



A
DISCOURSE

Sent to the
Late King James,
To persuade him to Embrace the
Protestant Religion,

BY
Dr. SAMUEL PARKER

Late Lord Bishop of Oxford.

To which are prefixed

TWO LETTERS;

The FIRST,

From Sir *Leolyn Jenkins*, on the same Subject;

The SECOND,

From the said Bishop, with the DISCOURSE.

Printed from the Original Manuscript Papers,
without Observation or Reflection.

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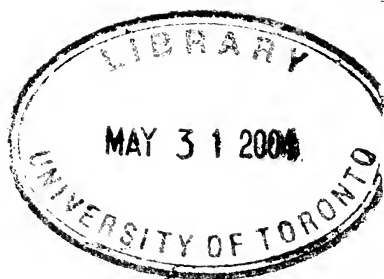
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To the READER.

THese Papers accidentally falling into my hands, 'twere injustice to conceal them from the World, when so much benefit may be reap'd from their Publication; and though there are many Reasons to be alledged for Printing so useful a Discourse, yet none was so prevalent with me as the thoughts of doing our dead Author Justice, at least as to that part of his Accusation wherein he has been adjudg'd, if not professedly, yet a well-wisher at least to the *Roman* Catholick Religion; that he was so to the Person he sends these following lines, is evident from the Design of them, which was to bring him over to the Communion of the Church of *England*; a Design, considering the Circumstances of those distracted Times, so very seasonable and honest, that the D—— Himself was forc'd to acknowledge as much, and afterwards thank'd the Dr. for it, and had God given it its due Effect, we might all have thank'd him too: But however the Discourse may have miss'd of its aim where intended; I hope it may not want some Proselytes of the same Persuasion, for whose sake 'tis chiefly publish'd. As to what concerns the Author himself, I shall be wholly silent, the World labouring under too great a Prejudice to hear his Panegyrick with Patience: The following Tract, with his other Learned Writings are his best Orator; but if any Mans Curiosity should lead him to a farther desire of knowing his Character, if he pleases, he may better take it from himself.

DEPOSITUM
SAMUELIS PARKER

Nuper Episcopi Oxoniensis :
Qui hoc Elogio posteris commendari voluit.

S*Imultates, & privatas inimicitias
Non modo non fovi,
Sed contempsi.
Solâ integritate fretus,
Nec vivere
Erubesco;
Nec mori reformido.
Divinam Providentiam
Non minus credo, quam opto.
Hanc vitam, utcumq; sustineo,
Meliolem expecto;
Fide non infelix,
Spe felicior.
Multa legi, cogitavi, scripsi
Omnia ab ipsis rei cujusq; Principiis exorsus;
Nec tamen ulla scire videar melius
Quam quæ per fidem accepi.*

Sir Leolyn Jenkins His Letter to the late King.

THIS Discourse (or what else you please to call it) was brought me by the *Canterbury* Carrier; your *R. H.* will see in the loose Leaf join'd to this, how it comes to be addressed to my Hands. The Author I have known long since; he was Chaplain to my late Lord Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, his Name is Dr. *Samuel Parker*, (at present) Arch-Deacon of *Canterbury*; as I have not had any Communication with him of any kind, these many Years, so the coming of this Treatise to my Hands is a perfect Surprise; yet seeing the Subject matter of it is that which we pray and contend for, I durst not but commit it to this present Conveyance, beseeching Almighty God to give a Blessing upon it.

For Sir Leolyn Jenkins.

SIR,

Having been lately confin'd with a great Indisposition of Health, and not knowing how the Divine Providence might be pleased to dispose of me, after I had settled my own private Affairs as well as I could, an Extravagant Thought thrust it self vehemently upon me to leave a Legacy for His Royal Highness, which in those better Intervals I enjoyed, I composed, and out of that eager Zeal I have for the true Settlement of the Church of England, cannot forbear to present it. And in order to make bold to convey it to your Honor, and if your Curiosity will support your Patience to peruse it, I submit it entirely to your Wisdom to dispose of it as you please. And though I have no reason to expect any success from so weak an Endeavor, yet the very Decency of the Design in a Priest of the Church of England will at least warrant it self; for I have only addrest my self to His Royal Highnesses Conscience without any regard to his worldly Interest; and that is a thing that any Church-man that has any sincere love for his Religion is not only authoris'd, but oblig'd to do, and as for the Event of such unlikely Attempts, they are to be entirely left to the over-ruling Providence of God. However I request the favor of your Perusal, and if you judg not the Design utterly ridiculous, to convey it to His Highness. If you are tempted to smile at my Folly, I beseech you to impute it to my present Weakness, and when I am in a better Condition of Health, for which I thank God I am now in a very fair way, perhaps I shall be as forward as any to laugh at the oddness of the Attempt. But whatever it is, I am sure it has the warrant of a good meaning from, Sir,

