cum Hebraicis collatione Libri tres. Et de decem Tribubus Ifraelis Liber fingularis; acceffit diatribe de Legione fulminatrice Christianorum sub Imperatore Mar. Aur. Antonino. Amstel. 1683.
- The Chronology of the ancient Kingdoms amended. To which is prefixed, a fhort Chronicle from the firft Memory of Things in Europe to the Conqueft of Perlia by Alexander the Great. By Sir Ifaac Newton. Lond. 1727.
- The Chronology of the Hebrew Bible vindicated. The Facts compared with other ancient Hiftories, and the Difficulties explained from the Flood to the Death of Mofes. By Robert Lord Bifhop of Clogher. Lond. 1747. He who wifhes to know more on this fubject of Chronology, may confult Jackfon's Scripture Chronology, in 3 vol. 4to. Bedford's Scrip. Chron. publifhed in 1730, and an Eflay of Dr. Brett's wherein he defends the Computation of the Septuagint, 1729, &c. &c.
- Had. Relandi Palæstina ex Monumentis veteribus illustrata. Trajecti ad Rhe. 1714, 2 vol.
- De Sacrificiis Libri duo; quorum altero explicantur omnia Judzorum; nonnulla Gentium profanarum Sacrificia; altero Sacrificium Chrifti. Utroque Ecclefae Catholicæ his de Rebus Sententia contra Fauftum Socinum ejuíque Sectatores defenditur. Auctore Gul. Ontramo S.T.P. Lond, 1677.
- The peculiar Doctrines of Revelation relating to piacular Sacrifices, Redemption by Chrift, Faith in him, &c. in two Effays; to which are fubjoined, two Differtations, 1. On the Office of Jelus Chrift, as Mediator

diator and Surety of the new Covenant. 2. On the Perfon of Jefus Chrift. By J. Richie, M. D. Warrington, 1766, 2 vol.

- Antonii Van Dale Differtationes de Origine et Progressiu Idololatriæ et Superstitionum · de vera ac falsa Prophetia, uti et de Divinationibus Idololatricis Judæorum. Amstel. 1696.
- Antonii Van Dale de Oraculis veterum Ethnicorum Differtationes duæ, &c. Ed. 2da. Amftel. 1700. Voffius publifhed a learned work in folio, 1668, intitled, De Origine ac Progreffu Idololatriæ. Selden's Treatife De Diis Syris, with the Additions of Beyer, was publifhed in 8vo. at Amfter. 1680: and another work with 88 copper plates illufrative of the Idolatry of the Ancients was publifhed at Mentz in 1699, under the title — Theatrum-Ethnico-Idololatricum.
- Of Idolatry: a Difcourfe, in which is endeavoured a Declaration of its Diftinction from Superflition; its Notion, Caufe, Commencement, and Progrefs; its Practice charged on Gentiles, &c., as alfo of the Means which God has vouchfafed for the Cure of it by the Shechinah of his Son. By Tho. Tenifon, B. D. Lond, 1678.
- The Court of the Gentiles, or a Difcourfe touching the Original of human Literature, both Philology and Philofophy, from the Jewifh Church. By Theop. Gale. Oxf. 1672, 2 vol. 2d. Ed.
- A critical and chronological Hiltory of the Rife, Progrefs, Declenfion, and Revival of Knowledge, chiefly religious, in two Periods. 1. The Period of Tradition from Adam to Moles. 2. The Period of Letters from Moles to Chrift. By Hen. Winder, D. D. Lond. 1745, 2 vol.
- Reflexions fur l'Origine, l'Hiftoire, et la Succeffion des Anciens Peuples Chaldeens, Hebreux, Pheniciens, Egyptiens, Grecs, &c. juíqués au Tems de Cyrus. Par M. Fourment, l'ainé. nov. Ed. a Paris, 1747, 2 vol.—The beft Naturalifts of the age find great difficulty in admitting, that the earth had no exiftence as a *terraqueous* globe before the æra affigned by Mofes for its creation, or at leaft for its formation into water and dry land: and hence all arguments, tending to prove the origination of the human race to have been that which is mentioned in Scripture, are of great ufe; for, if the *antiquity* and the *civil hiflory* of our fpecies correspond with the accounts delivered in the Bible, we cannot reasonably (confidering the imperfection of our knowledge) fuffer our Faith to be fhaken, by the difficulties attending the *natural hiflory* of the earth. Viewed in this light, as well as in many others, the following work has the greateft merit.
- A new Syftem, or an Analyfis of ancient Mythology: wherein an Attempt is made to diveft Tradition of Fable, and to reduce the Truth to its original Purity. In this work is given the hiftory of the Babylonians, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Canaanites, Helladians, Ionians, Leleges, Dorians, Pelafgi, alfo of the Scythæ, Indofcythæ, Ethiopians, Phœnicians. The whole contains an Account of the principal Events in the firft Ages from the Deluge to the Difperfion: alfo of the various Migrations which enfued, and the Settlements made afterwards in different Parts: Circumftances of great Confequence which were fubfequent to the Gentile Hiftory of Mofes. By Jacob Bryant. Lond. 1774-6, 3 vol.
- Jac. Bruckeri Hiftoria Critica Philosophiæ a Mundi incunabulis ad noftram usque ætatem deducta. Lip. 1742, 5 vol.

Radulphi

- Radulphi Cudworthi Syftema Intellectuale hujus Univerfi, feu de variss Naturæ Rerum originibus Commentarii, quibus omnis eorum Philolofophia qui Deum effe negant funditus evertitur. Accedunt reliqua cjus Opufcula. T. L. Mofhemius omnia ex Anglico Latinè vertit, recenfuit, variifque Obfervationibus, Differtationibus illuffravit et auxit. Lug. Bat. 1773, Ed. 2da. emendatior et auctior, 2 vol.
- Jo. Dav. Michaelis Syntagma Commentationum. Goettingæ, 1759. The fourth Differtation is intitled, Argumenta Immortalitatis Animorum humanorum ex Mofe collecta (auctore Chrif. Colberg).
- Novum Teftamentum Græcum, ita adornatum ut Textus probatarum Editionum medullam, margo variantium Lectionum in fuas Claffes diftributarum Locorumque parallelorum delectum; Apparatus fubjunctus, Crifeos facræ Millianæ præfertim, compendium, &c. exhibeat; inferviente Jo. Alberto Bengelio Tubingæ, 1734. A fecond edition of the Apparatus was printed at the fame place in 1763: and an 8vo. edition of the Text, various Readings and parallel Places, with only one error of the prefs, and that a wrong accent, was publifhed at Stutgard in 1734. Another 8vo. edition at Tubing, 1753.
- Novum Teftamentum Græcum ad fidem Græcorum folum Codicum MSS. exprelfum, adftipulante Ja. Wetflenio: juxta Sectiones Jo. Alber. Bengelii divifum et nova Interpunctione fæpius illuftratum. Typis et fumptibus Joh. Nichols. Lond. 1783, Ed. 2da.
- A Concordance to the Greek Teftament: with the English Version to cach Word; the principal Hebrew Roots corresponding to the Greek Words of the Septuagint; short critical Notes where necessary; and an Index for the Benefit of the English Reader. By John Williams, I.L.D. Lond. 1767.
- A complete Concordance to the Holy Scriptures of the old and new Teitament: in two Parts. By Alex. Cruden, M. A. Lond. 1758. And I believe there has been a later edition.
- Petri Mintert Lexicon Græco-Latinum in N. T., in quo cujufibet vocis Etymon datur, Significationes variæ explicantur, eique Vox feu vocis Hebraicæ et Chaldaicæ, quando et pro quibus LXX Interpretes illis ufi fuerint, apponuntur, et loca omnia N. T. in quibus leguntur, ordine annotantur, variantes etiam Lectiones adduntur. Francofurti ad Moenum, 1727. This, as its title indicates, is a learned work, it may fupply the place of a Greek Concordance to the Septuagint and the new Teftament.
- A Greek and Englifh Lexicon to the new Teftament, &c. by John . Parkhurft, M. A. Lond. 1769.
- Theological Lectures at Weltminfter Abbey, with an Interpretation of the new Teftament; to which are added, Select Difcourfes upon the principal Points of Revealed Religion. By John Heylin, D. D. Lond. 1749, Part I. and 1761, Part II.
- Introductory Lectures to the facred Books of the new Teftament, by J. D. Michaelis. Lond. 1761. A new edition in 1780.
- Sacrorum Evangeliorum Verfio Syriaca Philoxeniana ex Cod. MSS. Ridleianis in Bibl. Coll. Nov. Oxon. repofitis nunc primum Edita: cum Interpretatione et Annotationibus Josephi White, A. M. Ling. Arab. Prof. Laudiani. Oxon. 1778.
- Le nouveau Teftament de notre Seigneur Jesus Christ, traduit en Fran-

çois

çois fur l'original Grec. Avec des Notes literales pour eclaircir le Texte. Par Mrs. De Beaufobre et Lenfant. Amfter. 1718, 2 vol.

- The Family Expositor, or a Paraphrase and Version of the new Testament, with critical Notes and a practical Improvement of each Section. By P. Doddridge, D. D. Lond. 1761, 6 vol.
- An Exposition of the new Testament, both Doctrinal and Practical: in which is inferted, 1. A correct Copy of the facred Text and the genuine Senfe thereof given: 2. The Truths of the Christian Religion are fet in a plain and clear Light: 3. Difficult Places explained: 4. Seeming Contradictions reconciled; and, 5. Whatever is material in the various Readings, and the feveral oriental Versions, is obferved. The Whole illustrated and confirmed from the most ancient Jewish Writings. By J.Gill, D.D. A new edition corrected. Lond. 1774, 5 vol.
- Chriftiani Schoettgenii Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ in univerfum novum Teftamentum. Quibus Horæ J. Lightfoot in Libris hiftoricis fupplentur, Epiftolæ et Apocalypfis eodem modo illuftrantur. Accedunt Differtationes quædam Philologico-facræ. Drefdæ, 1733, 2 vol. The fame author publifhed in 1742 in 2 vol. Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ in Theologiam Judæorum dogmaticam antiquam et orthodoxum de Meffia.
- Novum Teftamentum ex Talmude et antiquitatibus Hebræorum illuftratum, curis clarif. vir. Balth. Scheidii, Jo. And. Danzii et Jac. Rhenfordi, editumque una cum fuis propriis Differtationibus de Nafi feu præfide Synedrii M. et de directoribus Scholarum Hebræorum.

A Joh. Ger. Meuschen. Lip. 1736.

- Remarques hiftoriques, critiques, et philologiques fur le nouveau Teftament, par feu M. De Beaulobre. A la Haye, 1742, 2 vol.
- A Commentary and Notes on the four Evangelifts and the Acts of the Apoftles; together with a new Tranflation of the Epiftle to the Corinthians, with a Paraphrafe and Notes; to which are added other Theological Pieces, by Zach. Pearce, D.D. late Lord Bifhop of Rochefter; to which is prefixed, fome Account of his Lord/hip's Life and Character, written by himfelf. Lond. 1777, 2 vol.
- A Harmony of the four Golpels, in which the natural Order of each is preferved, with a Paraphrafe and Notes, by James Macknight, D. D. Lond. 1763, 2 vol. 3d. Ed. There are prefixed to this edition various preliminary observations; fix chronological differtations; nine difcourfes on Jewifh antiquities; and an effay on the demoniacs, all of which have great merit. A Latin translation of this work came out at Bremen, 1772.
- A Harmony of the Évangelifts in Englift, with critical Differtations, an occafional Paraphrafe, and Notes for the Ufe of the unlearned. By J. Prieftley, LL.D. F.R.S. Lond. 1780. The reader may alfo confult a new Harmony of the Gospels, by John Jebb, M. A. Camb. 1772, 2d. Ed.
- Difcourfes on the four Gospels, chiefly with Regard to the peculiar Defign of each, and the Order and Places in which they were written. To which is added, an Inquiry concerning the Hours of St. John, of the Romans, and of fome other Nations of Antiquity. By J. Townfon, B. D. Oxf. 1778.

