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A  
DISCOURSE  
ON  
GOVERNMENT  
AND  
RELIGION,

Calculated for the MERIDIAN of the  
THIRTIETH of JANUARY.

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By an INDEPENDENT.

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*Ye know nothing at all, neither consider that it is expedient for us, that one Man should die for the People, and that the whole Nation perish not.*

CAIAPHAS.

SALUS POPULI SUPREMA LEX ESTO.

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T H E

P R E F A C E.

**T**H<sup>O'</sup> this is the place of a Preface, what I have to say, more than the contents that follow, being not the subject of the day in the title-page, but of the present times, I think it may not improperly be called, *a Postscript by way of Preface.*

There is now much talk about altering the *Common Prayer*; no one doubts of the need of doing it, but pore-blind bigots; but how to alter it to please every one, is an unsummountable difficulty. I own I have read none of the arguments published on this subject: however, I will give my opinion, that if it be at all altered, it ought to be in such a manner, as will best please *all conscientious and reasonable men*, and that in my judgment will be, not to alter the book, but the use of it; not to abolish a syllable or ceremony of it, but let it remain just as it is. Let every parish priest either use the whole, or leave out what part he pleases, or let it all alone, not allowing him to introduce any *new* ceremonies, for that would be a leading towards popery; but leave out as many of the old ones as he thinks proper; that he who is to pray for others, may pray in what manner he judges best, either by that form, or by any other of his own composing, or by none. So the priest enjoying liberty of conscience himself, will feel the sweetness of it, and be willing that others should enjoy the same felicity. How can any one pray, or teach, according to the best of his judgment, in the sincerity of his conscience, that is denied the liberty  
of

of doing it? Upon the rock of private judgment and liberty of conscience, stands the reformation. That no ceremonies should be imposed on men in religious matters, nor doctrines, but such as agree with their reason and the Bible, is the foundation of protestancy; and if this was freely permitted, all bigotry in religion, which is the scandal of it, would be done away. Men will not then persecute one another in words, or deeds, about things indifferent, nor esteem them essentials. All *good and wise* men both clergy and laity will be pleased, and none displeased but superstitious, arbitrary and unreasonable tempers. And such good consequence is as much as can be expected or desired, when any alteration is made, on any account, in any time or place in the world. An unalterable conformity to any one system, is presumption to expect, and tyranny to impose, unless the men appointing it were infallible. But infallibility is God's peculiar property, according to protestant doctrine; and is doubtless an infallible truth: therefore to leave men free in religion, is true protestant practice. To give this liberty in public devotion, is to make but *one* alteration; but to alter the book, will be to make an alteration, which, however made, will want altering again and again without end. But by this method, all the people as well as all their guides will please themselves, for then if too many or too few, too much or too little ceremonies, be used at one church to please any person, those that dislike may go to another, where the worship is more agreeable to them. All the conformity that God requires, is to the dictates of a pure conscience; and all the religious conformity necessary for social life and happiness, is, *that supplications, prayers, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings, and all that are in authority, the manner how should be left to the discretion of him that does it, so that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty;* and that men should be advised and counselled how to act as the reason and nature of their circumstances require, with all moral and commendable conduct.



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A  
**D I S C O U R S E**  
 O N  
**GOVERNMENT, &c.**

**A**FTER a hundred years contention and animosity about the good or evil of *one* action, it is time that men's passions should subside, and that they growing calm and sedate, without enthusiasm and bigotry, should reflect and reason on the subject; and 'tis fit that those who have the favour of good sense should exercise it. — Those who are not able to form a rational judgment of things, are liable to every deception; they cannot possibly tell when they are deceived, and for want of judgment can never be convinced: therefore such must go their own way, till suffering opens their understandings; then they wish, too late, they had reflected in time. As when men feel the effects of slavery, they wish for freedom, who never valued it, when they enjoyed it; nor endeavoured to preserve it, when they were in imminent danger of losing it. But were it not for the *careless* and the *coward*, mankind could never be enslaved. — As for my own

part, I am determined to write for *liberty*, while I have liberty to write, seeing in these happy days of freedom, we now enjoy that natural and reasonable liberty, which is the natural and reasonable right of mankind, and reason therefore may speak without fear: But when *tyrants* reign, reason for liberty is suppressed; because it is feared.——I am of no levelling spirit: I think sovereigns are made to rule, and subjects to obey, the laws governing both; the laws I mean made by the governing powers, that are according to equity, and moral justice. —— Such a government ought not to be abused, nor to suffer abuse from malecontents, that enjoy equal liberties with their fellow subjects; whose murmuring is only to make men despise the heavenly *manna* they at present relish, to bring them back to the ancient slavery of *Egypt*, to lordly and priestly tyranny, which freeborn souls abhor; or to the stinking *garlick* of popery, which is loathed by men of taste.——Some men are of such servile and stupid dispositions, that they think whatever is the will of the sovereign, is law. If he was God himself, a Being not capricious, but necessarily so perfect, that it is absolutely impossible for him to be the author of an *evil law*, it would be so, and right in being so. If his laws like God's were perfectly just, because his will is absolutely good, not because he is absolutely powerful; for power and goodness are distinct and different things; therefore the one may be where the other is not; and very seldom meet together in man. They can only be cemented by wisdom and justice. This cannot be where weak-headed men are possessed of power; for where ambitious and self-conceited men bear rule (which is the natural consequence of strong passions and weak intellects) the event naturally is, that destruction at-

tends

tends not only all those, their arm of vengeance is capable of reaching ; but also, that they over-reach themselves to their own fatal downfall and justly merited ruin.—— If to enslave a nation is an *inglorious* and *dishonourable* thing to the doer ; to redeem a nation from slavery is a *glorious* and an *honourable* action. If men have a natural right to the enjoyment of civil and religious liberties, they have a natural right to assert and maintain these liberties, and to defend them by what means they can. When necessity calls for it, it is not any unnatural rebellion, but a natural and noble stand for liberty : but to rebel without this cause, *as has been lately done*, is to attempt the destruction of our most valuable liberties, and to set up tyranny and slavery in its room ; which if attempted by a king, renders him the most detestable of all kings ; and if by a people, proves them the most base and ungrateful of all people. A king is then a tyrant, when he will not be governed by the laws of the country he ought to be governed by : But as long as he governs himself by them, those laws are his protection. On the contrary, he that makes his arbitrary and despotic will, the law of the nation, is a tyrant ; and as he does and would reign without the law of reason and justice, he is, or ought, in reason and justice to be outlawed. And every priest that preaches up the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance to such a prince, is a traitor to the liberties of the people. When the people's liberties are intended to be taken away, then, and only then, such doctrine is necessary to be preached to the stupid and unthinking herd ; that while they are lulled asleep in spiritual stupor, their properties may be invaded without obstruction ; and their natural rights stolen from them without impediment. The king and the priest, so

joining to play their part, are like two robbers, that, at their attacking a man upon the highway, one of them throws dust in his eyes, while the other robs him of what he has. What's the reason that priests don't preach this high-flown doctrine now? It is *first* because the prince intends no invasion on the liberties of his subjects, and *secondly*, because they have got a king they can't make an ecclesiastic noodle of. When fools reign, they have always knaves at their elbow. When a king is desirous to enslave the people, there are always some *black* counsellors at hand, that seek their own advancement in the common ruin. If he take it into his head to side with the church and clergy in doing it, they will sanctify all his actions, assert his birthright from above, cast a ray of glory around him, and make him appear a saint, or one of the minor sons of God.

Notwithstanding the wicked, stupid, and damning doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance, men have a right to stand up in their own defence, when their lives and liberties are invaded; for *self-defence* is the greatest law in nature, it is interwoven in the constitution of every creature, and such unnatural doctrines cannot extirpate it.

Let not kings be deceived by false notions; when by wicked actions, they have lost the love of the people in general, they can have no safety from the people; but are in the case of poor debtors, that dare not trust themselves abroad for fear of a bailiff. But a few malecontents, and a faction against the court, will always be, *1st*. By some, because they are out of place. *2dly*. By others, because they suffer themselves easily to be deceived, and are generally dissatisfied. And *3dly*, Those that are jealous of their liberties will always fear the worst, and therefore grumble at whatever does

not

not seem to them to have a favourable aspect, or appears to have an ill tendency ; these I may call *court spies* ; but it is a sign of liberty in the state, when the people are permitted to be watchful of it, and even allowed a jealous murmur or complaint.

The action of this day, being done contrary to the *interest*, and therefore contrary to the *dispositions* of the priests, it was policy in them to blacken it, and make it a sin, which now they have prayed above these hundred years to be forgiven. And if it is not forgiven by this time, they either pray to a strange God, or they are a strange sort of prayers, that work no manner of effect upon him : He either hears them not, or don't think them worthy his regard, and so they may pray on till Doomsday.—When God, the King, and the People are to be mocked, there is no better way of doing it, than by practising it with the face of Religion. The cavaliers pray for the forgiveness of a sin they never committed ; and so they have mocked God, ever since they have begun to practice repentance on this score.—Those that are most guilty of hypocrisy, cry out most against others for being hypocrites. What is it but hypocrisy, for men to pretend to repent of what no man in the age they live in is guilty of ; or to attempt by four penitence to atone for an action of the generation now dead, and which those that committed, were not conscious of its being a crime in the nature and reason of the thing ?—But however it be, if they have committed a crying sin before God, and have not answered for it by this time before God, there is no truth in our Religion.—Why then should we, a degenerate race, condemn ; and whining, pretend to repent of the action they did, and thought themselves right in doing ? If we are to answer for it, where is the ju-

justice of God? If we believe we shall be answerable for their faults, where's the rationality of our belief? But I expect to be told that the *Lord visits the iniquities of the fathers upon their children to the third and fourth generation*. What upon those children who had no hand in the action of their fathers, and who cannot be guilty of it! To assert this is as ridiculous, as impious. This is just as right, as it would be to lash a boy at school, that never played truant in his life, because his father or grandfather play'd the truant, and was not whipt for it. *Ezekiel* (chap. xviii.) tells us, that God said *then*, and I suppose he has not changed his mind since; *the soul that sinneth shall die, the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, &c.* This chapter is a good explanation of the threatening annexed to the second commandment.—The truth is, there are *families*, as well as *nations*, that tread in their predecessors steps, and the *son* goes on in the same wicked path the *father* did (as *James II.* followed *Charles I.*) till their iniquities are full; that is, till they can be borne with no longer; and then *justice* fully incensed, whets her vengeful sword, and cuts them off. Seldom does it happen, that tyrannical kings treading in the steps of their wicked ancestors, prosper to the *fourth* generation; but according as their iniquity is, as to time and measure, they are cut down in the *second* or *third* succession. So the sins of *James I.* which his son *Charles* walked in, helped forward his fall. — It is the mercy of God to mankind, that tyranny and oppression shall naturally stir up the vengeance of an incensed people, *to bind the heathen kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron. Such honour have all his saints, praise ye the Lord*, says the \* Psalmist. This is an honour due to none but *saints*, that is, to a people

ple worthy of redemption. And kings that persecute christians are heathens to them.