- The Hiftory of the Life of Jefus Chrift, taken from the new Teftament, with Obfervations and Reflections proper to illuftrate the Excellence of his Character and the Divinity of his Miffion and Religio... By the late Rev. G. Benfon, D. D. To which is added, Memoirs of the Life, Character, and Writings of the Author. Lond. 1764.
- Obfervations on our Lord's Conduct as a Divine Inftructor, and on the Excellence of his moral Character, by W. Newcome, D. D. Bifhop of Waterford. Lond. 1782.
- The Hiftory of the first Planting of the Christian Religion, taken from the Acts of the Apostles and their Epistles, together with the remarkable Facts of the Jewish and Roman Hiftory, which affected the Christians within this Period. By G. Benfon, D. D. Lond. 1756, 2d. Ed. 3 vol. A new Version of St. Matthew's Gospel, with felect Notes, wherein the
- A new Verfion of St. Matthew's Gofpel, with felect Notes, wherein the Verfion is vindicated, and the Senfe and Purity of feveral Words and Exprefions in the original Greek are fettled and illuftrated; to which is added, a Review of Dr. Mill's Notes on this Gofpel. By D. Scott, J. U. D. Lond. 1741.
- A new Translation of the Gofpel of St. Matthew: with Notes critical, philological, and explanatory. By Gilbert Wakefield, B. A. Lond. 1782.
- Commentarius Analytico-Exegeticus tam literalis quam realis Evangelii fecundum Joannem. Authore Fred. Adol. Lampe. Amftel. 1724-6, 3 vol. This is the moft valuable work on St. John's Gofpel that was ever published.
- A Paraphrafe and Notes on the Epiftles of St. Paul to the Coloffians, Philippians, and Hebrews, after the Manner of Mr. Locke. To which are annexed, feveral critical Differtations on particular Parts of Scripture. The fecond Ed. By the late reverend and learned Mr. James Peirce, of Exon. With a Paraphrafe and Notes on the three laft Chapters of the Hebrews left unfinithed by Mr. Peirce; and an Effay to diffeover the Author of the Epiftle, and the Language in which it was originally written. By J. Hallet, Jun. Lond. 1733.
- A Paraphrafe and Notes on fix of the Epiftles of St. Paul, viz. I. Theff. II. Theff. I. Timothy, Philemon, Titus, II. Tim. attempted in Imitation of Mr. Locke's Manner. To which are annexed, critical Differtations, by G. Benfon, D. D. Lond. 1752, 2d. Ed.
- A Paraphrafe and Notes on the Epiftle to the Romans; to which is prefixed, a Key to the Apoftolic Writings, or an Effay to explain the Gofpel Scheme, and the principal Words and Phrafes the Apoftles have ufed in deferibing it. By J. Taylor, Minifter of the Gofpel in Norwich. Lond. 1754, 3d. Ed.
- A Paraphrafe and Notes on the Epiftles of St. Paul to the Galatians and Ephefians, by S. Chandler, D. D. Publifhed from the Author's MS. Lond. 1777.
- A Paraphrafe and Notes on the Epifile to the Hebrews. To which is prefixed, an Enquiry — into the Author of this Epifile : when it was wrote: the Manner of citing the old Teftament; and the Method of reafoning in it: with fome Remarks on the late Lord Bolingbroke's Treatment of St. Paul. By Arthur Afhley Sykes, D.D. Lond. 1755.

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- A Paraphrafe and Notes on the feven (commonly called) Catholic Epiftles, by George Benfon, D.D. Lond. 1756, 2d. Ed.
- Anacrifis Apocalypfios Joannis Apoftoli, qua in veras interpretandæ ejus Hypothefes diligenter inquiritur, et ex iifdem interpretatio facta, certis hiftoriarum monumentis confirmatur atique illuftratur: tum quoque quæ Meldenfis Præful Boffuetus hujus libri commentario fuppofuit, et exegetico Proteftantium Syftemati in vifis de Beftia ac Babylone Myftica objecit, fedulo examinantur. Auctore Camp. Vitringa. Ed. altera. Amftel. 1719.—Heidegger in 1687, publifhed two volumes in 4to. upon the prophecy in the Revelation, De Babylone magna, and endeavoured by a variety of arguments to eftablifh this conclution,— *Hierarchiam feu Clerum Ecclefiæ Romanæ dominantem Babylonem magnam effe.*
- A perpetual Commentary on the Revelation of St. John, with a preliminary Difcourfe concerning the Principles upon which the faid Revelation is to be underflood. By Charles Daubuz, M. A. late Vicar of Brotherton in Yorkfhire. New modelled, abridged, and rendered plain to the meaneft Capacity, by Peter Lancafter, A. M. Lond. 1730.
- Obfervations upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypfe of St. John, in two Parts. By Sir Ifaac Newton. Lond. 1733.
- A Paraphrafe and Notes on the Revelation of St. John. By Mofes Lowman. Lon. 1745, 2d. Ed. A third Ed. in 8vo. 1773.
- Oeuvres de Méffire Jacques-Benigne Boffuet Evêque de Meaux, &c. Nouvelle Ed. a Paris, 1772. In the preface to the third vol. there is this obfervation, — Le Commentaire fur l'Apocalypfe qui occupe la plus grande Partie de ce Volume, a pour Object principe de découvrir l'abus énorme que les Miniftres Proteftans, et furtout le fameux Jurieu, faifoient de ce Livre divin, pour charger l'Eglife Catholique des plus horribles Imputations en la reprefentant comme la Babylone dont il eft parlè dans Saint Jean. Bifhop Hurd has very properly remarked, " that the Bifhop of Meaux knew what he did when he *affèctied* a contempt of *Jofeph Mede*. He was then at liberty to turn himfelf from the ableft advocate of the proteftant caufe, to the *weakeft — M. Jurieu.*"
- A critical Hiftory of the Text of the new Teftament, wherein is firmly eftablished the Truth of those Acts on which the Foundation of the Chriftian Religion is laid. By Father Simon. Lond. 1689-92, 2 vol.
- Fabricii Delectus Argumentorum et Syllabus Scriptorum, qui Veritatem Religionis Chriftianæ adverfus Atheos, Epicureos, Deiftas, feu Naturaliftas, Idololatras, Judæos et Muhammedanos Lucubrationibus fuis afferuerunt. Hamburgi, 1725. The Title of this work fufficiently indicates its nature and utility. A Treatife of a nature fomewhat fimilar to this was publifhed by Walchius in 1752, in 8vo. intitled, Introductio ad Theologiam Polemicam; in which the points controverted by Atheifts, Deifts, Jews, &c. are difcuffed with great accuracy.
- La Religion Chrétien prouvée par les Faits. Par M. l'Abbe Houtteville. Nouvelle Ed. a Paris, 1740, 3 vol. This book is written with good judgment; the third volume is taken up in answering deistical objections.

- The Truth of the Gofpel Hiftory, by James Macknight, D. D. Lond. 1763.
- A large Collection of ancient Jewifh and Heathen Teftimonies to the Truth of the Chriftian Religion, with Notes and Observations, by Nat. Lardner, D. D. Lond. 1767, 4 vol.
- Philippi a Limborch de Veritate Religionis Christianæ amica collatio cum erudito Judæo. Gondæ, 1687.
- Salomonis Glaffii Philologia Sacra, qua totius SS. Veteris et novi Teffimenti Scripturæ, tum Stylus et Literatura, tum Senfus et genuinæ Interpretationis ratio et doctrina libris quinque expenditur ac traditur. Lipfiæ, 1743. This work was firft published in 1623, and it is ftill much efteemed. Buddeus, in a preface prefixed to this edition, and written in 1713, expresses the fentiments of the learned concerning it in the following terms, — Confentiunt in eo omnes hunce ex eorum genere librum effe qui facrarum literarum cultoribus non tantum utiles fed profus neceflarii fint, et quo nemo carere queat, qui ad feripturæ facræ lectionem et interpretationem folide et accurate infituendam animum adjungit. The last edition was published at Leipsic in 1776 by Professor Dathius under this title, Philologia Sacra his temporibus accommodata.
- Commentatio critica ad Libros N. T. in genere. Cum Præfatione D. J. Gottlob Carpzovii. Accurante J. W. Rumpæo. Lip. 1757, Ed. 2da. Critical queftions of great variety and importance relative to the new Teftament are here folidly difcuffed by a reference to the writers of the greateft credit on each of them,
- Camp. Vitringa Obfervationum Sacrarum Libri fex, in quibus de Rebus varii Argumenti et utilifiimæ inveftigationis critice ac theologice differitur, &c. Amfter. 1727, 2 vol. 3d. Ed. and a 7th Book. Franequeræ, 1727.
- Joan. F. Buddei Miscellanea Sacra. Jenæ, 1727, 3 vol. The last volume contains Differtationes Theologicas sub ejus Moderamine publico Eruditorum examini expositas.
- Samuelis Werenfelfii Opuscula Theol. Philof. et Philologica. Bafiliæ, 1718.
- D. Salomonis Deylingi Obfervationes Sacræ. In quibus multa Scripturæ veteris ac novi Testamenti dubia vexata folvuntur, &c. Lipsiæ, 1739, 5 vol. Ed. 3tia.
- Jo. Chriftopheri Wolfii Curæ philologicæ et criticæ in omnes Libros N. T., quibus integritati contextus Græci confulitur, fenfus verborum ex præfidiis philologicis illuftratur, diverfæ Interpretum fententiæ fummatim enarrantur, et modefto examini fubječtæ vel approbantur vel refelluntur. Bafilæ, 1741, 5 vol. This work has fome refemblance, in the manner of its composition, to Poole's Synopfis, but is written with more judgment, and contains the opinions of many expositors who have lived fince the publication of Poole's work. Wolfus, moreover, has not followed Poole in fimply relating the fentiments of others, but has frequently animadverted on them with great critical differnment.
- Jo. Chrif. Koecheri Analecta Philologica et Exegetica in IV. S. Evangelia quibus Wolfií Curæ philologicæ fupplentur atque augentur. Altenburgi, 1766.

- Critical Conjectures and Obfervations on the new Teftament, collected from various Authors, as well in Regard to Words as Pointing, with the Reafons on which both are founded. By W.Bowyer. Lond. 1783, Ed. 3d. The reader will here meet with much found criticifm, and many inftances of the importance of true Punctuation, which Mr.Bowyer thought of more moment than all the various readings put together.
- D. C. B. Michaelis Tractatio critica de variis Lectionibus novi Teftimenti caute colligendis et dilucidandis. Halæ Magde, 1749.
- D. Jo. Alberti Bengelii Gnomon novi Teftamenti, in quo ex nativa Verborum vi, fimplicitas, profunditas, concinnitas, falubritas fenfuum cœleftium indicatur. Tubingæ, 1759, Ed. 2da. The defign of this work is properly declared by the learned Author, when he fays,— Hoc denique agitur, ut quæ in fententiis verbifque Scripturæ N. T. fita vis fit, neque tamen primo ab omnibus obfervatur, ea breviter monftretur.
- Dubia Evangelica in tres Partes diftributa; quibus dubia partim ะร้างรูปแสะ partim ะวิเวนาเหล difcuffa et vindicata a cavillis et corruptelis Atheorum, Paganorum, Judæorum, Samofatenianorum et Anabaptiftarum, Pontificiorum et Sectariorum aliorum Opera Fred. Spanhemii. Genevæ, 1658, 2 vol.
- Historia Ecclesiastica duorum primorum a Christo nato Sæculorum e veteribus Monumentis deprompta a J. Clerico. Amstel. 1716.
- Joh. Lauren. Molheim de Rebus Christianorum ante Constantinum magnum Commentarii. Helmstadii, 1753.
- Thomæ Ittigii Lipfiensis de Hæresiarchis ævi Apostolici et Apostolico proximi, seu primi et secundi a Christo nato Sæculi. Lip. 1690.
- Appendix Differtationis de Hærefiarchis, &c. aut. T. Ittigio. Lip. 1696.
- The Hiftory of the Hereticks of the two first Centuries after Chrift, containing an Account of their Time, Opinions, and Testimonie to the Books of the new Testament. By Nat. Lardner, D. D. Lond. 1780.
- Fred. Spanhemii brevis Introductio ad Hiftoriam facram utriufque Teftamenti ac præcipue Chriftianam, ad an. 1518, inchoata jam Refor. Ed. fere nova omnium purgatifima. Lugd. Bat. 1694.
- Joan. Dallæi de Uíu Patrum ad ea definienda Religionis capita quæ funt hodie Controverfa. Genevæ,1686. This very excellent book appeared firft in French, 1632, and it was translated into English in 1651.
- Salutaris Lux Evangelii, toti Orbi per divinam gratiam exoriens, five Notitia hiftorico-chronologica literaria et geographica propagatorum per Orbem Terrarum Chriftianorum facrorum delineata a Joan. Alb. Fabricio. Hamb. 1731. There is fubjoined to this work a Geographical Index of all the Bifhopricks which have formerly fubfifted, or do at prefent fubfift in Chriftendom. All the works of Fabricius are full of erudition, and deferve the peculiar attention of young divines.
- Cafparis Zeigleri de Epifcopis eorumque Juribus, Privilegiis, et vivendi ratione Liber Commentarius, ex variis veteris Ecclefiæ Monumentis atque fcriptis collectus, inque gratiam Juris Canonici fludioforum publicæ luci expofitus. Norimbergæ, 1686. In this book a great many curious queftions are propofed in great order, and difcuffed with much learning.

The Hiftory of the Puritans, or Proteftant Non-Conformifts. By Dan. Neale, M. A. Lond. 1754, 2 vol. 2d. Ed. Tracts on the Liberty, Spiritual and Temporal, of Proteftants in Eng-

- Tracts on the Liberty, Spiritual and Temporal, of Protestants in England. By Anthony Ellis, D.D. late Lord Bishop of St. David's. Lond. 1767, 2d. Ed.
- Inftitutio Theologicæ Elencticæ, in qua ftatus Controversiæ perspicue exponitur, præcipua orthodoxorum Argumenta proponuntur et vindicantur, et sontes solutionum aperiuntur. Authore Fran. Turretino. Genevæ, 1689, 3 vol.
- Francisci Turretini de Satisfactione Christi Disputationes. Gen. 1666.
- De neceffaria Seceffione noftra ab Ecclefia Romana, et impoffibili cum ea Synchretifmo, Difputationes. Aut. Fran. Turretino, acceffit ejuídem Difputationum mifcellanearum decas. Genevæ, 1688.
- Joh. Alphonfi Turretini, Cogitationes et Differtationes Theologicæ, quibus Principia Religionis cum Naturalis tum Revelatæ adftruuntur et defenduntur, Animique ad Veritatis, Pietatis et Pacis fludium excitantur. Genevæ, 1737, 2 vol.
- Syntagma Thefium Theologicarum in Academia Salmurienfi variis temporibus difputatarum. Salmurii, 1664, Ed. 2da.
- Francisci Burmanni Synopsis Theologiæ et speciatim Oeconomiæ fæderum Dei ab initio sæculorum ulque ad confummationem eorum. Trajecti ad Rhenum. 1687, 2 vol.
- A Courfe of Lectures on the principal Subjects in Pneumatology, Ethics and Divinity: with References to the most confiderable Authors on each Subject. By the late Rev. Philip Doddridge, D. D. Lond. 1762.
- The Oeconomy of the Gofpel in four Books. By C. Bulkley. Lond. 1764.
- The Works of the late reverend and learned Ifaac Watts, D. D. Lond. 1753, 6 vcl.
- The Works of the Right Reverend T. Newton, D. D. late Lord Bifhop of Briftol. With fome Account of his Life, and Anecdotes of his Friends, written by himfelf. Lond. 1782, 3 vol.
- The Works of the Right Reverend T. Willon, D. D. Lord Bifhop of Sodor and Man. With his Life compiled from authentic Papers, by C. Crutwell. Lond. 1781, 2 vol.
- A Syftem of Revealed Religion, digefted under proper Heads, and compofed in the Words of Scripture, by Jo. Warden, M. A. Lond. 1769.

# OCTAVOS, &c.

- Biblia Hebraica fecundum ultimam Editionem Jof. Athiæ a J. Leufden denuo recognitam recenfita, atque ad Maforam, et correctiones Bombergi, Stephani, Plantini, aliorumque Editiones exquifite adornata, variifque Notis illuftrata, ab Everardo Vander Hooght, V. D. M. Ed. longe accuratifima. Amftel. et Ultraj. 1705, 2 vol.
- Vetus Teftamentum ex Verfione Septuaginta interpretum fecundum exemplar Vaticanum Romæ editum. Præfationem una cum variis Lectionibus, e præftantiffimis MSS. Codicibus Bibliothecæ Leidenfis deferiptis, præmifit David Millius. Amftel. 1725.

Vetus

- Vetus Teftamentum Græcum ex Verfione Septuaginta interpretum juxta exemplar Vaticanum Romæ editum. Cantab. 1663. This is a very fair edition of the Septuagint printed by Field, with a preface by Bp. Pearfon, at the end of which he recommends a collation of the MSS. of the Septuagint. Mintert made use of this edition in composing his Lexicon.
- Clavis Pentateuchi; five Analyfis omnium Vocum Hebraicarum fuo ordine in Pentateucho Mofeos occurrentium: una cum Verfione Latina et Anglica. In ufum juventutis Academiæ Edinburginæ. Cui præmittuntur Differtationes duæ; I. De Antiquitate Linguæ Arabicæ;
  2. De genuina Punctorum Vocalium Antiquitate. Auctore Jacob. Robertion S. T. P. Edinb. 1770.
- A Differtation concerning the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language, Letters, Vowel-Points and Accents. By T. Gill, D. D. Lond. 1767.
- Francifei Masclef Grammatica Hebraica, a Punctis aliisque inventis Masforethicis libera, &c. Paris, 1731, 2 vol.
- Chriftiani Stockii Clavis Linguæ fanctæ veteris Teftamenti. Lipfiæ, 1753, Ed. 6a.
- Jo. Chrif. Clodii Lexicon Hebraicum felectum in quo Voces rariores et obscuræ Codicis Hebræi Biblici illustrantur, &c. in Supplementum Lexici Gustetiani. Lips. 1744.
- Joan. Dav. Michaelis Épif. de LXX Hebdomadibus Danielis. Ad D. Joan. Pringle Baronetum. Lond. 1772.
- Observations on divers Passages of Scripture, placing many of them in a Light altogether new; afcertaining the Meaning of feveral not determinable by the Methods commonly made use of by the learned; propoling to Confideration probable Conjectures on others, different from what have been hitherto recommended to the Attention of the curious; and more amply illustrating the Rest than has been done, by Means of Circumstances incidentally mentioned in Books of Voyages and Travels into the Eaft. Lond. 2d. Ed. 1776, 2 vol. The defign of this work is very ufeful, and it has been executed with great ability. by the author, the Rev. Mr. Harmer. We are indebted to the fame author for the outlines of a new Commentary on Solomon's Song, drawn by the help of Instructions from the East. Lond. 1768, 8vo. The Society which was inftituted in the course of the last year at Calcutta, under the aufpices of Sir William Jones, for inquiring into the Hiftory civil and natural, the Antiquities, Arts, Sciences, and Literature of Afia, will, it is to be hoped, contribute not a little by their refearches, to the improvement of this kind of fcriptural criticifm ; as weil as to the enlargement of our knowledge in many other particulars.
- An Effay for a new Translation of the Bible. Wherein is fhewn, from Reafon and the Authority of the best Commentators, Interpreters, and Critics, that there is a Necessity for a new Translation. Lond. 1727, 2d. Ed.
- Apparatus Biblicus; or an Introduction to the holy Scriptures. In three Books. 1. Of the original Hiftory and Antiquity of the Jews. 2. Of the Canon, Authors, original Texts, Verfions, Editions, and Interpretations of Scripture. 3. Of the falfe Gods, Animals, precious Stones, Difeases.

Difeafes, and public Sports, mentioned in the Scriptures. Together with an Explanation of the fcriptural Names and a new Reading of the Scriptures. Done into Englifh from the French of *Pere Lany*, with Notes and Additions. Illuftrated with 36 Copper-plates. Lond. 1728, 2d. Ed. 2 vol. This work will be very ufeful to those who have not leifure to confult larger treatifes, on the fubjects which are difcuffed in it.

- Antiquitates Hebraicæ fecundum triplicem Judæorum Statum ecclefiafticum, politicum, et æconomicum breviter delineatæ a Conrado Ikenio. Bremæ, 1741, Ed. 3tia. the 1ft. Ed. in 1732. Reland's Antiquitates Sacræ have been publifhed in different forms, and they are to be met with in Ugolini Thefauro with Annotations by the Editor. This book of Ikenius' is valuable for its brevity, method, and perfpicuity.
- Origines Hebrææ: The Antiquities of the Hebrew Republick. By Tho. Lewis, M. A. Lond. 1724-5, 4 vol. This is a laborious compilation from the moft diffinguifhed writers, whether Jews or Christians, on the manners and laws of the Hebrews.
- Jewish Antiquities; or a Course of Lectures on the three first Books of Godwin's Moles and Aaron. To which is annexed, a Differtation on the Hebrew Language, by Dav. Jennings, D. D. Lond. 1766, 2 vol. The Treatises of Mr. Lowman on the Ritual and on the civil Government of the Hebrews, may properly accompany these works on the Hebrew Antiquities.
- Revelation examined with Candour. Lond. 1735-63, 3 vol. by Dr. Delany.
- Lettres de Quelques Juifs, Portugais, et Allemands, â M. De Voltaire. Avec des Reflexions critiques et un petit Commentaire extrait d' un plus grand. A Paris, 1776, 3 vol. 4 Ed. Thefe letters contain an elegant answer to the various objections to revealed religion which Voltaire had borrowed from our English Deifts; they were written by the Abbé Guenée. An English translation of them by Dr. Lefanu was published at Dublin in 1778, 2 vol.
- A Vindication of the facred Books and of Josephus, especially the former, from various Missepresentations and Cavils of M. De Voltaire. By Rob. Findlay, A. M. Glasgow, 1770. This is a ferious and folid resultation of many of M. De Voltaire's most formidable objections to the facred writings.
- A critical Hiftory of the Life of David : in which the principal Events are ranged in Order of Time; the chief Objections of Mr. Bayle and others against the Character of this Prince, &c. are refuted. By S. Chandler, D. D. Lond. 1766, 2 vol.
- The divine Legation of Moles demonstrated in nine Books. By W.Warburton, Lord Bishop of Gloucester, Lond. 1765, 5 vol. 4th Ed. A new edition of all the works of this learned Prelate is expected.
- Codex Pleudepigraphus veteris Teltamenti collectus, caftigatus, teftimoniifque cenfuris et animadverfionibus illuftratus a Fabricio Hamb. 1722, 2 vol.
- Novum Testamentum Græce. Textum ad fidem Codicum Versionum et Patrum emendavit et Lectionis varietatem adjecit. Jo. Jac. Grief-

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bach Theologiæ Doctor, ejuídemque in Academ. Jenen. Profesfor publ. Ordinarius. Halæ, 1777, 2 vol.