It is the duty of subjects to defend and obey a *good* Prince, and oppose a *bad* one ; for all opposition to evil is good. The people, that obey a wicked prince, will be wicked ; for a tame submission to his vices, will corrupt their morals. And his *religious vices*, most of all ; because they are not seen as vices, being gilded over with religion. By this means slavery and iniquity may be planted, and take deep root in a nation.

Right government is, when the governor and governed mutually agree, and are mutually benefited : When they harmonize, they make each other happy. The chief end of government is the safety and tranquillity of the people, in which the prince finds his account : Their duty is to serve and protect each other.—Subjects disobeying a lawful prince, are justly punished ; and he is a lawful prince, whom the power and will of the people appoint, and who rules according to law.—He that redeems a people from slavery, or from those arbitrary measures that present them with an approaching prospect of it, has a right to rule over them ; and as he is their *rightful*, so he is their *lawful prince* if he don't enslave them.—Kings are the servants of the public, and if they deserve well of the public, they ought to be well rewarded by the public. But servants that do not their duty, ought to be discarded their service. He that destroys the public peace, whose duty it is to preserve it, deserves public punishment, whatever his office or station be in the public service. As it is hard to punish governors, without injury to the governed, if they can get rid of them at any rate, they must be contented ; for formal justice cannot be executed on those that are above the reach of justice. Justice

cannot always be executed where it ought, but ought always where it can, without regard to persons.—He that reigns according to the laws of the country, is not to be esteemed a bad prince ; but if bad laws are complained of, and he can rectify them, but does not, he is not a good prince ; for every one that is made sensible of his duty, ought to do it, if it be in his power. A prince may be so far misled, as to agree to the making laws that may be productive of grievances to a nation ; because he may not apprehend they will turn out such ; but when he finds they do, by the complaints of the people, if he don't endeavour to redress them, he is a bad governor.—Necessary Taxes must be raised to support governments, and when it is done in a legal way, according to the laws of the country, and applied to the necessary emergencies of State, it is a proof of disaffection, in persons that can afford to pay their taxes, to grumble at paying them. And if people at this time pay more taxes than formerly, they are much more able to do it, because of the great increase of trade ; though the poor have always enough to do to live, and live honestly ; therefore those only that are able to pay taxes, should be tax'd ; for to demand of any man what is not in his power to do, cannot be the demands of that law which is *holy, just and good*.—But kings that impose taxes on their Subjects without law, and take away their rights and properties because they have power to do it ; and do it, because it is to their advantage, are but more powerful robbers. And those that distress and destroy their subjects, that they may the better subdue and enslave them, to enhance their own arbitrary power, are tyrants and wicked rulers. *As a roaring lion and a raging bear, so are these over the poor people*.—Is it not just to remove the causes of common calamity by the death



death of the principal person, which nothing but his death could remove, or the death of the people from their oppressions? Is it *better*, in such case, *that one man die, or the nation perish?*

The promoters and abettors of slavery endeavour to enforce and sanctify tyranny by one text of St. Paul, *Rom. xiii. 1, 2. Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.*—These words have been made a shameful handle of by shameless priests, for shameful ends and purposes.—According to the seeming sense of these words, if by *higher powers*, be meant *persons in power*, every one that is invested with power, has his power from God; and every soul must submit to it on the peril of damnation. As there is nothing of *hereditary right* in the text, it does not patronize the slavish principles of passive obedience and non-resistance to one family, or set of men, more than to another. But if every one in power must be passively obey'd, on the peril of damnation, a worse doctrine cannot be taught to enslave the world than this; and favours more of a revelation from the infernal tyrant, than the revelation of the *glorious liberty of the sons of God*. This then is the doctrine not of *Paul*, but of priests: 'Tis not *gospel*, but *priestcraft*; for the Devil then in power must not be resisted, but obeyed.—I apprehend this doctrine is against *levellers*; against those that would be subject to, or governed by no power; who are for no king in this world, but *king Jesus*, no governor to exercise the authority of rule over them: Whereas God has ordained, that there shall be some men having higher power than the rest, to govern the rest; and he that resists this ordinance

of God, and order of nature, is a rebel to God and man ; and will meet with his justly-merited condemnation ; for this is to overturn all order and government among men ; without which, all manner of evil may be committed with impunity.—The apostle don't say, *all persons in power* are to be obeyed ; but the *power*, that is, every order, and office, appointed by the public, for the public good. Every one in a superior office ought to be obeyed in such a manner as is necessary. 'Tis the office, the subjection is due to, for 'tis this, that gives the power to the person possessing it, whoever the person be, not for the sake of his person, but of his office and authority : So far as his office, place, authority, or power requires he should be obeyed, in such manner and degree he ought to be obeyed ; and he that does so, submits himself to the *power* rather than to the *person*, or only to the person for the office, power, and authority sake ; not because so it *must* be, but because so it *should* be, or it is right so to do ; for governing powers are the ordinance of God.—But if he in office does not use the power *right* which he is possessed of, he has no right to possess it ; he forfeits his right by the ill use he makes of it : Obeying him in such case, is not obeying the ordinance of God, as his minister for good ; 'tis obeying man rather than God ; what *the man in office*, not what *the office of the man* requires. Thus we should distinguish between the person and the power.—Every man in life has a power given him to some *end*, and if he uses his power to a different end than what he ought to do, he abuses it ; and not using it right, it is right to take it from him.—If kings can do no wrong, it is because as soon as they do wrong, they cease of *right* to be kings. A good office must be executed by a good man. The man should be fitted for the office he is to execute, or he is disqualified

qualified for the office, and so cannot serve it, cannot be what he is appointed, because he is not qualified for it. So that a king ruling wickedly, is not a king; therefore the people that kill, or cast off such a man, don't kill, or cast off their king, only one that would have been their king if he had been properly qualified for that high office and sacred dignity; and one that has unking'd himself by discovering his inability to reign. He is not a husband, that takes no care of his wife and family, and she that is a whore, is not a wife.

It is cause of wonder, how it should ever come into the head of any man to imagine, he ought to be obeyed as a God. It is an evident sign of the devil in man, that sets himself up in the place of God. It is making an idol of a prince, to bring the judgments of God upon him. It is a doctrine that nothing but a priest could invent, or one that intended to raise his king the *higher*, that he might fall the *lower*. A spiritual trap to catch an unwary prince in, to fetter him to his everlasting and irretrievable ruin.

If *Charles* had not been a great enthusiast, it could never have come into his head, that any king on earth could possibly be so much a favourite of God, as that he indulged him to do what he pleased, without being accountable as men ought to be that break the laws of society. — Are not kings men? and no body but priests, madmen, or fools ever supposed or said they were more than men; and if so, then they are under the same laws of God in this world that all mankind are. Their office and power indeed makes it reasonable, that if they reign well, they should be more valued and respected than other men; because they are the authors of more good and benefit to men; but if they reign ill, they are less valued than other men; because they are the cause of much more evil and injury to men than

others are.—Or rather why should God *bate* kings more than other men, that he should indulge them in the practice of more wickedness than others, to enslave the world with impunity. The rod of correction is used for the good of children, which a loving father will exercise when necessity calls for it, to reclaim them by reasonable punishment. To suffer a king to be a criminal without fear, is to debauch the office of a king, and debase royal dignity. To suppose God does it, is supposing partiality in God ; thus to do, is to debase God, to exalt the king.

Men are made *kings* by the grace of God,—but not *tyrants*, because they have not the grace of God in them. And that *grace of God* which makes kings, comes by means of the *good-will of the people*. Those that hold their power by this right, as *the present royal family do*, have the best, the justest, and the most natural right in the world. Properly speaking, men are made kings by *the grace of the people*, and they behave as worthy of such office, by *the grace of God*. Let those that deny this, shew their commission to be from God, and not from the people ; let them plainly prove it so, without the sophistry of priestcraft, that the world may believe it.

What king did ever come from heaven ! that any of them should presume to claim a divine right to any kingdom on earth ? Or what commission was ever given from *heaven* to any man, to possess a kingdom on *earth*. The *divine right* of kings to rule over people, without, and against their consent, is a *profane jest* ; though 'tis like many other things that are called divine, which of all things have the least relation to divinity. And yet nations have been so far deluded, and imposed on by their teachers, by the governors and guardians of their liberties,

liberties, that they have suffered their natural rights, liberties and properties to be given away, by will, at the pleasure of a departing king, like a paternal estate. If a king has a right to dispose of the people at his death, without their consent; why not to sell the kingdom in his life time without their consent, as a man has to sell his estate? or to sell his subjects, as cattle are sold in the market? But if he cannot justly give away the kingdom at his death, nor sell it in his life-time, without consent of the people, then 'tis evident that the power of governing them lies in themselves, and no man hath a right to a kingdom, as a man hath to an estate; but that, *the right and power of governing a nation, is in the power of the nation*, till tyranny and oppressions rob them of it, and render them for ever incapable of recovering their *native right*: Then farewell all that is dear and valuable to a free people.—When a whole nation become the property of a king or priest, or of both united to make the chain that binds them the stronger, who dare say his soul or body is his own? And as kingly majesty, so the priesthood is constituted by the people. “Whoever is declared to be a priest by any society, is a priest to them; and ceases to be one, the moment they declare him none.” — But all pretended right that is maintained by power, force and violence, is no longer right than the foundation can support it. He possesses my property, as a robber does that is stronger than I, and can hold it no longer than he holds his strength; for when I can, it is my right to dispossess him of his unjust gains.—He that would enslave a nation, is himself a slave to some other person, or to his passions, and to restless ambition. He has a *weak head*, and a *wicked heart*; and if superstition and bigotry may pass for religion, he may be a very religious man.

The *Scotch prince* assumed a tyrannical power over the constitution of this realm, and the consciences of men, throughout his whole reign. He endeavoured to encroach on the privileges of parliament, and to set himself *above the laws*. In these *principles* and *practices*, he was flattered and encouraged by his sycophant ministers, bishops and clergy. With these false notions of power, the son's heart was corrupted, his head was turned and overturned. Ambitious men told them, their persons and authority were *divine*, to exalt themselves thereby; they swallowed the *profane* bait, and were intoxicated with it; they reeled and staggered with licentious power like drunken men.