- The new Teftament carefully collated with the Greek and corrected; divided and pointed according to the various Subjects treated of by the infpired Writers, with the common Divifion into Chapters and Verfes in the Margin. And illuftrated with Notes critical and explanatory. By R. Wynne, A. M. Lond. 1764, 2 vol.
- The Hiftory of the Ministry of Jefus Chrift, combined from the Narrative of the four Evangelifts, by Rob. Willan, M. D. Lond. 1782.
- A View of our bleffed Saviour's Ministry, and the Proofs of his Divine Mission arising from thence. Together with a Charge, Differtations, Sermons, and Theological Lectures. By the late Tho. Randolph, D. D. Lady Margaret's Prof. of Divinity in the University of Oxford. Oxf. 1784, 2 vol.
- Chriftiani Stockii Clavis Linguæ Sanctæ novi Teftamenti. Lip. 1752. Ed. 5a. In the prefaces to his Lexicons, Stockius has enumerated the principal Hebrew and Greek Lexicons of the Bible which were published before his own.
- J. Conr. Schwarz Commentarii critici et philologici Linguæ Græcæ novi Fæderis. Lipf. 1736, 2 vol. very fmall 4to.
- Georgii Pritii Introductio ad Lectionem N. T. in qua quæ ad rem criticam Hiftoriam, chronologiam, et geographiam pertinent breviter et perfpicue exponuntur. Lipliæ, 1704. the 4th. Ed. in 1737. I have never met with any book fuperior to this as an introduction to the new Teftament.
- Jufti Henningii Böhmeri XII Differtationes Juris Ecclefiaftici Antiqui. Halæ, 1729, Ed. 2da. This is a very excellent book, the titles of the Differtations are, 1. De Stato Chriftianorum Die. 2. De antelucanis Chriftianorum cœtibus. 3. De Confœderata Chriftianorum Difciplina. 4. De coitionibus Chriftianorum ad capiendum cibum. 5. De Chriftianorum cœtibus in vicis et agris. 6. De Cognitionibus de Chriftianis. 7. De differentia inter Ordinem Ecclefiafticum et Plebem, feu inter Clericos et Laicos. 8. De confeflu Ordinis Ecclefiaftici.
  9. De Ecclefiæ Statu antiquo generatim. 10. De Jure Laicorum facerdotali. 11. De Jure dandi Baptifmum. 12. De extraordinario primitivæ Ecclefiæ ftatu.
- Jo. Francifci Buddei Ecclefia Apoftolica, five de Statu Ecclefiæ Chrifianæ fub Apoftolis Commentatio Hiftorico-Dogmatica; que et Introductionis loco in Epiftolas Pauli cæterorumque Apoftolorum effe queat. Jenæ, 1729. The author has briefly treated this important fubject with great judgment, and referred to a variety of ufeful writers.
- Mifcellanea Sacra: containing an Abstract of the Scripture History of the Apostles in a new Method. With four critical Estays: 1. On the Witness of the holy Spirit. 2. On the Diffinction between Apoftles, Elders, and Brethren. 3. On the Time when Paul and Barnabas became Apostles. 4. On the Apostolical Decree. To which is added, an Estay on the Differstations of God to Mankind, as revealed in Scripture: together with a Differstation on Hebrews xii. 22-25, now first published. A new Ed. with large Additions and Corrections. Lond. 1782, 3 vol. The merit of this work is generally acknowledged.

ledged; Dr. Benfon owned himfelf much indebted to it in his hiftory of the first Planting of Chriftianity, and in fome other of his works.

- A new Introduction to the Study and Knowledge of the new Testament, by E. Harwood, D. D. Lond. 1773, 2d. Ed. 2 vol.
- The facred Interpreter : or a practical Introduction towards a beneficial reading of the Bible. Containing, I. An Hiftory of the four antient Monarchies. 2. A general View of the Jewith Church to the taking of Jerufalem. 3. Remarks on the Pentateuch, Prophets, Gofpels, &c. fhewing the Defign of each Book. 4. An exact Chronology of the Scriptures. 5. A Differtation on revealed Religion, and an Account of those Divines who have defended it. 6. Difficult Texts explained, &c. By David Collyer. Lond. 1726-46, 2 vol.
- Dominicí Diodati, T. C. Neapolitani de Chrifto Græce loquente Exercitatio; qua oftenditur Græcam feu Hellenifticam Linguam cum Judæis omnibus, tum ipfi adeo Chrifto et Apoftolis nativam ac vernæculam fuifle. Neapoli, 1767. The reader will meet with fome obfervations on this fubject in Bowyer's Preface to his Conjectures on the new Teftament.
- Problema de anno Nativitatis Christi, ubi occasionem offerente vetere Herodis Antipæ Nummo, in Nummophylacio Clementis XIV. P. O. M. Affervato demonstratur, Christum natum esse anno VIII. ante Æram vulgarem, contra veteres omnes et recentiores Chronologos. Auctore P. Dominico Magnan. Romæ, 1772.
- Jacobi Elfneri Obfervationes facræ in novi fæderis Libros, quibus pluræ illorum Librorum loca ex Auctoribus potifimum Græcis et Antiquitate exponuntur et illuftrantur. Trajecti ad Rhenum, 1720, 2 vol.
- Joan. Alberti Obfervationes Philologicæ in facros novi fæderis Libros. Lugd. Bat. 1725.
- Geor. Raphelii Annotationes in S. Scripturam, Hiftoricæ in vetus, philologicæ in N. T. ex Xenophonte, Polybio, Arriano, et Herodoto collectæ. Ludg. Bat. 1750, 2 vol.
- Eliæ Palairet Observationes Philologico-criticæ, in facros novi fæderis Libros, quorum plurima loca ex Auctoribus potiffimum Græcis exponuntur, illustrantur, vindicantur. Lugd. Bat. 1752.
- Jo. Tobiæ Krebfii Obfervationes in novum Teftamentum e Flavio Jofepho. Lipf. 1755.
- Georg. Davidis Kype Observationes sacræ in novi fæderis Libros ex Auctoribus potifimum Græcis et Antiquitatibus. Wrabslaviæ; 1755.
- Jo. Bap. Ottii Spicilegium, five excerptum ex Flavio Josepho ad N. Testam. illustrationem. Lugd. Bat. 1741.
- A free and impartial Study of the holy Scriptures recommended : being Notes on fome particular Texts, with Difcourfes and Obfervations on various Subjects. By Jof. Hallet, Jun. Lond. 1729-36, 3 vol.
- The facred Claffics defended and illuftrated: or an Effay humbly offered towards proving the Purity, Propriety, and true Eloquence of the Writers of the new Teftament. By A. Blackwell, M. A. Lond. 1737, 2 vol.
- A Paraphrale on the four Evangelist, by Sam. Clarke, D. D. Lond. 1758, 10th. Ed. 2 vol. Though this paraphrale is included in Dr. O Clarke's

Clarke's works in folio, yet I have mentioned it here, as it may be eafily procured and is very uleful.

- A Paraphrafe and Notes on the Acts of the Apoftles, and upon all the Epiftles of the new Teftament. Being a complete Supplement to Dr. Clarke's Paraphrafe on the four Golpels. By T. Pyle, M. A. Lond. 1765, 2 vol. 5th. Ed. There is a Paraphrafe and Notes on the Revelation by the fame author.
- Bengelius' Introduction to his Exposition of the Apocalypfe: with his Preface to that Work, and the greateft Part of the Conclusion of it, and alfo his marginal Notes on the Text, which are a Summary of the whole Exposition. Translated from the High Dutch, by J. Robertfon, D.D. Lond. 1757.
- Codex Apocryphus novi Teftamenti collectus, caftigatus, teftimoniifque cenfuris et animadverfionibus illuftratus a J. Alb. Fabricio. Hamb. 1703, 2 vol.
- An historical Geography of the old and new Testament, by Ed. Wells, D. D. Lond. 1721, 4 vol.
- Dionyfii Petavii Rationarium Temporum, cui accedit Supplementum quo Hiftoria ad hoc ufque Tempus continuatur. Lugd. Bat. 1724, 2 vol.
- The facred and profane Hiftory of the World connected from the Creation of the World to the Diffolution of the Affyrian Empire, &c. By S. Shuckford, M. A. Lond. 1743, 4 vol. 3d. Ed.
- The old and new Teftament connected in the Hiftory of the Jews and neighbouring Nations, from the Declenfion of the Kingdom of Ifrael and Judah to the Time of Chrift. By H. Prideaux, D.D. Lond. 1749, 4 vol. 10th. Ed.
- J. Alph. Turretini compendium Hiftoriæ Ecclefiafticæ a Chrifto Nato ad finem Sec. XVII. Genevæ, 1737. And with the Continuation, by T. Simon. Halæ, 1750.
- Pauli Ernefti Jabloníki Inflitutiones Hiftoriæ Chriftianæ. Francofurti ad Viad. 3 vol. 1754-67. The third volume, which contains the hiftory of the Church from the end of the feventeenth to the middle of the prefent century, was composed by Profession Stocch after the death of Jabloníki. An English translation of this work in one vol. 8vo. would be very ferviceable.
- An Ecclefiaftical Hiftory from the Birth of Chrift to the prefent Time. Written originally in French by Mr. Formey, Secretary to the Academy of Sciences at Berlin. To which is added, an Appendix, giving an Account of the People called Methodifts, by the Translator. Lond. 1766, 2 vol.
- An Ecclefiaftical Hiftory ancient and modern, from the Birth of Chrift to the Beginning of the prefent Century: in which the Rife, Progrefs, and Variation of Church Power, are confidered in their Connexion with the State of Learning and Philofophy, and the Political Hiftory of Europe during that Period. By the late learned L. Mofheim, D.D. Tranflated from the original Latin, and accompanied with Notes and chronological Tables, by Arch. Maclaine, D.D. Lond. 1782, 6 vol. The learned translator mentions the approbation which Dr. Warburton, Bifhop of Gloucefter, gave of this work in the following terms, "Mo-

"Mofheim's compendium is excellent, the method admirable, in fhorf the only one deferving the name of an Ecclefiaftical Hiftory." The three preceding works, however, have great merit, and may be read with much utility.

- A compendious Hiftory of the Church, from the Beginning of the World to the prefent Time (1710). Written in French by L. E. Dupin, and translated into English. Lond 1713, 4 vol. Echard's Ecclesiaftical Hiftory from the Birth of Chrift to the Eftablishment of Chriftianity under Constantine, in the year 313, is valuable in many respects, the third Ed. was published in 1712, and the first in 1702.
- Remarks on Ecclefiaftical Hiftory from the Commencement of Chriftianity to the year 1517, when Luther began the Work of Reformation, by T. Jortin, D. D. 1767-73, 4 vol. Dr. Jortin has, in a little compals, taken notice of io many facts, and animadverted on them with fo much judgment, that this work will be ever held in deferved repute; he has inferted, alfo, into it the fubftance of his Difcourfes on the Nature, Ufe, and Intent, of Prophecy; and on Miracles, which were preached at Boyle's Lecture.
- Prelectiones Ecclefiafticæ triginta novem olim habitæ in facello Collegii Emmanuelis apud Cantabrigienfes a Joan. Richardfon, S. T. B. Lond. 1726. This is a pofthumous work of an author well known by his Vindication of the Canon of the new Tcftament in Anfwer to Toland.
- Hiftoire des Juifs depuis J. Chrift jusqu'a present, pour fervir de Continuation a l'Hiftoire de Joseph. Par M. Basnage. Nouvelle Ed. augmentée. A la Haye, 1716, 15 vol.
- The Apologies of Juftin Martyr, Tertullian, and Minutius Felix, in Defence of the Chriftian Religion, with the Commonitory of Vincentius Lirinenfis concerning the primitive Rule of Faith, translated from their Originals: with Notes, for the Advantage chiefly of English Readers, and a preliminary Difcourse upon each Author. Together with a prefatory Differtation about the right Use of the Fathers. By W. Reeves, M. A. Lond. 1716, 2 vol. The reader will peruse the notes of this Gentleman with caution, for he declares with much violence, "that he had rather believe no bible at all, than believe it in the fense of that commentator" Le Clerc.
- The genuine Epiftles of the Apoftolical Fathers, St. Barnabas, St. Ignatius, St. Polycarp, the Shepherd of Hermas, and the Martyrdoms of St. Ignatius and St. Polycarp, written by those who were prefent at their Sufferings. Translated and published with a large preliminary Discourse relating to the feveral Treatifes here put together. By W. Wake, Lord Bishop of Lincoln. Lond. 1710, 2d. Ed.
- Differtatio de S. Scripturarum Interpretatione fecundum Patrum Commentarios. In qua probatur, 1. S. Scripturam effe regulam fidei unicam, ex qua de omnibus Articulis fidei creditu neceffariis ad falutem Judicium ferendum eft. 2. Patres five primævos five fubfequentes non effe Idoneos S. Scripturæ Interpretes. 3. Non poffe Controverfias de S. Trinitate motas ex patribus, conciliis, aut traditione vere catholica definiri. Authore D. Whitby. Lond. 1714. Whitby in the Epilogue to this work very boldly adds, Ex trium primorum feculorium.

rum Scriptoribus, haud pauca, in hoc opere, interpretamenta congeffimus, ab omni veritatis fpecie aliena. Oftendant nobis Patrum Patroni unicam Scripturæ Pericopen, quæ alias, obfcura cum effet, ab iis fit lucem mutuata. But though the authority of Fathers and Councils be of no weight in controverfy; the learned will fiil have recourfe to them, as containing the materials of Ecclefiaftical Hiftory.

- The Credibility of the Gofpel Hiftory, or the Facts occafionally mentioned in the new Teftament confirmed by Paffages of ancient Authors, who were cotemporary with our Saviour or his Apoffles, or lived near their Time. By Nat. Lardner, D. D. Lond. 1727-57, 17 vol. The first part of the Credibility of the Gofpel Hiftory was published in 1727, 2 vol. and a 3d. Ed. of it 1741. The fecond part was published at fundry times from 1733 to 1755, in 12 vol. The Supplement in 1756-7 in 3 vol. The intire Work is now become very fcarce.
- The Hiftory of the Eftablifhment of Chriftianity, compiled from Jewifh and Heathen Authors only; exhibiting a Proof of the Truth of this Religion. Tranflated from the French of Profeffor Bullet, by W. Salifbury, B.D. Lond. 1776. This work is well executed, and may be ferviceable to those who have not Lardner's collection of Jewifh and Heathen Teftimonies. The reader will find fomething worth his attention on this fubject in a finall tract in 4to.—Non Chriftianorum de Chrifto Teftimonia ex antiquis Monumentis proposita et dijudicata. A Tobia Eckherdo. Quedlinburgi, 1725.
- A new and full Method of fettling the canonical Authority of the new Teftament. By the late Rev. Jer. Jones. Lord. 1726-7, 3 vol.
- The Hiftory of the Propagation of Chriftianity and Overthrow of Paganifm. Wherein the Chriftian Religion is confirmed, the Rife and Progrefs of heathenih Idolatry is confidered, the Overthrow of Paganifm and the Spreading of Chriftianity in the feveral Ages of the new Teftament Church is explained. The prefent State of Heathens is inquired into, and Methods for their Conversion offered. By Rob. Millar. Edinb. 1723, 2 vol.
- Letters on the Prevalence of Chriftianity before its civil Eftablifhment. With Obfervations on a late Hiftory of the Decline of the Roman Empire. By Eaft Apthorp, M. A. Lond. 1778. The author has enriched this work with many learned remarks, and efpecially with a catalogue of civil and ecclefiaftical hiftorians which the reader will find to be very ufeful.
- Five Letters concerning the Infpiration of the Holy Scriptures. Tranflated from the French of M. Le Clerc, 1690.
- A Vindication of the divine Authority and Infpiration of the Writings of the old and new Teftament, in Answer to the preceding Book. By W. Lowth, B.D. Oxf. 1692.
- An Effay on Infpiration, confidered chiefly with Refpect to the Evangelifts. By Gilbert Wakefield, B.A. Lond. 1781.
- Defenfe des Propheties de la Religion Chrétienne, par le R. P. Baltus de la Compagnie de Jefus, contre Grotius et M. Simon. A Paris, 1737, 3 vol. Grotius and Father Simon contend, that many of the prophecies cited in the new Teftament from the old, have double fenfes; one Vol. VI. \* C proper

proper and literal, which refpected the times and perfons of the Jewifh nation; the other allegorical, which refpected the advent and perfon of Chrift. M. Baltus cenfures this as a Socinian mode of expounding the prophecies, and, by a particular examination of the prophecies quoted by the writers of the new Teftament, fhews, that they primarily refpected Chrift, and were literally accomplifued in him.

- The Ufe and Intent of Prophecy in the feveral Ages of the World. In fix Difcourfes, delivered at the Temple Church. To which are added
- feveral Differtations. By Tho. Sherlock, D. D. late Mafter of the Temple, now Lord Bifhop of London. Lond. 1749, 5th. Ed. Thefe difcourfes were attacked by Dr. Middleton in 1750, and have been defended by Dr. Rutherforth, Mr. Rotherham, and others.
- A Defence of Chriftianity from the Prophecies of the old Teflament; wherein are confidered all the Objections againft this Kind of Proof advanced in a late Difcourfe on the Grounds and Reafons of the Chriftian Religion. By Ed. Chandler, Lord Bifhop of Coventry and Lichfield. Lond. 1725, 2d. Ed.
- A Vindication of the Chriftian Religion, in two Parts. 1. A Difcourfe of the Nature and Ufe of Miracles. 2. An Anfwer to a late Book, intitled, A Difcourfe of the Grounds and Reafons of the Chriftian Religion. By Samuel Chandler. Lond. 1725. Collins' Difcourfe on the Grounds and Reafons of the Chriftian Religion, publifhed in 1724, was anfwered not only by the three authors laft mentioned, but by a variety of others; there is an account of the chief of them in Leland's View of the Deiftical Writers; and in Fabricius' Lux Evangelica, where above 50 different publications in oppofition to Collins are enumerated. In the fame authors (Leland and Fabricius) the reader will find a lift of thofe who anfwered Woolfton's Objections to the Miracles of our Saviour.
- An Effay upon the Truth of the Christian Religion; wherein its real Foundation upon the Old Testament is shewn. Occasioned by the
- Difcourfe of the Grounds and Reafons of the Chriftian Religion. By A. A. Sykes, M. A. Lond. 1725. M. De la Roche, in his Memoirs of Literature, fpeaking of this work, fays, — If this book does not appear fufficient to remove feruples about the quotations of the firft preachers of the Gofpel from the old Teftamenr, I know not what will do it. — Mr. Sykes exprefies himfelf very firmly againft a double completion of any prophecy; a double completion, fays he, unlefs it be declared by the prophet, will make all prophecy perfectly ufelefs.
- An Introduction to the Study of the Prophecies concerning the Chriftian Church; and in Particular concerning the Church of Papal Rome: in twelve Sermons, preached in Lincoln's Inn Chapel, at the Lecture of the Right Reverend W. Warburton, Lord Bithop of Gloucefter. By R. Hurd, D.D. Lond. 1772.
- Twelve Sermons on the Prophecies concerning the Chriftian Church; and in Particular concerning the Church of Papal Rome. Preached at Bp. Warburton's Lecture, by S. Hallifax, D. D. Lond. 1776.
- Twelve Difcourfes on the Prophecies concerning the Eftablifhment and fubfequent Hiftory of Christianity. Preached at Bp. Warburton's Lecture, by Lewis Bagot, LL.D. Oxford, 1780.

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- An Effay towards reconciling the Numbers of Dăniel and St: John, determining the Birth of our Saviour, and fixing a precife Time for the Continuance of the prefent Defolation of the Jews; with fome Conjectures and Calculations pointing the Year 1764, to have been one of the moft remarkable in Hiftory. By the Rev. G. Burton, M.A. Lond. 1766.
- The Reafonablenefs and Certainty of the Chrisfian Religion, containing Difcourfes upon fuch Subjects as are thought most liable to Objections. By Rob. Jenkins, D. D. Lond. 1734, 5th. Ed. 2 vol.
- A Conference with a Theift; containing an Anfwer to all the moft ufual Objections of the Infidels against the Christian Religion. By W. Nichols, D. D. Lond. 1723, 3d. Ed. 2 vol.
- Difcourfes concerning the Truth of the Chriftian Religion, by J. Jortin. Lond. 1746. The fubjects of thefe Difcoures are, 1. The Prejudices of the Jews and Gentiles. 2. The Propagation of the Gofpel. 3. The Kingdom of Chrift. 4. The Fitnels of the Time when Chrift came into the World. 5. The Teftimony of John the Baptift. 6. The Scriptures of the new Teftament. 7. The Gofpel as it is Grace and Truth. A third Ed. has been publifhed.
- An Argument in Defence of Christianity, taken from the Confession of its most ancient Adversaries. By Greg. Sharpe, LL.D. Lond. 1753.
- A fecond Argument in Defence of Christianity, taken from the ancient Prophecies, applied to the most remarkable Events in the Life and Character of Jesus Christ. By Greg. Sharpe, LL.D. Lond. 1762.
- The Evidence of Chriftianity deduced from Facts and the Teffimony of Senfe, throughout all Ages of the World to the prefent Time, in a Series of Difcourfes preached at Boyle's Lecture in 1766-7-8, wherein is fhewn, that upon the Whole this is not a decaying, but a growing Evidence. By W. Worthington, D. D. Lond. 1769, 2 vol.
- Religionis Naturalis et Revelatæ principia, Methodo Scholaftica digefta in ufum Juventutis Academicæ. Parifiis, 1754, 2 vol. and a third vol. by Way of Supplement. Authore L. T. Hooke. The author of this book is a Doctor of the Sorborne, yet there are many things very liberally faid in it, as the reader may judge from the following propofition which is maintained in the Supplement, — Deus *falus* ob fapientiffimos fines caufarum naturalium ordinem, per feipfum aut Minifterium Angelorum intervertit: Dæmonum quæcunque *naturalis vis* fit, nulla eft *licentia*; ac ubi fe noftris rebus immifeent, divinorum judiciorum Minifteri, non fuo arbitrio unquam relinquuntur, neque unquam per eorum minifterium in confirmationem falti Miracula eduntur.
- The Ufefulnefs, Truth, and Excellency of the Chriftian Religion, defended against the Objections contained in a late Book, intitled, Chrifianity as old as the Creation, &c. By James Foster. Lond. 1734, 3d. Ed.
- The Reafonableness of the Christian Religion as delivered in the Scriptures. By G. Benfon, D. D. Lond. 1759, 3d. Ed. 2 vol. The author not only advances many arguments in proof of the Truth of the Christian Religion, but obviates, in a familiar way, the chief objections of the Anti-revelationist.
- A Difcourfe concerning the Refurrection of Jefus Chrift, in three Parts. C 2 Wherein,

Wherein, 1. The Confequences of the Doctrine are ftated hypothetically. 2. The Nature and Obligation of moral Evidence is explained. 3. The Proofs of the Fact of our Saviour's Refurrection are propoled, examined, and fairly demonstrated to be conclusive. Together with an Appendix concerning the impossible Production of Thought from Matter and Motion, &c. By Humph. Ditton. Lond. 1740, 5th. Ed. This book was translated into French in 1728, and the year after into Dutch.

- A Defence of Chriftianity, in two Parts. 1. The Law of Nature confidered, and fhewn to be confiftent with Reafon and itfelf, — and the Attention to it productive of the greateft Benefit to Mankind. 2. The Authority and Ufefulnefs of Revelation and the facred Writings afferted and vindicated, againft the feveral Objections made to them by the Deifts in general, and in Particular by the Author of Chriftianity as old as the Creation. By John Leland, D.D. Lond. 1753, 2d. Ed. 2 vol.
- A View of the principal deiftical Writers that have appeared in England in the laft and prefent Century; with Obfervations upon them, and fome Account of the Anfwers that have been published against them. In feveral Letters to a Friend. By J. Leland, D. D. Lond. 1766, 2 vol. 5th. Ed.
- An Enquiry into the divine Miffions of John the Baptift and Jefus Chrift, fo far as they can be proved from the Circumftances of their Birth, and their Connection with each other. By W. Bell, M. A. Lond. 1761. There is publifhed by the fame author, A Defence of Revelation in general and the Gofpel in particular.
- Letters from Baron Haller to his Daughter, on the Truths of the Chriffian Religion. Translated from the German. Lond. 1780.
- Differtations on Subjects relative to the Genius and Evidences of Chriftianity. By Alex. Gerard, D. D. Edinb. 1766.
- An Inquiry into the Caufes of the Infidelity and Scepticifm of the Times, with occafional Obfervations on the Writings of Herbert, Shaftefbury, Bolingbroke, Hume, Gibbon, Toulmin, &c. &c. By J. Ogilvie, D.D. Lond. 1783.
- An Appeal to common Senfe in behalf of Religion. By the Rev. James Ofwald, D.D. Lond. 1768, 2d. Ed. A fecond vol. in 1772.
- The Advantages and Neceffity of the Chriffian Revelation thewn from the State of Religion in the ancient Heathen World: especially with Respect to the Knowledge and Worschip of the one true God: a Rule of moral Duty: and a State of future Rewards and Punishments. To which is prefixed, a preliminary Discourse on natural and revealed Religion. By John Leland, D.D. Lond. 1768, 2 vol. All the works of Dr. Leland are valuable.
- A Difcourfe of the Neceffity and Ufefulness of the Chriftian Religion, by Reafon of the Corruptions of natural Religion among the Jews and Heathens. By Dan. Whitby, D.D. Lond. 1705.
- The Light of Nature purfued by Edw. Search (Abraham Tucker) Efq; Lond. 1768-78, 9 vol. In the laft four volumes there is added to the general title,—Lights of Nature and Gofpel blended.
- Of the Principles and Duties of natural Religion. By the Right Rev. John Wilkins, D. D. Lord Bifhop of Chefter. Loud. 1734.