Whatever is *divine*, must be so in the *nature* of the thing; and if so, then such as are *by nature kings*, are kings by divine right: And such his successor seems to have been, who kept by his wisdom what he got by his valour. Nature herself could not forbear discovering her disorder, groaning for the nation, at the loss of so great a man.—But nature seemed never to design the man, whom this day has almost deified, a higher step than that of a *bishop*; nor his father, than that of a *schoolmaster*. Both father and son mistook their abilities, in conceiving themselves kings by any *natural qualification* they had for that office, or by any thing like *divine right* inherent in their persons.—To carry on this juggle since their reigns, and to deceive the populace into the *divinity* of the *Stuart family*, their successors pretended to work miracles, in curing diseases by a touch, and the bishops and clergy countenanced the fraud, and carried on the imposture. Some fools now have faith enough to believe (and when have not fools a foolish faith) that the seed of the *Stuarts* have this gift, and have been as far as *France* or *Rome* to partake of it. A sufficient demonstration of the

the *imposition* and *stupidity* of that party. But truth and righteousness are not supported by religious knavery.

Enthusiasm enraged is madness; if the persons seized with it are exasperated, they grow mad. The king was enthusiast enough to believe, that he of all the nation was the *sole favourite* of heaven. The people who had scrutinizing eyes, seeing nothing superlative in him, worthy the delight of heaven or of earth, began to conceive, that if he *by the grace of God*, was God's peculiar favourite, they had as much right and title to *that grace* as he. Thus the enthusiasm which the priests had kindled in the king, began to spread among the people; and the wild fire being caught out of the priests hands, it was no longer under their direction. Every one of the Lord's people was as good as a priest or a king. And how indeed could it be otherwise, unless the king and priest had by their better doctrine and conduct taught the people better? And so all thought themselves to be *kings and priests to God, even the lamb*, even that lamb who is convertible into a *lion*. As the king himself, in *his way*, was baptised with the fire of this enthusiastic spirit, so from him the flame caught the people; his priests sowed the seeds of it in him, and he among all the people. It begun at court, and extended over all his dominions. Such as men sowed, they also reaped in full measure, making good the righteous sentence of scripture, which saith, *With whatsoever measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.*

I read that, ' The bad policy of king *James* appeared in nothing more than his falling out with his parliaments. This was principally owing to his *extravagant notions of regal power*, which he carried higher than most of his predecessors, and so far as was inconsistent with a limited monarchy,

' chy, such as is the wise and happy constitution of  
 ' *England*. This brought many and great incon-  
 ' veniences upon him ; and happy had it been, if  
 ' his only surviving son and successor *Charles I.*  
 ' had taken warning by the imprudent manage-  
 ' ment of his father ; for then he might have a-  
 ' voided the rock on which he unhappily split. But  
 ' being brought up in the same *high notions of pre-*  
 ' *rogative*, he trod in the same steps, nay took  
 ' *larger strides* towards *arbitrary power* than even  
 ' his father had done. By this means, the people  
 ' that sided with the party against the court, grew  
 ' every day more formidable, men's passions on  
 ' both sides were heated, mutual distrust and jea-  
 ' lousy took place ; and religion also mixing in the  
 ' quarrel, the patrons of civil liberty made their  
 ' advantage of it, till enthusiasm, which gathered  
 ' strength from the *arbitrary proceedings of the*  
 ' *court, and the severity of the hierarchy*, grew  
 ' rampant in its turn, and overturned not only the  
 ' *hierarchy* but the *monarchy* too.' This is the sum  
 of the general history of those times, of which par-  
 ticular facts are but so many proofs.

These were the mismanagements of king *Charles*,  
 his exercising an unlawful power, that is, a power  
 to raise taxes without consent of parliament ; his  
 insulting, provoking, and falling out with them,  
 instead of a becoming endeavour to please them, as  
 if *majesty* consisted in *haughtiness*—never convoking  
 them but when compelled by want, and when his  
 wants were satisfied, suddenly adjourning or dis-  
 solving them again in a short time after their meet-  
 ing ; and at those times seizing some of their mem-  
 bers ; calling men to account out of parliament for  
 what was said in it, which ought to be *the sanctu-*  
*ary of freedom* ; and trying all the illegal ways he  
 could to supply his need without them. *Eleven*  
*years*



years did tyrannical power reign uncontrolled by parliament. The kings protecting and defending evil ministers, that persuaded him into such measures, both abroad and at home, as were prejudicial to the nation.—His shewing favour to papists, and putting many of them into posts of power and authority, whom all protestants had reason to dread and abhor, remembering queen *Mary's burning reign*. Authorising archbishop *Laud's* tyranny, who fined men in his high commission court at his pleasure, while the king's ministers, by his sole authority, did the same in the star-chamber.—His giving men reason to complain by hard and unjust usage, and denying them the liberty of complaint.—His raising an army against his *Scotch* subjects to force them to conformity and obedience to *Laud* and the liturgy. It was grievous to the king to redress the grievances of his subjects, which were often remonstrated, and perpetually augmented; and when he suffered them to be redressed, it seemed to be by constraint, and with a design to renew them.—The parliament's being never able to depend on his promises being fulfilled, if he had power to break them.—These things were the unhappy mismanagement of that king, which in the end brought on him the hatred of the people, and his own destruction. And as the king took extraordinary and unprecedented strides towards arbitrary power, the parliament were obliged to take extraordinary and unprecedented strides to prevent his engrossing it to the ruin of the people's properties and liberties. Though neither side were entirely innocent, or all their actions justifiable; and in such confusion of affairs, it is impossible they could be void of blame; yet 'tis enough if we see clearly which side was most in fault, and was the real occasion of all the faults of the other side.—It appears by the general conduct

of *Charles's* reign, that he used his people not as a nursing father does his children, but as the Lord used his enemies, and made them such to himself, for he ruled them as with a rod of iron, and broke them to pieces as a potter's vessel.—The commons shewed their fidelity to the nation, in often entering into the consideration of the liberties and properties of the subject, and of the multitude of grievances complained of by the people, as it was their duty to do, who are chosen to be guardians of their liberties; and not to be creatures of the court, or tools of dominion, to enrich themselves and beggar the nation, but defenders of the kingdom, to redress an injured people from court-oppressions. They had a right, as it was their business to hear and examine into *grievances*, and do their endeavour to redress them. To whom should the people seek redress in such cases, but to their representatives? and when sought for in a *legal* manner, it was *illegal* not to do them *justice*; for that is to crush them with *injustice*.—Such vile infringement of the laws were so often made, that the parliament then must have had no regard to themselves, nor their country, not to be incensed at it.——The severities of the church and state increased the enemies to both. I may here set the church before the state, because the state was ruled by it.—Many then forsook their native country forced by the inclemency of government, for shelter among the savages of *America*, hoping to enjoy life more to their satisfaction abroad, in an unknown and foreign country, than what they could expect at home.

As the duke of *Buckingham* was the man to whom (at the beginning of *Charles's* reign) the people imputed the cause of all their grievances, one lieutenant *Felton* undertook, at the expence of his life, to attempt the redemption of the nation, by stabbing the duke to

to the heart, so that he fell down dead ; and happy had it been, if *Felton's* success had been equal to his good intention, and undaunted action. Happy had it been, if the king could have learned *care* and *conduct* from it, by endeavouring to ease and please the people ; and not by an obstinate disregard, or invincible stupidity, opened the fountain of their blood, which inevitably drew after it the loss of his own.—Actions well designed, but without success, are often blamed when men see the event, but not before. Many things are known to be wrong when they take a wrong turn to our expectations and desires.—The putting *Charles I.* to death, was not esteemed a sin by the nation, till *Charles II.* came in : The nation did not repent of it, till then ; and till then, God did not seem displeas'd with them for the action ; and then the Lord was displeas'd, or the priests belyed him, as they have often done. *Charles the martyr* gives us a sample of what many other martyrs have been, who died for their folly and obstinacy, not for their wisdom and goodness. The *mother church* has *many* such martyrs in her calends ; and its excuseable for the *daughter* to have *one*.—The power that is of God is a good governing power, or a power that governs us for our good : This excites a love to God, when he punishes us only for our reformation, not *visits the iniquities of the fathers on their innocent children*, for this prevents our loving him. The more dreadful we conceive him to be, the less love we have towards him.—A religious sense of deity must needs be, that God makes, or knows the difference we make, between good and evil, and rewards or punishes according to the regard we have thereto. But, what is good and evil to man, is *really* and *necessarily* so to him, whether it be the same to God or no, and we must form our conduct by our sense and

knowledge thereof in all things relating to ourselves and society, that is, we must judge, whether actions are fit or unfit, as they may be prejudicial or beneficial to ourselves or others, by the nature and necessity of their circumstances.—If we act for our own private good in opposition to that of the public, 'tis a vice; and so much the greater, as the actor is a more public person, or person entrusted with the good of the public. An action for the *public good*, is an *extensive virtue*; and the goodness is greater or less in degree, as it more or less redounds to the public interest or advantage. This is good and true policy, and better than any bad and false religion. And all religion is false and bad that has not this true policy in it. Seeing necessity requires, of two evils we should chuse the least; *private good*, when it comes in competition with the *public*, should be made to submit to it. If then taking away the life of *one man*, will redeem a *nation* from civil and intestine wars, he *knows nothing at all* who does not consider, that *it is good one man should die for the people, that the nation perish not.*

The king's endeavour to force episcopal government, with the discipline, ceremonies, and service of the church of *England*, on the *Scots* nation, set the *Scots* against him with no less zeal on their side, which produced the Solemn League and Covenant, to maintain their own mode of Religion against all innovations.—Religion is a thing of that nature, that though by pretending it, nothing is more easy than to wheedle people out of their senses, as appears by the pagantry, trumpery, idols, and brea'den God of *Rome*; or though people may be brought up in what is called religion, without any sense at all of right or wrong, but as they are taught, as persecuting and burning men for conscience

science and judgment-sake, evidently shew ; yet neither can *Religion*, or what bears that name, bring forth the fruit of good works, which is forcibly ushered in, and put on as a yoke with severity. Reason may sometimes prevail, but compulsion never, to make men abandon what they esteem sacred ; for violence committed on the sacred veneration men have for what they esteem, and have been accustomed to esteem *Religion*, stirs up their abhorrence to that violence, and turns their veneration to zeal, to enthusiasm, to frenzy ; and then it is, men so irritated are fit to burn or be burnt. Whoever attempts to *fill God's house by compelling men to come in*, will find it the only way to *empty* it. This method, instead of driving any useful members in, will drive many out. He that endeavours to force men's consciences, in matters not injurious to the government, has no right notion either of government or of religion : for he that suppresses an honest conscience, suppresses religion. The conscience that would injure another, is an evil conscience ; because it is an injurious one ; therefore a popish conscience is such as deserves no toleration among protestants ; because it suffers papists not to tolerate any other than their own. If it have toleration, therefore, among protestants, it is more than it deserves ; and that toleration ought to be under proper restraints and limitations, to guard their own liberties against its baneful influence. It is much more safe to tolerate Mahometanism, Judaism, or Paganism, than Popery. — A right conscience towards God, can never injure others for conscience-sake. — *Religion* is nothing else but *believing in, and worshipping God, according to the dictates of conscience*, and if it hurts no body, nor has any tendency to it, it ought to be tolerated ; for not to tolerate such faith and worship, is destructive

structive of sincerity and truth. And kindling a persecution against it by unwarrantable opposition, kindles the flame of enthusiasm in the persecuted. He that erects a church on the ruins of humanity, and carries a spiritual conquest over slaughtered consciences, is ignorant of divine and human nature, knows nothing of religion, and is a rebel to the majesty of heaven, which he pretends to worship; but 'tis the majesty of the priest he really promotes and pays his adoration to.—Ceremonies are *insignificant* as well as *indifferent* things; but he makes them *essential* who raises contentions and bloodshed in defence of them. Such ceremonies and encroachments as are set up to pull down liberty, men may warrantably guard against and oppose.—Where liberty is rooted out, sincerity is rooted out; impartial justice and goodness in such a state finds no place.—If God is a reasonable nature, form or no form equally pleases him, for *alike sincerity in all, must be alike acceptable from all*, by whatever mode, or in whatever manner the sincerity appears; as we are told, \* *The Lord seeth not as man seeth, but the Lord regardeth the heart.* And again, † *The true worshippers worship the father in spirit and in truth.* The best and only best things please the only best being.—Modes and externals please the men of mode and of superficial judgments.—Whatever way men use, which pleases themselves in serving God, cannot displease him; for the heart sanctifies his action, without which all is no more than mere antaastic fashion, empty ceremony, and foolish formality. God loves that men should please themselves in pleasing him, if he made us, as we are told, to give us pleasure and happiness, not to encrease his own.—He who understands that *equal sincerity in all religions is equally acceptable to God*, will give liberty of conscience to all; but he that sees it not, is religiously blind, and piously stupid.—He that denies

\* I Sam. xvi. 7.

† John iv. 23.

denies men liberty of conscience, makes some men hypocrites, and destroys those that cannot be so made. He destroys that sincerity among men which is the only pure religion all the world over. Liberty of conscience to every man to worship God, and endeavour to please him in the best manner that appears to him, is as much the divine right of every subject, as power is the divine right of the best and most rightful kings on earth.—What I call the worship of God, is, that action which concerns only God and the worshipper, and has no relation to *meum* and *tuum*. An action which hurts no man, and which benefits no man but the worshipper. And as God is *the God of the spirits of all flesh*, he must have an equal regard to the spiritual worship, which is sincerity in all.—If it was evident to all, what sort of worship God loves or hates more than another, there would be some reason to value one better or worse than another. But till that is done, or appears on good proof, all sides have equal pretensions in their own way.—The consideration of man's ignorance of God, is sufficient to humble the spiritual pride of the most conceited enthusiast; for though there is not any thing in the world is more talked of, than of God, there is not any thing in the world less known; and the greatest priests know as little of him as the meanest men. Therefore methinks they should not presume too much, seeing though they bear the name of *divines*, they are but little acquainted with *divinity*; therefore gentleness and moderation become all parties.

The king went to *Scotland* with an army of 20,000 men, to reduce the *Scots* to the obedience of prelatie power and common prayer. So the king first raised arms against his subjects, and taught them to stand up in their own defence against a deluge of arbitrary power. True it is, that he did

not use his army against the *Scots*, because the *English* were not fond of assisting such power, the king being advised not to venture a battle: But if he had not intended it, why all that parade of power, and running the nation to such an unnecessary expence, when he was always in want of money? This wound was skinned over between the king and the *Scots* by a sort of truce rather than peace.—The *Scots* obstinately determined not to submit to any alteration in their religion, and the king as obstinately to make them, urged on by archbishop *Laud*, who managed the king's conscience, as men manage beasts of burden. Such stupid animals are kings who are inflaved by priests.—The king resolving to reduce the *Scots* by force of arms to his will, a numerous army is raised, but wanting money there was a necessity to call an *English* parliament, lest further impositions should further alienate the affections of the people. But the parliament when called had no desire to aggrieve the *Scots*; but to have their own grievances redressed. Brave men, that would not be byassed by court-threats nor flatteries! and though we pray for the pardon of their sins, it would become us more to mend our own.—This parliament not complying with the king's demands, nor he with theirs, it was dissolved in about three weeks, and as was usual with him, he sent some of the members to prison.—When power is in the hand of a foolish prince, his exercising it exposes his folly. His priest should have taught him *Solomon's* advice \*, *Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry, for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.*—Now the king prepares against the *Scots*, and the *Scots* against the king, and in the end the *Scots* had the advantage. The king is now obliged to call an *English* parliament to settle the disturbed state of the nation.

This

\* Eccles. vii. 9.



This was the last parliament, which met in *November* 1640. And as the nation had been always oppressed, without being able to obtain any redress, and all former parliaments had been bubbled; They first appointed a select committee to draw up a remonstrance of all the grievances of the nation, which were numerous, but not presented till a year after. The king well knowing what he had to expect, shewed great compliance in giving his assent to all their bills, being awed, 'tis likely, into a sort of tractableness, by an army of *Scots* being in the nation.—The parliament went a great way in redressing the nation's grievances, and punishing the authors of them, which rendered them popular. *Earl Strafford* was brought to the block. The *high commission-court* and *star-chamber* were abolished, and many great and good things were done at the beginning of this parliament.—— But though the king suffered them to go on great lengths, in delivering the nation from great oppressions, they knew it was contrary to his natural disposition; for he hated to have his authority limited by parliament, and was desirous of nothing more than of reigning without them; therefore, though they had passed a bill for triennial parliaments, they could not depend upon the security of that law; for what security can law afford, from one that tramples upon law; therefore they procured the king's assent to their *establishment* during their own pleasure, and having so done, they carried their point in all things they undertook to transact.—And well knowing their power had been despised, and as it were, annulled for some time before, they looked with a jealous eye on all the actions of the king, and resolved, by way of self-defence, to stand by and protect one another, and to prescribe due limits to that tyrannical power, which

had inflaved the nation fifteen years before.—They knew that to make lions tame, is to fetter them, and that then, though they may seem tame, yet as soon as they slip their fetters, they appear to be lions still. Whether the king feared those he had before insulted and irritated ; for tyrannical tempers under power, or in fear, are the most abject ; or whether he was under some better sort of tuition, like *Nero* under *Seneca*, that he behaved in a tractable manner for a while ; I shall not pretend to determine ; but certain it was, they knew the man. Therefore they had a jealous eye on all his actions ; and as they could never trust him with safety, when he went afterwards to *Scotland*, they had as much reason to fear, he would contrive to bring a *Scotch* army against them, as he had before raised an *English* army against the *Scots*, contrary to the will of the *English* parliament and people.—Men of sense and penetration have the gifts of discerning the spirits of other men, more than the imprudent and unwary can discern their own ; and time made it appear, their mistrust and jealousy was not ill-founded. The king, who was always as weak in his conduct, as he was tyrannical in temper, could no longer be restrained : The severity and folly of his disposition discovered itself, though at the most improper season : For as the proverb says, *Muffled cats are no good mousers*. It was now too late to begin again to attempt the shewing his great power when he had suffered his head to be shorn ; and though *he awoke and said, I will go forth as at other times, and shew my great strength ; he knew not that the Lord was departed from him*, and was now with the parliament ; for the Lord is never on the side of *weakness and folly*. Undoubtedly this condescension in the king's delivering so much of his *regalia* to the parliament, was a proof of a weak judgment, if he was right  
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in maintaining it at first so strenuously, that he always disoblged his parliaments, and would if he could have reigned without any; but if he was right in his complacency, because he saw his former error; why did he foolishly assume such authority again, in sending officers to the house of lords and commons, to seize some of their members, and to deliver articles of impeachment against them of high treason, and at the same time, by his sole authority, to send persons to seal up their doors, trunks, and papers? And why did he come himself with an armed band the next day to demand their delivering up those members? Does this look like a thorough conviction of his error? or was it only the effect of *restraining grace*? Was not this like *the dog's returning to his vomit again*, and like *the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire*? Did it not evidently shew the nature of the man, that *the old man*, the old tyrannical nature was yet in him, and that he had *not put him off with his deeds*; that he had not put on *the new man in righteousness and sincerity*, but in profession and external appearance only? Did not those clear-sighted men the commons see through him? Was not their inward jealousy confirmed and increased by this outward proof of his *unconverted state*? Had not then the commons, the guardians of the people's liberties, reason to be on their guard against all his actions? Did not they well, in withstanding such tyrannical spirit, and in sending a serjeant at arms to break open the seals, and apprehend those that put them on? for if they had not made a stand against these arbitrary proceedings, all they had done before had been to no purpose. And did they not well, to make an order, forbidding the seizing any of their members without leave of the house, authorizing all members to stand upon their guard, and all constables,

bles and other officers to assist them? For had they not done this, they had established themselves as members of parliament in vain ; nay, they had not established themselves at all ; for if they had left it in the king's power to apprehend any of them at his pleasure, he might have gone on, and by such repeated acts, soon demolished the parliament. No doubt but if they could have trusted the king to the *laws*, and permitted their triennial act to take place when they were dissolved, they would not have continued themselves by a *new* act ; which, though it was contrary to any *former*, was however *law* ; because it was agreed to by the king, lords and commons ; for such agreement makes law by the constitution of this realm ; and extraordinary cases may require extraordinary acts to be made : For to every new necessity a new law must be adapted, and proportioned to the exigency of the case. But if a king, or his ministers by his command, act contrary to law, it is unlawful, and they are culpable of the breach of the laws of the land.—Force must be opposed by force, and deceit may be subverted by deceit, when other methods fail, or man has not an equal guard for self-defence. Where there is good ground for jealousy, men ought always to be upon their guard, and never part with their power, when they fear being attacked ; and so much the more exert themselves, as the enemy is *great* in authority. Kings that use their power to prey on the people, *Solomon* compares to *roaring lions and raging bears* ; and they are not more merciful when their indignation is stirred up, and revenge is in their reach.—He that takes away a people's liberties, has a design on their properties ; and their lives are next at his mercy. Let kings alone to engross power, and the property of his subjects, and their liberties and lives will follow.

follow.—If *Charles* did not grasp at this, why did he pretend peace to his parliament, and prepare for war against them, by sending his queen to *Holland*, to buy up arms and ammunition, and putting the crown-jewels into her hands for that purpose?—Arbitrary power is what no man breathing ought to be trusted with; therefore 'tis good policy, to overturn the bad machinations that any person makes use of to obtain it: For when it is obtained by any king, there remains no remedy to any people: Seldom doth the death of the tyrant redeem them, if his heirs succeed, though a sea of blood be spilt to recover their lost liberty.