The

- The Analogy of Religion, natural and revealed, to the Conflictution and Course of Nature. By Jos. Butler, D. D. late Lord Bishop of Durham. Lond. 1754, 5th. Ed.
- The Religion of Nature delineated. ByMr. Wollafton. Lond. 1750,7th.Ed. Confiderations on the Theory of Religion : in three Parts. I. Want of Universality in natural and revealed Religion, no just Objection against either. 2. The Scheme of divine Providence with Regard to the Time and Manner of the feveral Difpenfations of revealed Religion, more especially the Christian. 3. The Progress of natural Religion and Science, or the continual Improvement of the World in general. To which are added, two Difcourfes; the former on the Life and Character of Chrift, the latter on the Benefits procured by his Death, in Regard to our Mortality. With an Appendix, concerning the Ufe of the word Soul in holy Scripture; and the State of the Dead there described. By Edw. Lord Bishop of Carlisle. Carlisle, 1784, Ed. 7th. An Effay on Miracles, in two Difcourfes. By Will. (Bifhop) Fleetwood. Lond. 1701. The two main Principles of this Book, - that none but God can work a true miracle, - and that it cannot be fuppoled that a true miracle was ever wrought in oppolition to a doctrine eftablished on true miracles, - were opposed by Mr. (Bishop) Hoad-
- ley, in a Letter to Mr. Fleetwood. Lond. 1702. And the reading thefe two tracts occafioned Mr. Locke's writing his difcourfe on Miracles, which he published in his works.
- Traité fur les Miracles. Dans lequels on prouve que le Diable n'en fauroit faire pour confirmer l'erreur; où l'on fait voir, par plufieurs exemples tirez de l'Hiltoire fainte et profane que ceux qu'on lui attribue ne font qu' un effet de l'impofture ou de l'addreffe des hommes. Et où l'on examine lè Syftème oppofé tel que l'a établi le Dr. Clarke dans fon Traité fur la Religion Naturelle et Chretienne. Par J. Serces Vicaire d'Appleby dans le Comté de Lincoln. A Amfter. 1729. The author fays in his preface, that in maintaining that God never permitted the devil to work miracles in fupport of any dangerous error, and in queftioning the phyfical power of the devil to effect a miracle, he declared war againft the opinion of the moft venerable theologians and philofophers ancient and modern. The book is well written, and I do not know that it has ever appeared in Englifh.
- A Differtation on Miracles, defigned to fhew that they are Arguments of a divine Interpolition, and abfolute Proofs of the Miffion and Doctrine of a Prophet. By Hugh Farmer. Lond. 1771. The doctrine advanced in the preceding book, is very ably fupported in this. The reader will find in *Werenfelfus*' works the queftion, — Num Miracula *certa* fint Veritatis figna — determined, by various arguments, in the affirmative. The author, Mr. Farmer, was accufed of having borrowed his Idea of Miracles from Mr. Le Moine's book on that fubject, and he publifhed a pamphlet, intitled, An Examination of Mr. Le Moine's Treatife on Miracles, in which he fhews the difference of his plan from thofe of Mr. Le Moine, Dr. Sykes, and Bp. Fleetwood.
- A brief Difcourfe concerning the Credibility of Miracles and Revelation. Wherein the Credibility of Gofpel Miracles is fhewn, notwithftanding all later Miracles may be rejected as fictitious. To which is added, a Poffeript in Anfwer to the Lord Bifhop of Litchfield's Charge

to his Clergy. By A. A. Sykes, D. D. Lond. 1742, and a fecond Ed. in 1749.

- 'I wo Queffions, previous to Dr. Middleton's Free Inquiry impartially confidered: viz. What are the Grounds upon which the Credibility of Miracles, in general, is founded? And, Upon what Grounds the Miracles of the Gofpel, in particular, are credible? To which is added, a Differtation upon Mark xvi. 17-18. Thefe figns shall follow them that believe, &c. Lond. 1750. and a fecond Part in 1752, by Dr. Sykes. This author wrote above fixty different tracks, an edition of all his works would be ufeful.
- The Criterion: or Miracles examined with a View to expose the Pretensions of Pagans and Papists, to compare the miraculous Powers recorded in the new Testament, with those faid to subsist in later Times, &c. By the Rev. J. Douglass, A. M. Lond. 1757.
- A Differtation on Miracles: containing an Examination of the Principles advanced by David Hume, Efq; By G. Campbell, D.D. Edinb. 1762.
- An Inquiry into the Nature and Defign of Chrift's Temptation in the Wildernefs. By Hugh Farmer. Lond. 1776, 3d. Ed.
- An Effay on the Demoniacs of the new Teffament. By Hugh Farmer. Lond. 1755.
- An impartial Inquiry into the Cafe of the Gofpel Demoniacs. By W. Worthington, D. D. Lond. 1777.
- Letters to the Rev. Dr. Worthington, in Answer to his late Publication, intitled, "An impartial Inquiry into the Cafe of the Gospel Demoniacs". By Hugh Farmer. Lond. 1778.
- An Inquiry into the Heathen and the Scripture Doctrine of Dæmons. In which the Hypothefis of the Rev. Mr. Farmer and others on this Subject, is particularly examined. By John Fell. Lond. 1779.
- An Enquiry into the meaning of the Demoniacks in the new Teftament. By T. P. &c. Dr. Sykes. Lond. 1737. And a further Enquiry, &c. by the fame author in the fame year.
- The Cafe of the Demoniacs mentioned in the new Teftament. By N. Lardner, D. D. Lond. 1758.
- The general Prevalence of the Worship of human Spirits in the ancient Heathen Nations afferted and proved. By Hugh Farmer. Lond.1783.
- An hiftorical Differtation on idolatrous Corruptions in Religion, from the Beginning of the World; and on the Methods taken by divine Providence in reforming them. By Arthur Young. Lond. 1734, 2 vol. 'The object of this author is to fhew, that Revelation was defigned to prevent Superflition; he has many fentible Obfervations on particular parts of the Law of Mofes.
- Pauli Ern. Jablonski Pantheon Ægyptiorum sive de Diis eorum Commentarius. Francosurti ad Viadrum, 1750, 3 vol.

Archæologiæ Philosophicæ: five Doctrina antiqua de Rerum originibus. 1 Lond 1733. Auctore Thoma Burnet, S. T. P.

Origines Gentium Antiquifiimæ. By R Cumberland, D. D. late Lord Bishop of Peterborough. Lond. 1724.

De Fide et Officiis Christianorum. Liber polthumus. Lond. 1728, Ed. 2da. Autore T. Burnetio, S. T. P. All the Latin works of Dr. Burnet, are written with fuch perfpicuity and elegance of flyle, that, not-

withftanding

- withftanding the fingularity of fome of his opinions, they are highly deferving of attention.
- Eight Sermons, preached at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, in Defence of the Divinity of our Lord Jefus Chrift. By Dan. Waterland, D. D. Lond. 1720, 2d. Ed. This and the other theological works of Dr. Waterland, are much efteemed by the orthodox, and they may be properly confulted by fuch Arians and Socinians as wifh to know what can be advanced againft their principles.
- Traité de la Divinité de nôtre Seigneur Jefus Chrift, par M. Abbadie. A Rotterdam, 1709. This author publifhed a treatife on the Truth of the Chriftian Religion at Rotter. 1689, 2 vol.
- The Works of Mr. Tho. Emlyn, containing a Collection of Tracts and Sermons on various Subjects. With a large Account of the Author's Life, by Solom. Emlyn, Efq; Lond. 1746.
- An Effay on Spirit; wherein the Doctrine of the Trinity is confidered in the Light of Nature and Reason, as well as in the Light in which it was held by the ancient Hebrews, compared also with the Doctrine of the old and new Teftament. With an Inquiry into the Sentiments of the primitive Fathers of the Church, &c. Lond. 1751, from the Dublin Copy with Additions and Corrections by the Author (Bp. Clayton). This work was animadverted on by Dr. Scot in his foriptural Doctrine of the Trinity, 1754, and answered by Mr. Jones, 1770.
- The Apology of Benjamin Ben Mordecai to his Friends for embracing Chriftianity, in feven Letters to Elifha Levi, Merchant of Amfterdam, together with an eighth Letter, on the Generation of Jefus Chrift, with Notes and Illuftrations. The 2d. Ed. with Alterations and Additions. By Henry Taylor, Rector of Crawley and Vicar of Portfmouth, in Hants. Lond. 1784, 2 vol. Thefe Letters were printed at various times, from 1771 to 1777, in 4to.; they are composed with great learning and ingenuity, and contain the most formidable attack on, what is called, the Athanafian System that is any where to be met with.
  - A Letter writ in the Year 1730, concerning the Question, Whether the Logos supplied the Place of a human Soul in the Person of Jesus Chrift? to which are added, two Poftfcripts; the first containing an Explication of these Words, the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, as The fecond containing Remarks upon the ufed in the Scriptures. third Part of the late Bifhop of Clogher's Vindication of the Hiftories of the old and new Teftament. Lond. 1759. By Dr. Lardner. There is reason to refer to the fame author, - Two Schemes of a Trinity confidered, and the divine Unity afferted. Four Discourses upon Philip. ii. 5-11. Lond. 1784. - Newton and Locke were efteemed Socinians, Lardner was an avowed one: Clarke and Whiston were declared Arians; Bull and Waterland were profeffed Athanafians; who will take upon him to fay that thefe men were not equal to each other in probity and fcriptural knowledge? And if that be admitted, furely we ought to learn no other lefton, from the diverfity of their opinions, except that of perfect moderation and good-will towards all those who happen to differ from ourfelves. We ought to entertain no other wifh, but that every man may be allowed, without lofs of fame or fortune,

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### A Catalogue of

et fentire quæ velit, et quæ fentiat dicere. This abfolute freedom of inquiry, it is apprehended, is the beft way of inveftigating the fenfe of feripture, the moft probable mean of producing an uniformity of opizion, and of rendering the Gofpel Difpenfation as intelligible to us in the eighteenth century as, we prefume, it was to the Chriftians in the firft.