After this fresh provocation given the parliament, the king, perceiving how unpopular he had rendered himself, sent two messages to them in a complying humour; telling them he would wave his proceedings against the six members, and be as careful of their privileges, as of his own life and crown: and offered a general pardon. But pardon could not be grateful, when himself was the aggressor.—Now either the parliament saw that this was *temporizing* and *flattery*, knowing his natural disposition, or it appeared to them, he was like those christians that are always *sinning and repenting*, whose repentance and reformation never last longer than the influence of the cause that occasioned it. Whether of these ways they judg'd, his word appeared to them not to be confided in; their jealousy was confirmed, the fire was rekindled, they judged their lives and liberties were in danger from his power, and therefore it was to be retrenched as much as possible. Things were now carried to that pitch, and mutual jealousies raised so high, that the people could neither trust the king, nor the king the people. Had they submitted to the king's authority, in all probability they would have been crushed!

crushed. And the king seemed resolved not to suffer a diminution of his *divine* power, as his courtiers and favourite priests persuaded him that he was a *Divinity*; and weak heads exalted on an eminence, are always made giddy thereby. Ambitious spirits chuse rather to reign in hell, than serve in heaven.

The sudden starts of mischief and treachery in the king, were a good foundation of jealousy to the parliament and people. And when will not fire increase fire where there is fuel? It increased here to a flame, till the king was burnt in the fire which himself had kindled: for in him was fulfilled the threatening of the Lord by the prophet *Isaiab*, (l. 11.) *Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: that walk in the light of the fire and in the sparks ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow.* And so it came to pass with those that had kindled the fire on both sides; and if the Lord hath executed the fierceness of his wrath on them already, will he do it again on us? Doth he not know when to have done? that the nation yet fast and howl before the Lord, and rather pelt him with prayers, if I may so say, than pray with true piety; for as *Isaiab* saith, lvii. 4, *Behold ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness. Is this such a fast as I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? — They fast, pray, and preach in spite to their brethren; therefore he that sits in heaven laughs them to scorn, and has them in derision; therefore this their righteousness is as filthy rags, and they ought to pray God to forgive them the iniquity of their holy things. The wise God heareth not the prayers of fools; because they are foolish prayers. — Not but I would*

would have this droning day for ever kept, to shew the world the mockery of religion ; how one party, pretending piety, calls on God to pardon that sin of theirs which they never committed ; while the other party that did the action, and in like circumstances would do it again, think it was an action worthy of as much praise as stabbing *Cæsar* in the capitol. When those that did the action ruled, God was not mocked by a national repentance for it, and yet in all appearance, he is not in better friendship with us, than he was with them, notwithstanding all our prayers and penitence, which appear to be all in vain ; since being *yet* continued, they have not *yet* answered their end, in making atonement and procuring pardon : And no wonder, for God loves not fools, nor hypocrites ; and therefore wisely rejects their foolish, or hypocritical humiliation. However, it is very fit and necessary this day should be for ever kept, to remind kings that if they are desirous of living the *life*, they may expect to die the *death* of that king which this day celebrates.

The flame which begun in *England*, burnt to the utmost bounds of *Scotland*, and reached even to *Ireland*, where the *Irish*, to make use of the advantage, destroyed 40,000 protestants settled there, by innumerable acts of barbarity ; which, if only done to free themselves from the *English* yoke, whether countenanced by the king or not. Certain it is, that he regarded not the life of his protestant subjects ; but the only thing he regarded was, that he might have sole dominion over them ; to this end, he called for his forces from *Ireland*, that he might employ them against his parliament in *England* ; whereby it's plain, he judged that the settling his own authority on the destruction of the constitution, was more necessary, than revenging the  
blood

blood of 40,000 protestants, or securing *Ireland* under the dominion of the crown of *England*; and therefore, he either knew, the *Irish* papists that committed those massacres, were his friends, and he could trust them to secure *Ireland* to his obedience; or he was willing to lose a kingdom, to have revenge of his protestant subjects. And he that thirsts for dominion by blood, or that endeavours to wade to it through a sea of blood, deserves a bloody reward.—In short, the consequence was, what is very natural, and in such case will always be, that both king, courtiers, and high-flying priests on one side, and the parliament and people on the other, secured what power each party could for themselves; for it was not safe for the parliament to trust their persons in the power of the king, nor did the king think it safe, to trust his power with their persons. And the steps that each party took, but enraged the other; which of necessity terminated in the utter ruin of one of them. And as in nature the same causes will always have the same effects; so the same circumstances would always produce the same event, was the affair acted in any age or country in the world.— It happened at the end of eight years intestine wars which followed, to terminate by the death of the king, and his death alone could put an end to the blood that was spilt on his account. And sure it was better that *one man should die for the preservation of the people, than the whole nation should perish.*

If *Charles* received his royal power from God alone, it is more than any king in this world ever did. — But *Charles* mistook his kingdom, for *it was not of this world*; therefore he was removed out of it, to seek a better, for which he was doubtless better qualified; for I don't dispute the Goodness of the *man*, but the goodness of the *king*; who  
seems



seems to me to have been the reverse to what some have said of king *David*, that he was one of the *best of kings*, but one of the *worst men*. Whereas on the contrary, king *Charles* who 'tis said was one of the *best of men*, was one of the *worst kings* in the world, as archbishop *Laud* was a very famous churchman, but a very infamous christian. As for religion, 'tis certain *Charles* had enough in him to set up a bishop, and a greater stock of *that* sort than kings ought to have. Yet this unhappy prince deserves our pity, as well as the nation under his government; he being stupidly instructed by the pedant, his dogmatical father, in his younger years, was so fitted in maturer age to receive the malignant impressions of his spiritual *Laud* and court flatterers, who sowed those seeds in him, that growing up, brought ruin to the nation and himself. And one would think, that *he being made perfect through sufferings*, and happy before his natural time, it does not require a hundred years penance of a whole nation, for sending the soul of so good a man, among the souls of the blessed: And that the exchanging a mortal inglorious crown, for a crown of immortality and glory, was such a sufficient and satisfactory advantage to him, that he and his friends have reason to thank God and the nation, for such happy translation. And had it been done sooner, it had saved the lives of thousands more than it did. Necessity makes things unlawful, to be lawful. That which justifies war, in the defence of the rights and liberties of the people, from tyranny iron abroad, will justify whatever measures necessity obliges people to take, to defend their rights and liberties against tyrants at home. But no man's liberty or property is now at all invaded, every man sits under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree; enjoys the fruits of his labour, and may worship God according

according to his conscience, if he has any good conscience at all ; if his conscience don't mis-lead him to overturn the state, and the consciences of all those that are led by more reason and humanity than himself.

In all probability, the presbyterians would not have attempted to overturn the episcopal church, if that church, when governed by archbishop *Laud*, had not endeavoured to overturn them. It must be owned, the church was the aggressor, or his tyrannical behaviour over them in it, which had the favour and protection of sovereign power. As both king and pontif confederated together, and encouraged each other, to humble and demolish the power and liberty of nonconformists, both civil and religious ; what was more natural, than for them to stand up in their own defence, to grasp that power which was capable of defending them against both civil and religious tyranny : And when they had grasped it, to use it as a scourge on their adversaries, and pay them in their own coin by way of retaliation ? Men may talk what they will, that religion being the subject of the quarrel, by the principles of that religion they ought not to have gone such lengths as they did ; the laws of religion will always subside when they are against the laws of nature, as soon as nature has power to prevail ; and they will find reasons to comprehend the laws of retaliation in their religion, which before appeared opposite to it. For though the doctrine of *loving our enemies* may be preached, and embraced in sentiments when men have no enemies, or may seem to be embraced and practiced, when retaliation is out of their power ; yet when the power is turned, the tables are turned ; when wrath prompts opportunity to action, then you shall hear another sort of religious doctrine maintained by the ascendant party ;

ty ; then the vengeance of the Lord of hosts is to be executed to maintain his honour. Then you find it commanded, \* Reward her even as she has rewarded you ; nay more, double unto her double according to her works : In the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double, then torment and sorrow, plagues, death, famine, and fire, follow to the conquered party. And this gives joy to the conquerors. Thus it ever was, and thus it will ever be ; men's passions will direct men's conduct, as policy and power give liberty to their actions.—Tho' revenge is not always laudable, yet it is generally justifiable, because necessary to awe men in power, not to exercise their power tyrannically and wickedly. Retaliation of injuries, not exceeding measure for measure, are therefore just, needful, and proper to be executed, being that chiefly which awes the wicked, and keeps men within the bounds of duty or moral behaviour. If I allow that christians, as such, ought not to revenge injuries done them, yet it must be allowed too, that christians are men, no more divested of human passions than others, and those passions have the same influence, on the same occasions, over christians as over other men ; therefore they, in such cases, will act as other men, even as *heretics* and *infidels* do ; for when was it known that ever they did otherwise ? I don't think there is an *infidel*, *deist* or *atheist* in the world would burn a man for his religion, but if they were burnt by people of any religion ; as soon as they had it in their power, they would destroy the power of that religion ; and reason just, and practice good. And these, (if they feared not God) would be as obedient to a mild and merciful king that acted for his subjects good, as any subjects the king had ; but if like *Satan* on *Job*, he put forth his hand to destroy their

properties, and their liberties, and torment their flesh, they would be as fit to rebel, and as zealous in the cause as other men, that are prompted on to action by the fury or enthusiasm of religion. And all men, religious or not religious, will do the same when excited by *oppression*, which *makes a wise man mad*.

He that redeems men from tyrannic power, and brings liberty and peace to an enslaved nation, even tho' it is but already begun, and a certain prospect of it appears; he that from such a state, frees a kingdom by his virtue and valour, is *by nature a king*, and *born to reign*, therefore has in himself *divine right* from God, his actions are a sufficient proof of it; and that slavish religion which is a friend to arbitrary power in the prince and priest, in any nation, is inimical and injurious to the peace and happiness of mankind. And such religion should be kept in a state of subjection, whose leaders and abettors are promoters of slavery in civil and religious government. Both civil and religious tyrants are such fast friends to each other, that they cannot well be separated; they rise and fall together.

One may generally know the *goodness* of men's religion, by the spirit that maintains it; for the worst opinions are generally maintained with the worst spirit by those that embrace them. And it is no wonder, if stupid principles or frantic opinions, should have stupid or frantic effects in practice. *By their fruits ye shall know them*.——That religion which teaches men to damn and burn those that cannot embrace it, ought to be condemned by all men. Better would it be for mankind, than maintain such religion, to extirpate all religion out of the world. It is more to the honour of God, to say he requires no worship of us, than such a worship as makes man inhuman, and the world miserable.

ble. What is it but religious madness to affirm, that all men will be damned who are not of this or that faith, or who do not conform to this or that church discipline, or sort of worship? For seeing these all damn one another, don't they all prove themselves to be mad? Needs there a greater proof, when neither party will be directed by cool reason, which alone can cure their madness? The furious and bigotted spirit is equally bad in all religions; it is the spirit of popery in them all, which nothing but time and reason can expel.—Anger and rage on one side, breeds anger and rage on the other, so does a persecuting spirit in a church, stir up the same spirit in that which is persecuted. These who are first in the quarrel, are the cause of the effect that follows. If the presbyterians persecuted the episcopal church, it was a sign of a bad spirit, but it was first stirred up by the episcopalians; they were first, and therefore greatest in fault; though nothing is more common than to lay the *whole blame* on the provoked, not on those that gave the provocation; and yet nothing is more wrong, for it is as natural for anger, indignation, and resentment, to arise from oppression, abuse, and injury given, as for fire to kindle fire; and men must be devoid of passion to be otherwise, which is more than any men are. Therefore to the public peace-breakers all the consequences of the public disturbance are owing.