- The true Dockrine of the new Teftament concerning Jefus Chrift confidered; wherein the Mifreprefentations that have been made of it upon the Arian Hypothefis and upon all Trinitarian and Athanafan Principles are expoled; and the Honour of our Saviour's divine Character and Miffion is maintained. With an Appendix, containing Strictures upon the firft Chapter of St. John's Gofpel; and a prefatory Difcourfe upon the Right of private Judgment in Matters of Religion. This work was revifed, before it was printed, by Dr. Lardner; the author (the Rev. Mr. Cardale) published a Supplement to it, initided, A Comment on fome Paflages in Chrift's Prayer at the Clofe of his public Ministry.
- The Apology of Theophilus Lindley, M.A. on refigning the Vicarage of Catterick, in Yorkshire. Lond. 1774.
- A fcriptural Confutation of the Arguments against the One Godhead of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoft, produced by the Rev. Mr. Lindsey in his late Apology. By a Layman. York, 1774.
- A Sequel to the Apology on refigring the Vicarage of Catterick, Yorkfhire. By Theo. Lindley, M. A. Lond. 1776.
- An Inquiry into the Belief of the Chriftians of the three firft Centuries, refpecting the One Godhead of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoft. Being a Sequel to a feriptural Confutation of the Rev. Mr. Lindfey's late Apology. By W. Burgh, Efq; York, 1778. Mr. Lindfey's principles were opposed, not only by Mr. Burgh; but by Mr. Bingham in his Vindication of the Doctrine and Liturgy of the Church of England; by Dr. Randolph in his Vindication of the Worfhip of the Son and Holy Ghoft, and in his Letter to the Remarker (Mr. Temple) on the Layman's feriptural Confutation, and by others.
- Two Differtations; I. On the Preface to St. John's Gofpel: 2. On praying to Jefus Chrift. By Theop. Lindfey, A.M. With a fhort Poftfeript, by Dr. Jebb. Lond. 1779.
- An historical View of the State of the Unitarian Doctrine and Worfhip, from the Reformation to our own Times. With fome Account of the Obftructions which it has met with at different Periods. By Theo. Lindley, M. A. Lond. 1783. The author has treated this interefting fubject with great candour and ability.
- An Enquiry into the Opinions of the Christian Writers of the three first Centuries concerning the Person of Jefus Christ. By Gilbert Wakefield, B. A. Lond. 1784, vol. 1st.
- Five Differtations: [1. On the Athanafian Doctrine. 2. On the Socinian Scheme. 3. On the Perfon of Chrift. 4. On the Rife, Progrefs, Perfection, and End of Chrift's Kingdom. 5. On the Caufes which probably confpired to produce our Saviour's Agony. By Ed. Harwood, D.D. Lond. 1772. And a 2d. Ed. of the Effay on the Socinian Scheme, in 1784. Dr. Harwood rejects the Athanafian and Socinian Schemes as not, in his opinion, founded in Scripture.

Tractatus

- Tractatus de Imputatione divina Peccati Adami in reatum. Authore. Dan. Whitby, S. T. P. Lond. 1711.
- The Scripture Doctrine of original Sin propoled to free and candid Examination. To which is added, a Supplement containing fome Remarks on two Books, viz. The Vindication of the Scripture Doctrine of original Sin, and, The Ruin and Recovery of Mankind. By John Taylor, of Norwich, D. D. 3d. Ed. 1750.
- A Difcourse concerning, 1. The true Purport of the Words Election and Reprobation, and the Things fignified by them in the holy Scripture. 2. The Extent of Chrift's Redemption. 3. The Grace of God, where it is enquired whether it be vouchfafed fufficiently to those who improve it not, and irrefiftibly to those who do improve it; and whether Men be wholly paffive in the Work of Regeneration. 4. The Liberty of the Will in a State of Trial and Probation. 5. The Perfeverance or Defectibility of the Saints; with some Reflexions on the State of Heathens, the Providence, and Præscience of God. By Dan. Whitby, D.D. Lond. 1710. Whitby fays of himfelf in the preface to this work that he was brought up a Calvinift, and that what first moved him to examine into the truth of the Calviniftic Divinity, was - the Imputation of Adam's Sin to all his Posterity, - and the strange confequences of it. He fays, that he examined the writings of antiquity, and finished a treatife on Original Sin in Latin, which had been composed about twenty years, but which he had not thought it adviseable to publifh. This treatife was published in the following year.
- The divine Feudal Law, or Covenants with Mankind reprefented, together with Means for uniting of Proteftants. By Sam. Baron Puffendorf. Tranflated from the Latin by Theop. Dorrington. Lond. 1703. In this book Puffendorf treats of many of the fubjects which are difcuffed by Whitby in the laft article. A track, initided, The Re-union of Chriftians, or the Means to re-unite Chriftians under one Confeffion of Faith, was publifhed in London, 1673. It was originally written in French, and in an appendix to another translation of it in 1700, we learn that M. D' Huiffcan, one of the Minifters of Saumur, had a principal hand in its composition.
- The Doctrine of Grace: or the Office and Operations of the Holy Spirit vindicated from the Infults of Infidelity and the Abufes of Fanaticifm. By W. Lord Bifhop of Gloucefter. Lond. 1763, 2d. Ed.
- The Doctrine of irrefiftible Grace, proved to have no Foundation in the Writings of the new Teftament. By T. Edwards, A.M. Camb. 1759.
- An Attempt to afcertain and illustrate the Authority, Nature and Defign of the Institution of Christ, commonly called the Communion and the Lord's Supper. By W. Bell, D. D. Lond. 1780.
- A plain Account of the Ordinance of Baptifm, in which all the Texts of the N. T. relating to it, are produced, and the whole Doctrine concerning it drawn from them alone, in a Courfe of Letters to the Right Rev. Dr. Benjamin Hoadley, late Lord Bifhop of Winchefter, Author of a plain Account of the Lord's Supper. Lond. 1766, 2d. Ed.
- The Hiftory of Infant-Baptifm. By W. Wall. Lond. 1720. The first Ed. in 4to. in 1705.

Reflexions

#### A Catalogue of

Reflexions on Mr. Wall's Hiftory of Infant-Baptifin. By J. Gale. Lond. 1711. Wall's main argument in favour of Infant-Baptifin, is founded on the practice which the Jews, he fays, had of baptizing profelytes to their religion: Dr. Gill has queffioned, in a learned track, the Exiftence of fuch a practice amongft the Jews; and others have endeavoured to fhew, that, admitting the practice to have exifted, it was not extended to Children who were born after their parents had become profelytes; and confequently that the neceffity of baptizing children born of Chriftian parents cannot be inferred from the Jewifh practice of baptizing profelytes. Socinus wrote a tract on this queftion, An homini Chriftian oaquæ baptifino carere liceat? and he demined it in the affirmative.

- The Scripture Doctrine of Atonement examined; first in Relation to Jewish Sacrifices: and then to the Sacrifice of our bleffed Lord and Saviour Jefus Christ. By John Taylor, D.D.1751. A simal pamphlet was published in 1772, by W. Graham, A. M. initiled, The Doctrine of Atonement briefly confidered, in a Series of Letters to a young Gentleman at the University. To which is added, Dr. Duchal's Letter to Dr. Taylor on the fame Subject; which was first published in the 2d. vol. of the Theological Repository. Before the publication of Dr. Taylor's Doctrine of Atonement, a very fensible effay on Redemption had been published by Mr. Balguy, 1741.
- Jefus Chrift the Mediator between God and Man, an Advocate for us with the Father, and a Propitiation for the Sins of the World. 2d, Ed, To which is now added by another Gentleman, an Effay to prove the Credibility of the Gofpel from the Doctrine of the Efficacy of Chrift's Death for the Redemption of the World. Lond. 1761. This is a very fenfible treatife (by Mr. Tomkins), in which the author endeavours to effablifh the literal fenfe of those passes in Scripture which concern our redemption by Chrift; he looks upon the death of Chrift as a real facrifice, and reprefents the notion the Scripture gives us of these things as confiftent with the dictates of Reason and natural Religion.
- An Effay on the Scheme and Conduct, Procedure and Extent of Man's Redemption; wherein is fnewn, from the holy Scriptures, that this great work is to be accomplifhed by a gradual Reftauration of Man and Nature to their primitive State. To which is annexed, a Differ tation on the Defign and Argumentation of the Book of Job. By W. Worthington, A. M. Lond. 1748, 2d. Ed.
- An Effay on the Nature, Defign, and Origin of Sacrifices. By Dr. Sykes, Lond. 1748.
- The Scripture Doctrine of the Redemption of Man by Jefus Chrift. In two Parts. In the *former* of which, the principal, if not all, the Texts relating to the Subject are produced, and the Meaning of each Text, where neceffary, is examined and explained. In the *latter*, the Doctrine of our Redemption is fet forth in 48 Propositions. By Dr. Sykes. 1756. This is one of the laft and one of the beft works of Dr. Sykes, who died in Nov. 1756.
- De Statu mortuorum et refurgentium Tractatus. Adjicitur Appendix de futura Judæorum Reflauratione. Lond. 1733, Ed. 2da. Autore T. Burnetio, S. T. P.

- An hiftorical View of the Controverfy concerning an intermediate State and the feparate Exiftence of the Soul, between Death and the general Refurrection, deduced from the Beginning of the Proteftant Reformation to the prefent Times. With fome Thoughts, in a prefatory Difcourfe, on the Ufe and Importance of Theological Controverfy. Lond. 1772, 2d. Ed.
- The Reftoration of all Things, or a Vindication of the Goodnefs and Grace of God to be manifefted at laft in the Recovery of his whole Creation out of their Fall. By Jeremy White. Lond. 1712. The author gives fome account, in his preface, of thofe who in ancient and modern times had fupported the opinion of the final reformation of all mankind. Dr. Hartley maintained the fame doctrine in the fecond volume of his Obfervations on Man, &c. and Bifhop Newton has fhewn himfelf an able advocate for it in one of his Differtations publifhed in his works.
- The Myftery hid from Ages and Generations, made manifeft by the Gofpel Revelation: or the Salvation of all Men, the grand Thing aimed at in the Scheme of God, as opened in the new Teftament Writings, and entrufted with Jefus Chrift to bring into Effect. Lond. 1784. By Charles Chauncy, D. D. of Bofton, in New England.
- An Enquiry into the Nature of the human Soul; wherein the Immateriality of the Soul is evinced from the Principles of Reafon and Philofophy. Lond. 1745, 2 vol. 3d. Ed. Mr. Baxter published an Appendix to the first part of this inquiry in 1750.
- Sermons on the Evidence of a future State of Rewards and Punifhments, arifing from a View of our Nature and Condition; in which are confidered fome Objections of Hume: By W. Craven, B.D. Camb. 1783. The fubject is treated with great perfpicuity, and Mr. Hume's objections folidly refuted.
- Difquifitions relating to Matter and Spirit. To which is added, the Hiftory of the philofophical Doctrine concerning the Origin of the Soul and the Nature of Matter; with its Influence on Chriftianity, efpecially with Refpect to the Pre-exiftence of Chrift. By Jof. Prieftley, LL.D. F. R.S. Lond. 1777.
- A free Difcuffion of the Doctrines of Materialifm and philosophical Neceffity, in a Correspondence between Dr. Price and Dr. Prieftley: to which are added by Dr. Prieftley, an Introduction explaining the Nature of the Controverfy, and Letters to feveral Writers who have animadverted on his Difquifitions. Lond. 1778. The reader who has a tafte for these metaphylical disquisitions, may confult fome more recent publications on the fubject, especially an Essay on the Nature and Existence of the material World. Lond. 1781.
- The Theological Repolitory, confifting of original Effays, Hints, Queries, &c. calculated to promote religious Knowledge. Lond. 1773, 3 vol.
- Thefaurus Theologicus, or a compleat Syftem of Divinity, fummed up in brief Notes upon felect Places of the old and new Teftament. By W. Beveridge, D.D. Lord Bifhop of St. Afaph. Lond. 1711, 4 vol.
- A System of Divinity and Morality, in a Series of Discourses on all the cliential Points of natural and revealed Religion, compiled from the Works

#### A Catalogue of

Works of above thirty eminent Divines. Revifed and corrected by Ferd. Warner, LL.D. Lond. 1767, 4 vol.

Joan. Chrif. Beckii Synophis Inflitutionum Univerfæ Theologiæ Naturalis et Revelatæ, &c. in ufum Auditorii Domefici. Bahliæ, 1765; This is a very good work; the author exprefies himfelf in the following terms concerning the mode of education which prevails in this place, and I believe in Oxford. — Multis placet Anglorum difcendi ratio, quorum finguli juvenes, cum ad Academias fefe conferunt, unum ex publicis doctoribus fibi ducem fludiorum eligunt, cujus fequentes confilium legant, meditentur, foribant. Identidem examinantur, ut de progreffibus judicari queat et confilia ulteriora fuppeditari. Habet hæc methodus fua commoda. Sed incommodum iftud eft maximum, quod finguli doctores nonnifi paucis hoc modo dirigendis fufficiant, nifi ab omnibus aliis laboribus immunes fint, quod apud nos minime obtinetur. — Our mode of academic inflitution is ftill more perfect than this author conceived it to be; and our Tutors have that freedom from other engagements which he wifhed for.