O! cry churchmen, the presbyterians are a pack of wicked rogues, they pulled down the church! Nay, say I, not so; for they possessed themselves of the churches, and so became churchmen. But the church-folk pulled down the meeting-houses, in *my time*, and would have pulled down all in the nation, if they had not been stopped by force. Was not this religious high-church frenzy and fanaticism? though this very party called the other fanatics!

So madmen know not their own madness, and think others mad : But the churchmen, to have been even with the Nonconformists, instead of pulling down their meeting-houses, should have gone and preached in them. The presbyterians indeed pulled down the common prayer, because God should not be on the side of the church ; for if they did not pray, to be sure the Lord could not hear them, and they could not pray without book, and at the same time the presbyterians themselves pray'd for dear life—and liberty to pray. But suppose they did pull down the church, was not the church as bad which would have pulled down the presbyterians at the same time ? They wanted not will, but power. I don't suppose any nonconformists would have had any intention or thought of robbing the church of her bishops and godly gear, if archbishop *Laud* had been a good man, and not, like a wolf in sheep's cloathing, have worried Christ's sheep in his spiritual courts. No doubt but the church might have *droned* in peace, had she let her sister church *toned* in peace. But at the end, the fortune of war turned for the dissenting party, and whatever party lose the day, they must be at the mercy of those that get it. Those that fall undermost must submit to them that get uppermost. What was the fate of the episcopalians and common prayer-mongers, would have been the fate of the presbyterians, had they lost the field. But they fought with the spirit, as well as pray'd by the spirit ; and it happened at that time *to help their infirmities*. Indeed, in my opinion, it is the fairest way of living to live and let live, not to have any business monopolized. Religion, like Trade, ought to be free. It is best dealing at an open market ; by that means we have a more reasonable choice, and at a more reasonable rate. When you have only *Hobson's* choice, you must pay

pay *Hobson's* price. Parsons, when they find people can by no means help themselves, but must deal with them alone, are as great extortioners as any pawnbrokers whatever. Why should not every man chuse for himself in spirituals, as well as in temporals, and buy those wares he likes best, or thinks he has most need of, seeing he must pay for them. Religion is a thing of choice, and he has no religion, that never chose any himself, for himself; but if he seems to have any, it is the religion of another he puts on, but not his own. It was the religion of the person that first chose it, but is not his that wears it, and that person might, perhaps, be his great grandfather's great grandmother; and it may have been, of a very different fashion from his, worn in the family till it becomes quite thread-bare. Many families have religion by *hereditary right*, and this they take to be *divine*, but if it was so, it would be by *election* and *grace*, both on the side of Christ and the Christian. Let either of them chuse first, they must *both* chuse; or else neither does the professor chuse Christ, nor Christ the professor. Therefore, in the day of judgment, will not Christ say to such, *Depart from me, I know you not*; and the professor, if he speaks the truth, must answer, *Nor do I know you*. What will become of these in that day, the day must declare.—But should any be so honest (for in that day men may be allowed to speak the truth) as to say, the priests of his country would not let him chuse, for they would damn him if he did. And I suppose this will be the complaint of millions. Let the priests look to it. I think it is but just that they should be damn'd for 'em. If any had liberty to chuse for himself, but depended on the priest to chuse for him; how can he think it unjust, that the priest should be saved for him. But as priests i

all such cases, chuse for others what is most consistent with their own interest, they are paid *here*, therefore it is unreasonable for them to expect to be paid again *hereafter*: Therefore both these we may reckon the Lord's chaff, which he will winnow from him with the fan of his word.—And suppose one is called to the bar, who, upon being asked his religion, declares upon his conscience, that as he lived in such days of fury, wherein every religious party damned each other, for fear of being damned (by all the rest) he chose none; and not thinking it safe to depend on mercenary priests, thought it better to preserve an honest conscience, and to place his whole dependence on the *merits of the son*, or the *mercies of the father only*. Will not the *son* or the *father* take pity of him, think you, and save him for his honesty and fidelity, if not for faith and formality-sake? God cannot condemn a just man, and be just himself. But he whose faith and worship makes him inhuman and injurious to men, mistakes the true God for *Moloch*, or *Mafs*, and he that makes his *interest* the motive of his choice, instead of serving the God of Heaven, he serves the god of this world, *worldly power*, and a *worldly disposition*. Men that will not do justice here, will surely there feel justice done them, for the Devil is just in his own dominions; how else can he be the executioner of justice? And there must be justice in hell, if there is mercy in heaven.

Nothing I think shews more the government of a good God, or his regard of this world, than that great criminals armed with power receive condign punishment in it; for what they receive in another world, those in this, know nothing of: Therefore God's conduct in *that world*, is no proof to us of his moral character in *this*. Certainly power and greatness cannot sanctify wickedness in high places.



If it be criminal to condemn *great criminals*, justice is all a farce, and power is only right, whether it be executed rightly or no; and power is sacred in them that have it, howsoever it be profanely used, and impiously prostituted for the screening villainy, and the worst of all villainy that of *tyranny*. *Cæsar* was a *tyrant*, because he overturned the constitution of his country. *Charles* did not this, because he could not; but he endeavoured to reduce the state into an absolute monarchy. *Cæsar* knew how to procure to himself favourable opportunities, and make the best use of them. *Charles* knew neither. *Cæsar* warred with glory, but *Charles* was inglorious in all his wars, and never shewed more bravery than when it least became him, in the unnecessary war he raised against his own subjects. In one respect they may be compared together; ‘ when we reflect upon the prodigious number of men, whose death, poverty, or slavery they occasioned, we can hardly forbear abhorring them. Their *falsehood* and *ambition* brought on a *civil war*. They used the arms of their country for the oppression of their country.’ The people indeed in *Rome* and *Britain* did not tamely submit: Therefore they that made the noble stand for the liberty of free-born subjects in opposition to *tyranny*, are damned by their favourites and priests, who endeavoured to enslave mankind by their wicked counsels and doctrines, and lead weak heads to their own undoing. Had it not been for their ambition to rule as they ought not, both might have *lived and died in peace*. He that makes a prince’s head giddy with unlawful power, paves the way for his destruction.

We blame that age, but not our own. They put a bad king to death. We expell’d another, not killed him; because his Heels saved his Head. But we

do worse than they, when we blame our redeemer, the ILLUSTRIOUS *WILLIAM*, for the action of redeeming us, and settling liberty on that glorious foundation on which it now stands. We were again redeemed by the bravery and conduct of another *WILLIAM*, from slavery rolling on like a deluge, and him, and that very glory which freed the nation, we now depreciate. They cut off a head that was troublesome to the body; we have several times rebelled against our head, in which the life, safety, and health of the body depends, against those that have settled and secured those civil and religious liberties to us, which they prayed and fought for; and is desirable and acceptable to all wise and good men, in all nations and in all ages. O let this day be for ever kept, to perpetuate the infamy of his tyrannic reign, and the holiness and power of high church, that it is capable of making one, who was so great a sinner in his life, so glorious a saint and martyr at his death; consecrating not only the man, but tyranny, oppression, and bigotry; and that generations yet unborn may know the hard and bloody struggle their ancestors had to preserve the liberty they have conveyed to them, and awake to the sense of its inestimable value. And whenever they are in like danger of losing it, let them cry unto the Lord, and say in the words of his prophet of old, \* *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art not thou the same arm that hast wounded the proud, and hewn the dragon in pieces?*

It can't be denied, that actions are known to be good or evil by the intentions and consequences.

Now

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\* Isaiah li. 9. So the old translation renders the latter part of the verse.

Now to judge by this maxim, the putting king *Charles* to death, being intended to put an end to civil wars, and the consequence was, that it did so, and prevented the death of many men, and valuable members of the commonwealth, every one of which could not be less useful to the public, than the king. For how could he be useful to the public, who destroyed the peace, properties, and lives of the public?—If he was a king appointed by God, he was such a king over this island, as the stork was, which devoured the frogs, whom *Jupiter* sent to rule over them.—To plead or pretend, that it is for men's *sins*, such kings are commissioned by heaven to rule over them, is an ignorant subterfuge; for do they make men *less sinful*, and not rather much *greater sinners* than they were before? unless *robbery* and *murder*, the necessary consequences of war, are no sins. Does God punish sin with sin? or does sin make an atonement for sin? if so, a less degree of sin displeases God, but a greater degree propitiates him. Or does God disapprove of some sort of sins, and approve of others? If he does, it may be hoped, that the sin of putting king *Charles* to death, might atone for the sins of the king, and of the nation committed on his account, as reasonably as the sin of putting *Christ* to death, atoned for the sins of men. Is heaven more pleased with earth when set in a tumult, or is there sometimes a disorder in the divine mind, and allayed by the disorder of mankind? This, as my reason informs me, is a false and stupid imagination. Does God regard men in such degree, as they are advanced to power and dignity by men? Is his judgment conducted by *ours* in the estimation of things? I am sure, if God exalts men in and over the state, according to the value he has for them, his judgments are not conducted by *his*.——Kings reign

reign by divine right, when they reign as they ought; but to say they reign by divine right, when they trample upon right divine, upon law and justice, and reign as they ought not, is a sacriligious doctrine, and profaning, if not blaspheming, divine nature. If the persons of kings are divine, and sacred in the sight of God, let them rule as they will, then power is divinity, and authority is sanctity; and lawless sway may be lawful government; then the office of a king is not an ordination for the public good, but the public were ordained for his good, and then to be sure, God makes the people for the sake of the king; and his life alone, is of more value than the lives of all the kingdom. If so, what the high priest spake, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, is not true, that *it is better one man die, than the nation perish*. If this was true when applied to Christ, one would think, as *Charles* was not, to be sure, so good a man, it was better, at least to the people of this land, for *their temporal state*, that their sovereign *Charles* should die to save the further effusion of the nation's blood, and their liberty, than that the Lord *Christ* should die to save the temporal state of the *Jews*, which was all that *Caiaphas* meant, though the Holy Ghost might have a further meaning. If God only regards kings, and the good of the people are below his notice, as must be the case, if the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance be right; then are the people in evil case! in evil case no doubt! But this is contrary to what we are taught, that *God is no respecter of persons*, and if *a sparrow cannot fall to the ground* without his notice, and we are *better than they*, in his sight; if *he takes care of oxen only for our sakes* †, sure we ought to take care of being gored, for our own sakes, by any

† 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10.

any person armed with power, or claiming a power over us. 'Tis reasonable to think that those to whom God has a peculiar regard to, more than to other men, he has given them some *greater endowments* of body or mind, more than he has to other men; but if nothing of this appears in them, how does the proof of it appear? It seems also reasonable to believe, that God guards his peculiar favourites in a peculiar manner, and yet what king cares to trust himself to God's guard only, if he can get other guard beside?—That this *divine right* should be *indefeasible* and *hereditary* too, is such a piece of *priestcraft* and *imposition* on the common understandings of men, that there is no man of any common understanding, but what must see the folly, absurdity, and villainy of it. Let them produce the original grant, warrant, commission, indenture, written above, signed and sealed below, and the witnesses. 'Tis not fit we should take the priest's word, who asserts what he is ignorant of, contrary to what he knows: He that does, will be priest-rid with a witness; it being an evident witness of priestly imposition. Or to prove that a *particular line* of princes are so eminently exalted above the rest of all mankind, to have their authority from God alone; sure they ought to be proved to be descendants from above, that the first of the race came down from heaven, or was begotten of some God originally, not an *imaginary* but a *real God*, not *Jove* or *Mars*, whose Godships are now dead and buried; and that the breed has not degenerated down to manhood. Let the assertors of this doctrine also prove that the *Stuart* race are of this heavenly born blood; for I think they have never conferred that *honour* on any other family, nor preached doctrine of *passive obedience* to any other princes, *honour* peculiarly great to *them* of all others; because *they* of all others deserved it so little! This is

they have to prove, and if they cannot prove this one thing, of *their indefeasible hereditary right*, who have asserted it with so much warmth, casting about *fire-brands, arrows, and death* to support and vindicate it, and therefore ought to have been very sure, they were very right in doing so. I say, if they cannot prove this, who can believe them in any other point, or, who ought to believe them without producing their authentic credentials ?

He that suffers such doctrines to be preached to him, or of him, has a *mean head*, and a *monstrous heart* ; for he must be a man of *mean judgment*, and a *monster* in the judgment of other men that have understanding. — If we go to scripture for our rule, God gave to *David* and to his descendants the kingdom of *Israel* by oath, and yet God chose rather, not to insist too strictly on the performance of his oath, than disoblige his people. Nay, God gave up *his own prerogative* rather than *their liberty*. He let them have a *king* to their mind, and let the king have a *God* to his mind. God himself did not force men to worship him contrary to their own inclinations. If therefore any officious set of men pretend to regard men's service of God, more than God regards men's service, it is for their own service they make those pretensions, and shew of zeal to God, in an ungodly manner. And why should any earthly king insist on his prerogative, more than the king of kings insists on his ; seeing \* *in the past he suffered all nations to walk in their own ways*. God surely knows better, what he has to do and how to do his will, than man does. If man can serve God better than God can serve him ; God may be obliged to man for serving him ; if God cannot be obliged by man's service, man can only serve himself in serving God.—But what God gave the kingdom of *Israel* to *David*, and his

\* Acts xiv. 16.

his sons, by *divine hereditary right*, what's that to us? How came the transition from *Israel* to *England*, and from *David* to *Stuart*? Our constitution of government is as different from theirs, as that people, time, and place are different from ours. They had *prophets* that knew the will of God, and received their revelation from him; but our *priests* know no more of the will and revelation of God, than we do; for they know no more of it than what they read, and we know as much, and understand it as well. Besides, *the gospel gives no rule about national government*; therefore God leaves all *christian* nations to walk in their own ways, as he did the nations in time past. Therefore it is not the business of christian priests to direct christian governors; 'tis impertinent in them to prescribe or meddle in state-matters, unless their assistance or advice is called for, or commanded by the state. And as *Christ's kingdom was evidently not of this world*, what have they to do to interfere and concern themselves with worldly kingdoms and affairs. Christ came to set us free, and is it their business, who profess to be his servants, to enslave us? It is both ridiculous and insolent, for the servant to pretend to have more authority than the master: *The servant is not greater than his Lord*. How then can those who call themselves Christ's ministers, pretend to worldly power and authority, when their master had none, *had not where to lay his head*. Were they to have no wages, but what their master Christ is to give them, there would be very few but what would quit his service; though those Christ sends, he will no doubt reward. They that pretend to have their mission from him, not from the state or the people, and therefore claim civil dominion, claim what their master never did, should have no reward, but such as he thinks fit to give them, from whom they pretend to be sent: For  
 this

this very good reason, because they assume a tyrannical authority over those on whom they are dependents for their livings, and who pay them their wages ; especially when humility and obedience to lawful kings and magistrates is their lawful and just duty, that they may, by their example, teach men to lead *quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty*. Their doctrine and behaviour ought to be such, as may bring *glory to God, peace on earth, and good-will to men*. This is *gospel* ; and this is the business of the *ministers of the gospel*. They ought not to *lord it over god's heritage*. Their duty is not to rule, but to obey ; not to use force and violence, but meekness and instruction ; both in life and doctrine promoting righteousness.

Be it known to all kings and princes, that those who preach unlimited obedience to them, do it for some base end ; but will practice it no more than those that maintain opposition in some cases to be lawful and just, for there is no such obedience in man's nature ; they preach a doctrine unnatural which cannot be practiced, and therefore will be no more regarded by them than by others : For such doctrines of religion as are against nature, whatever gloss may be put upon them, cannot, and will not be obeyed ; and are therefore arbitrary, tyrannical, and unjust. Religion should restrain and regulate men's passions, not presume to crucify or extirpate them ; for that is a presumptuous aiming to make men other creatures than ever God designed them ; therefore such aims are equally stupid and wicked. Should any king put forth his hand to oppress the clergy, as king *Charles* oppressed his subjects, and *Laud* the laity ; the clergy will be as ready as any other men to blow *the trumpet of sedition, and the alarm of war* ; nor will they be content with bare exercising their spiritual terrors in the  
next.



next world, and suffering in this. The *latter* will be the *Lord's* of whatever regiment in religion the clergy be ; and I have always observed, that the most zealous assertors of passive obedience, have been men of the most resisting and turbulent tempers. That they love tyranny, is very apparent, because they always promote it ; and always deify that king who deifies them ; who gives his power and dominion to them ; though by his actions he be apparently *the vilest of men* : Which shews, in the most glaring light, their extreme partiality, being always ready to sanctify and applaud whatever men or measures contribute to their advantage, to heap on them wealth and dominion, though they are of the darkest hue that moral characters can represent.

God who for the good of man, *spared not his own son*, for the good of the kingdom, spared not the king ; esteeming it *better that one man should die for the people, than the nation perish*. Nor does it appear to me that the one was less necessary in the different nature and reason of the thing than the other. For had the nation submitted to the king's will, it had, in all peradventure, remained enslaved at this day ; for when his vengeance had been irritated by opposition, in all probability there would have been no end, till tyranny had established its seat by blood, and popery by fire. But what if the church had not subjected to the pope at *Rome*, if it erected a pope at *Canterbury*, would that have mended the matter ? What if it had not all the popish trumpery and ceremonies, if it had her tyranny and cruelty, how would the matter have been mended ? His grace of *Canterbury* was graciously pleased to declare, that *he hoped to see the time when never a Jack gentleman in England should dare to stand with his hat on before the meanest priest*. This was a fil-

cient to shew, that he drove at making every gentleman servile and submissive to every mean spiritual tyrant, and that he hoped to make all priests rampant in power.

Though I may have seemed to have treated the divine right of king *Charles* without divine homage or veneration, yet if we consider rightly of the matter, there was a sort of *Athanasian divinity*, something like *trinity in unity* in the family ; for such as *Charles* was, such was the *father James*, and such was *James* the *son*, in majestic prerogative co-equal, in religion co-external. As was the tree, such was the fruit. And as we found the fruit naught, we contradict ourselves to mourn over the tree, as if it had been good, which there was judged to be a necessity to cut down. Our fathers began the struggle for liberty against an arbitrary family, and we finished it with glory. Can that which is glorious in us, be inglorious in them ? They, for the peace and security of the itate, cut off the head of the father ; we, for the same reason, cut off the tail of the son ; though it had been better for us if we had cut off his head also. But thus was the judgment of God executed upon *them*, that he might have mercy upon *us* ; for his judgments are always mixt with mercy. Such judgments the Lord threatened to his *Israel* of old, \* *The Lord will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush in one day.*

If we may judge of men's dispositions by their actions, if the tree be known by its fruit, this prince was doubtless weak in his judgment, obstinate, and vindictive in his temper, and very insincere as hypocrites are ; and therefore no wonder if he affected to be thought religious, and so fond of ignorant devotion and religious ceremonies, that he became a slave to priests ; and endeavoured, as tutored by  
them,

\* *Isaiah* ix. 14.

them, to inflave the people. Though it must be confessed, the king had a conscience, and a very great one; for when he had to do with the consciences of others that were different from his, it swallowed them all up, as *Aaron's rod* swallowed up the rods of the *Egyptian Magi*. And 'tis well known, that the rod of the priest's power always endeavours to swallow up all other power, and often does so.—In *Charles's* younger years he was looked on by all that knew him to be of a very obstinate disposition, which his mother much lamented; and publicly confessed, that *she feared he would live to be the ruin of himself, and occasion the loss of the three kingdoms by his obstinacy*.—If any thing hindered him from being a papist, it was his love of prerogative; for notwithstanding the strictness of the laws against papists at the beginning of his reign, he granted them a general pardon and indulgence; and declared, *it was his will that all the laws against them should stand discharged*. Thus he early discovered himself a friend to popery and tyranny.—And as the king and priesthood grasped at absolute authority, and increased in the exercise of it over the People, so the dire effects of their tyranny and cruelty increased. Their new-invented and erected High Commission Courts and Star-chamber were nearly related to popish Inquisition, by which monstrous cruelties were committed, and prodigious fines imposed on great numbers of persons, some of whom were men of the best reputation, parts and learning, of which it may not be improper to give a sample, whereby to judge of others.

Mr. *Prynne*, for reflecting on the court and archbishop *Laud* in his writings, was prosecuted in the Star-chamber, and sentenced to pay 5000*l.* to the king, to stand twice in the pillory, to have both his ears cut off, one at each time, to be afterwards im-

prisoned during pleasure without use of pen, ink or paper, and to be stigmatized on both cheeks with S L denoting a Seditious Libeller.