Joan. Fred. Burgii Inflitutiones Theologicæ. Vratislaviæ,1766, Ed. 3tia. Sermons on the Attributes of God. By Dan. Whitby, D.D. Lond. 1710, 2 vol.

- Difcourfes concerning the Being and natural Perfections of God. By T. Abernethy, M. A. Dublin, 1746, 2 vol.
- The Being and Attributes of God demonstrated. By H. Knight, A. M. Lond. 1747. It is enough to fay of this work, that it is recommended by Benson, Lardner, and Taylor of Norwich.
- A practical Catechifm. By H. Hammond, D. D. The 12th. Ed. whereunto is added, the Reafonableness of the Christian Religion, by the same Author. Lond. 1683.
- Lectures on the Catechifin of the Church of England. By W. Gilpin, M. A. Lond. 1781, 2d. Ed. This book greatly merits the attention of young perfons. Archbifhop Wake's Principles of the Chriftian Religion, in a Commentary on the Church Catechifm; Archbifhop Secker's Lectures on the Catechifm; Oftervald's Grounds and Principles of the Chriftian Religion; Bp. Gaftrel's Chriftian Inflitutes; Bp. Gibfon's Paftoral Letters, and a great variety of other religious Tracts are highly deferving of notice; but I omit an enumeration of them; heartily recommending it to the reader, whether he be a Layman or Clergyman, to furnifh himfelf with the collection of fuch tracts which is made by the Society for promoting Chriftian Knowledge.
- An Effay on the Composition of a Sermon, translated from the Original of the Rev. J. Claude, Minister of the French Reformed Church at Charenton. With Notes by Rob. Robinson, in 2 vol. Camb. 1779.
- Sermons on feveral Occafions, preached before the University of Cambridge; to which is prefixed, a Differtation on that Species of Compolition. By J. Mainwaring, B.D. Camb. 1780. The fludious reader will receive much advantage from the justness of the criticism dif-
- played in the Differtation and Notes.
- A Difcourfe of the Paftoral Care, by Gilbert Burnet, Lord Bifhop of Sarum; with a new Preface and fome other Additions. First printed in 1692. Glafgow, 1762.

Lectures

Lectures on the Exercise of the facred Ministry. By the late T. F. Of-

- tervald. Translated from the French, with a Preface and occasional Notes, by Tho. Stevens, M.A. Lond. 1781.
- The Theological Works of the moft Rev. Dr. John Potter, late Lord Archbishop of Canterbury: containing his Sermons, Charges, Difcourses of Church Government and Prælectiones Theologicæ. Oxf. 1753, 3 vol.
- The miscellaneous Works of the late reverend and learned Conyers Middleton, D. D. Lond. 1755, 5 vol. 2d. Ed.
- Opufcula Mifcellanea Theologica Joan. Burton S. T. P. and his Sermons, &c. in all 6 vol. Oxford, 1744-71.
- The Works of Tho. Sharp, D. D. late Archdeacon of Northumberland, containing occafional Sermons; Tracts on various Subjects; Confiderations on the Rubric and Canons; Differtations on *Elohim* and *Berith*; a Defence of the Differtations, in three Parts; Difcourfes touching the Antiquity of the Hebrew Tongue and Character; an Examination of Mr. Hutchinfon's Exposition of Cherubim. Lond. 1763, 6 vol.
- Four Differtations. 1. On Providence. 2. On Prayer. 3. On the Reafons for expecting that virtuous Men fhall meet after Death in a State of Happineis. 4. On the Importance of Chriftianity, the Nature of hiftorical Evidence and Miracles. By R. Price, F. R. S. Lond. 1767.
- Difcourfes on various Subjects, by W. S. Powell, D. D. Lond. 1776. The editor, Dr. Balguy, obferves that these difcourses were chiefly intended for the benefit of the younger fludents in divinity. They are written with great acuteness and knowledge of the several subjects.
- A rational Illuftration of the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England. By C. Wheatley. Lond. 1722, 4th. Ed. This is one of the molt useful works on the fubject, as it comprehends the fubstance of *Comber's* Companion to the Temple, of *Nichols'* Commentary on the Common Prayer, and of other fimilar treatifes.
- A Vindication of the Government, Doctrine, and Worfhip of the Church of England, eftablifhed in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, againft the injurious Reflections of Mr. Neale in his late Hiftory of the Puritans. Together with a Detection of many falle Quotations and Miftakes in that Peformance. Lond. 1740. By Bp. Maddox.
- An impartial Examination of the 2d, 3d, and 4th vol. (8vo.) of Daniel Neal's Hiftory of the Puritans. By Zach. Grey, LL.D. Lond. 1736-9, 2 vol.
- Free and candid Difquifitions relating to the Church of England, and the Means of advancing Religion therein. Lond. 1750, 2d. Ed. — In 1677, the third Ed. of a book was publifhed, intitled, — A Difcourfe vindicating the Lawfulness of those Things which are chiefly excepted against in the Church of England, especially in its Liturgy and Wor-
- hip, by W. Falkener. The Book of Common Prayer reformed according to the Plan of the
- late Dr. Sam. Clarke; together with the Pfalter or Pfalms of David: Lond. 1774.
- The Confeffional: or a full and free Inquiry into the Right, Utility, Edification

# A Calalogue of

Edification and Success of establishing systematical Confessions of Faith and Doctrine in Protestant Churches. Lond. 1770, 3d. Ed. The author of this work, who is well known to be a very learned Clergyman of the Church of England, takes fo much notice of all the writers who opposed his fentiments, that there is no need to give a particular enumeration of the feveral pamphlets which were written against it. The controverly is still unfettled; it is still a question, whether any Chriftian Church has a right to require from its public teachers any other Profession of Faith, than that of a belief in the Bible, as containing a revelation from God ?-It is still a question, whether, granting the Abstract Right, the Use of it be expedient in any degree, and to what degree, in the prefent condition of the Church of England? One of the lateft and best tracts on this subject, is that by the author of Ben. Mordecai's Apology, intitled, Farther Thoughts on the Nature of the grand Apoftacy of the Christian Church foretold by the Apoftles: with Observations on the Laws against Hereticks, the Subscription to Articles of human Composition, &c. Lond. 1783.

- The Errors of the Church of Rome detected, in ten Dialogues, between Benevolus and Sincerus. To which another is added, containing a brief Vindication of the Revolution, and fublequent Settlement of the Crown upon the illustrious House of Hanover. By the Rev. James Smith. Lond. 1778, 2d. Ed. The author left the communion of the Church of Rome, in which he had been educated, in 1764. He obferves, that he lived for fome years in the College for Parish Priests at Lifbon, and that he there took the College Oath, which is always adminiftered to fludents, a part of which is, that, whenever the prefident of the college fhould think proper, he would return to England as a Miffionary, and bring over as many Protestants as he could, to the Communion of the Church of Rome. He by chance met with Bennet's Confutation of Popery, and that book, together with the ecclefiaftical Hiftory of M. Jean Le Seur, principally contributed to make him renonunce the Errors of the Church of Rome. This is an uleful book for those who wifh to have a concife view of the corruptions of Chriftianity as practifed in the Church of Rome.
- An Hiftory of the Corruptions of Chriftianity. By Jof. Prieftley, LL.D. 2 vol. Some parts of this work have been animadverted on, in a very able manner, by Dr. Horfley, and others; nor has Dr. Prieftley been backward in his replies; the curious reader will furnifh himfelf with all the tracts which have been already publifhed on each fide of the queftion; and will expect with impatience the larger Hiftory of the State of Opinions concerning Chrift in the primitive Times; in the composing of which Dr. Prieftley is now engaged.
- Bibliotheca Sacra, feu Syllabus omnium ferme Editionum facræ Scripturæ ac Verfionum fecundum feriem Linguarum quibus Vulgatæ funt, Notis hiftoricis et criticis illustratus, adjunctis præftantisfimis Codd. MSS. Labore Jacobi Le Long, recensuit castigavit auxit C. F. Boernerus. Lipsæ, 1709.
- The Preacher's Affiltant (after the Manner of Mr. Letfome), containing a Series of the Texts of Sermons and Difcourfes, published either fingly or in Volumes : by Divines of the Church of England and by the

the Diffenting Clergy, fince the Reftoration to the prefent Time, fpecifying alfo the feveral Authors alphabetically arranged under each Text; with the Size, Date, Occafion, or fubject Matter of each Sermon or Difcourfe. By J. Cooke, M. A. Oxford, 1783, 2 vol.-There are fome errors in this compilation; but it is rather to be wondered at that there are not more, than that there fhould be fome; I refer the reader to it as to an ufeful catalogue, from which he may felect fuch writers of fermons as he may think fit to have in his library; for where almost all are equally good, it would be a prefumption in me to attempt to particularize the beft. If, in addition to the fermons contained in the three volumes of Boyle's Lecture, and in the works of Barrow, Clarke, Tillotfon, Hoadley, &c. I was to mention the names of Sherock, Secker, Jortin, Fofter, Abernethy, Seed, South, Ogden, Rogers, Whichcote, &c. and omit noticing Brady, Fiddes, Mois, Atterbury, Bellamy, Fleetwood, Pyle, Orr, Pearce, Warburton, &c. I might be accufed of appearing to give a preference where I had no intention of doing it, and where better judges than myfelf might think that none was due. If any enumeration, moreover, of books of this kind was made, the names of many living authors ought to be inferted in the lift, for they are in no refpect inferior to their predeceffors in this fpecies of composition. There are fome fine discourses also in the French language, by Bafnage, Croufaz, Saurin, Boffuet, Bourdaloue, &c. fome of which have been translated into English: but no church in Chriftendom was ever bleffed with a greater variety of excellent pulpit Compositions than our own is; and as they conflitute one of the most ufeful parts of a theological Library, it ought to be the fludy of every Clergyman to procure as large a collection of them, as his circumftances will admit.

It is unneceffary to give any directions, as to the manner of using the books which are here pointed out, fince every man will naturally confult fuch of them as treat of the particular fubjects on which he is defirous of obtaining information, and no one will have inclination to perufe them all. Theological learning is the profession of the Clergy, and it may juftly be faid to every ignorant minister of the Gospel, -" Thou which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?" Yet, on the other hand, mere abstract learning, how profound and various foever it may be, is not an acquifition much to be valued by them; it is its application to the ufeful purpoles of their profession, to the bringing men from the dominion of fin to gospel perfection, which will render it of any effimation in the fight of God. I mean not here to fpeak in difparagement of theological learning; but I do mean to fay, that practice is better than fpeculation, and that He who, in promoting the falvation of his flock by a fedulous performance of his pastoral duties, finds not leifure to be learned, instead of our cenfure, deferves our warmest approbation; it may honourably be faid of fuch a man, - contemnebat potius literas, quam nefciebat. I take my leave of the reader with freely expressing a general with, That we may all of us, in our respective stations, become more disposed to provoke

# A Catalogue, &c.

provoke one another unto Love and to Goodworks, and lefs difpofed to backbite and devour one another for our Opinions; that Christianity may have its root in our hearts, rather than in our heads; that it may fhew forth its fruit in the purity and integrity of our lives, rather than in the vehemence and fubtility of our difputes; in a word, that the time may at length come, when every individual in the Church, and out of the Church, Trinitarian, and Unitarian, may love his own Herefy lefs than Golpel Charity.

### Errata in the Appendix.

For	Teftimenti,		Testamenti.
	Ontramo		Outramo.
	Orthodoxum	_	Orthodoxam.
	Gondæ		Goudæ.
	Theologicæ Ele.		Theologiæ Ele.
	Cantab. 1663		Cantab. 1665.
	Vocis Heb.		Voces Heb.

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