Two or three years after, the same *Prynne*, and *Bastwick*, and *Burton*, for writing some reflections on the hierarchy and government, were sentenced to pay 5000*l.* each to the king, to stand in the pillory, to have their ears cut off, and *Prynne* that part of his ears which were left.

Mr. *John Lilbourne* for writing in Mr. *Prynne's* vindication, was condemned by archbishop *Laud* in his Star-chamber to be whipt with a treble-knotted cord from the *Fleet* prison to *Westminster-hall*, and had 500 lashes. Afterwards in this deplorable and bloody condition he was obliged to stand in the pillory, and was there gagged for complaining of this cruel and barbarous usage.

Dr. *Leighton* for offending the hierarchy, was sentenced to pay 10,000*l.* to the king, and by two of *Laud's* Officers was hurried into a most dismal cell in *Newgate*, there kept almost two days without food, and his effects seized, received when very ill thirty-six stripes with a treble cord, afterwards stood in the pillory all bloody as he was almost two hours in a time of frost and snow, had there one ear cut off, one nostril slit, and one of his cheeks branded with a red hot iron, then carried away to the *Fleet* prison again by water; and that day seven-night the sores on his back, nose, and face not being cured, he was again whipt and pillored in *Cheapside*, and there had the remainder of the sentence executed, by cutting off the other ear, shutting up the other nostril, and branding the other cheek.

Innumerable were the torments and troubles of the subjects, in the reign of this *pious king*. And where-ever the clergy reign, or a bigotted prince, they damn the laity, that is, they make them damned

damned *slaves* or *villains*: and if they drive them to heaven, it is through hell. None sacrifice to *mammon* more devoutly than they. When tyranny is intended to be established, it is the work of mercenary priests to begin the salley agrinst common sense: the better to bubble, bully, and inflave the people, the terrors of domnation are of sacred use: by these they endeavour as much as in them lies to annul all the laws that secure to the people their rights and properties. Laws cannot possibly be of any service, if they may not be defended, against a powerful robber and perverter of them. Or against a band of men combined to rob the nation of their properties and privileges, which are as much their right, as what the king holds by law is his, because both hold them by the same rightful power, the law of the nation; and therefore subjects have equal right to possess and defend, what the law gives them, as the sovereign has. **NOTHING IS MORE SACRED THAN LAW**; it is the power of wisdom and goodness, or both, united for a good end, and is called **JUSTICE**. *It is Justice that is Law*. Justice is the proper ruling power, not the power of the ruler; for power is given to a ruler, to a political head, for the sake of maintaining justice. To transgress the law, is a criminal thing; it is doing what is not just, and therefore renders the transgressor criminal, and an unjust person, whoever he be; for the Law is like God, which is God's Law, it is *no respecter of persons*; and the law of nature is the nature of the law. When the political head therefore is become unjust, it is unnatural to the body politic, and offends it; ought not then the gospel precept to be practised, which says \* *If thy right eye, right hand* (or principal member) *offend thee, cut it off, as*

\* Matthew vi. 29, 30.

cast it from thee ; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members perish, rather than the whole body ; for desperate diseases must have desperate remedies ; though it ought not to be in the power of pope, priest, enthusiast, or any private, particular person, to determine the public particular case ; but it resides in the united power of the public body, from which the head received its power of being read, for the united good of the body, or the public. For this reason, they confer their power on one person, and vest their authority in him, not for his good in opposition to theirs, but for their own good in conjunction with his. Considering the end and intention of their action, it is a power lent, not given ; it is their power who are the lenders, and they are the body who have it in themselves by *natural* right, that is, and that only is *divine* ; and he that receives it from them, has it by the same right ; but has no right to possess or execute it longer than he rightfully uses it. He that has lost his conduct cannot be a conductor. Of him that perverts what is lent him, to his own use, in prejudice to the lender ; certainly the lender has a right to demand the restoration of what he lent, and oblige him to it by force, and foul means, when fair means fail. No law can bind men down *for better for worse, till death*, if they are aggrieved, and can find a remedy, no more in political, than in physical cases. No laws of God or nature oblige any person or people to remain miserable if they can be freed from misery, and make themselves happy. To expel or kill a governor, undoubtedly puts a nation into convulsions ; but when his *life* puts a nation into convulsions, then his expulsion or death is the only remedy. When a disease is bad, the cure is good. If the remedy is worse than the disease, we must seek another ; but some cases admit

of

of but one remedy, one method of cure, and in those cases that must be had, or none. Let the remedy be what it will, it is not the less good because it is public ; nor is justice the less justice, because it is done in a justiciary way.— To extort money from a nation contrary to law, is national plunder, and public rapine. And we all know what punishment the law pronounces on highway-robbers. Do they who rob a whole nation deserve less punishment than those who rob only single persons ? or ought great criminals to escape with impunity, and little criminals only suffer. Or in desperate cases, *is it not expedient that one man die for the people, that the nation perish not ?*

Mr. Gordon, that Herculean reasoner, in his Discourses on *Tacitus* \*, says, ‘ An absolute prince is of all others the most insecure, as he proceeds by no rule of law, he can have no rule of safety ; he acts by violence, and violence is the only remedy against him. His acts of cruelty upon particulars, whether done for revenge or prevention, do but alarm other particulars to save themselves by destroying him.

† It is as rare for a prince limited by laws, and content with his power, to reign in sorrow, or die tragically, as it is uncommon for those who have no bounds set them, or will suffer none, to escape a miserable reign and unbloody end.

‡ The people likewise expect complaisance from a prince, expect to have their sentiments and humours considered ; while the prince probably thinks that they have no right to form any judgment of public matters, or to make any demands upon him, but on the contrary requires of them blind reverence and obedience to his authority ; and acquiescence in his superior conduct and skill, that all his doings should pass for just ; himself for a person alto-

gether,

gether sacred and unaccountable ; and his words for laws. If their behaviour towards him do not happen to square exactly with these his sovereign notions and high conceit of himself, he will be apt to think, or some officious flatterer will be ready to persuade him, ‘ his royal authority is set at nought, the people are revolted ; and what remains but they take arms.’ To punish therefore their Disobedience, he proceeds to violence, and exercises real severity for imaginary guilt. Mischief is prolific ; and violence in him begets resentment in them : The people murmur and exclaim ; the prince is thence provoked, and flies to vengeance ; when one act of vengeance is resented and exposed, as it ever will be, more will follow. Thus things go on ; affection is not only lost, but irrecoverable on either side, hatred is begun on both ; and prince and people consider themselves no longer as magistrate and subject, but one another as enemies.

Mr. *Gordon* says thus, of this *royal martyr's* reign, in his *Independent Whig* \*, “ Now, if we enquire into the first cause, from which all the rest naturally followed, we shall find that the violence of his reign caused his violent end. It is not to be denied nor disguised, that from the very beginning of the court aimed at arbitrary power, openly pursued it, and for fifteen years together practised it, raising money without law, and against law ; which was robbery in those who enforced the collection of it : imprisoning men, the best and greatest men, without law, and against law ; which was lawless cruelty : seizing the lands and estates of others, without right, and against right ; which was flagrant oppression and violence : assuming and exercising a power to dispence with laws, that is, to make and annul laws, which was manifest usurpation ;

\* Vol. III. p. 361.



tion: and, in short, establishing an arbitrary and *Turkish* authority over the persons, and rights, and fortunes of the people, which was apparent and undeniable *Tyranny*.'

'Between law and violence, between right and tyranny, there is no medium, no more than between justice and oppression. If king *Charles* had no right to act thus, then his acting thus was *tyranny*. If he had a right, of what force are laws and oaths; and where is our constitution, the boasted rights of *Englishmen* and our ancient *Magna Charta*? Why was his son king *James* turned out? why declared to have forfeited? And I would ask the admirers and defenders of king *Charles I.* how they would have liked, how borne such violences, such lawless doings and misrule in king *William*? how in the late reign? how in this? How would they have relished the imprisonment of their persons, taxes laid on, and exacted without consent of parliament, arbitrary and excessive fines, their estates seized, their families impoverished or famishing? Doubtless no men would have been louder in the cry of tyranny; and very just and natural would have been such a cry. How do they reconcile such zeal and profession with an approbation of the reign of king *Charles I.* which was one continued series of oppressions, had abolished liberty and law, and established universal slavery?'—

'Was it not crying guilt in the crown to abandon its duty, to violate the coronation-oath, to tread upon law and justice, to persecute conscience, to rob and oppress the people, and from limited and lawful to become lawless and arbitrary? And is it not equally reasonable, equally becoming us *Englishmen*, and freemen, to commemorate and detest an administration so pernicious and devouring, asures so black and lawless? Is it not our duty

to take warning by them, and whenever we are threatened with them, to guard against them, to watch every principle of slavery, and suppress it betimes; to rejoice that we live in happier times, live in a *free government*, and under *the free course of the laws*, to pray for the continuance of such an invaluable blessing, and be dutiful and assisting to that GOOD AND GREAT PRINCE who secures it to us, and claims nothing to himself, but what our parliaments and known laws give him."—

Seeing we have *now* the *best of kings* to govern us, which is the greatest of all national blessings, let us not grieve that our fathers delivered themselves from *tyranny* by their struggles, and us from the pernicious consequences of it. Have we not more reason to rejoice, that the parliament's army got the better of the king's, than if the king's army had got the better of the parliament's? for whereas we now lament *one* day in the year, should we not then have lamented *every* day in the year? We might have sought the freedom we now enjoy in *America*, we should not have found it in *Britain*. If we were not ungrateful to that God who redeemed us, he would give us *feasting* for *fasting*, and *the oil of gladness* for *the spirit of heaviness*, we should thank God for his mercies to us, instead of complaining and repining before him of his judgments to them, *seeing in the midst of judgment* to them *be bath remembered mercy* to us.

As the lesson for this day is the sufferings of our blessed Lord, and as *Charles's* devotees are fond of making an analogy between them, I shall grant there was some in their *deaths*, though there was none at all in their *lives*; for the one went about doing good with his power, and saving the lives of men; the other went about doing mischief with his army, and destroying men's lives, to defend his power.

power, and maintain his prerogative. But both friends and enemies allow that *he died a good death*. It was a national good that *one man died for the people, and the nation perished not*. In such case therefore, it may be looked on as a kind of propitiatory sacrifice, and his death may be *imputed righteousness*, which brought temporal redemption to the nation, as the death of Christ brought spiritual redemption to the world. As he died a *good man*, we must allow his death was unfortunate and is cause of mourning; but as he died a *bad king* the death of such a one is fortunate, and matter of joy to any people. Thus justly stating both sides of the account, we may set equal reasons of joy against equal cause of sorrow, so cancel each other, and make the balance even. And as our fathers have sent him to his heavenly father, and have followed him themselves, *Requiescant omnes in pace*. If God is reconciled with them, as we ought in charity to believe, there is a reconciliation between God and his people; therefore we ought to be reconciled with one another.

F I N I S,