Your most Humble Servant,

S. PARKER.

SIR,

W Hat Addresses, or whether any at all, have been made to Your Royal Highness by the Divines of the Church of *England*, for the Satisfaction of your Conscience, I am altogether ignorant. Tho I cannot suppose that none have been made, because I know great numbers of Learned Men of our Communion, both Zealous for their Religion, and also for Your Highnesses Service here, and Souls welfare hereafter: But then this I have too much Reason to fear, that some of them may not have taken that Method; nor have proceeded upon those Principles that they ought. For the Men that have ever since his Majesties Return, been, or at least appeared, most forward, in defiance of the Church of *Rome*, have been so unhappy in their Zeal and Opposition against it, as together with the Papal Usurpations, to dig up the very Foundations of the Christian Church: or, at the same time that they endeavor to pull down the Pope's present high and uncanonical Pretences, destroy all that Divine Authority that was vested by our Blessed Saviour in the Apostles and their Successors, for the Guidance and Government of Souls; so as to make every private Person the only Judge of his own Faith, without any defence to the Direction of his Spiritual Guides and Governors: which is in effect no less than really to cancel that Promise that our Blessed Saviour made to be assistant to them in the Execution of their Office, to the End of the World; for if he make good his Promise, that alone is more than enough to challenge the regular Submission of private Christians to their Decrees, as they would not Rebel against our Saviour's own Institution. This I know has been the great stumbling Block to the *Roman* Catholicks, that the Church of *England* neither pretends to, nor owns any such Power, as that of a living Judge; but that it either resolves all its Authority into the State, or leaves all its Members at their own entire liberty, to choose their Religion as they please, without being accountable to the Church for it.

These, I must confess, are very common Opinions among us, but then they are very new too, and as great Strangers to the Church of *England*, as to the Church of *Rome*: being at first started about his Majesties Return, when some young Men that had been fanatically Educated, seeing the Church of *England* Restored, and either having a mind to its Preferments, or to bring themselves off from the Principles of their Education, pretended that there was no such thing as any particular Form of Church-Government, settled by our Saviour or his Apostles; and therefore that it was left entirely to the power of the Civil Magistrate to Establish what Form He Himself liked best. And for that Reason, and for that alone, seeing his Majesty was pleased to restore Episcopacy, they thought it their Duty to submit to that as to all other Civil Laws and Constitutions. But, alas, these are not Church, but State Divines, and not only Traytors to the Liberties of the Church of *England*, but profest Enemies to the very Being of a Christian Church; which as such, subsists merely upon our Saviour's own Charter and Institution, by virtue whereof all Christians are bound to associate in a visible Society, and to submit to the Decrees and Ordinances of those Governors that he hath set over it. This, I say, is the first Principle of a Christian Church, and is owned by all Men, that either own any such thing as a Church, or understand what they mean by the word. So that the only true State of the Controversie in this Case between Church and Church, is to discover how the Government of the Catholick Church was at first settled by our Saviour: how it descended to after Ages, and who at this time stick closest to the Primitive Institution.

And for Your Highnesses full Satisfaction herein, I will make a faithful Representation of the true State of the Primitive Church, and then compare the present Constitution of the Church of *England*, and the Church of *Rome*; and thereby shew how enormously the Church of *Rome*, notwithstanding all its high Pretences, hath departed from it, and how

honestly the Church of *England* endeavors to keep to the original Platform; and when I have done this, I shall, with all Humility, submit it to Your Royal Highnesses Wise and Impartial Judgment: For I know that in matters relating to Your Souls welfare, You design nothing but Truth, and the best way to secure it. This I am assured of, not only from the fam'd Integrity, and Generousness of Your Princely Temper, that scorns to admit of the Alloy of Secular Interest into the great Concerns of Conscience, but by that great Courage and Resolution You have shewn for the Maintenance of Your present Perswasion (whatever that is) to Your great Detriment and Disadvantage of Your Affairs in this World. But though I think it most apparently Your present Interest to quit that Church, yet I think it too, a very Ignoble, as well as Irreligious Attempt, to make that an Argument for it. And I am afraid, That is one of the highest Prejudices that Your Royal Highness may have conceived against the Church of *England*, that some Men in it have insisted upon Your worldly Interest too much in a point of Conscience. And yet if by a true and sincere Account of things, I can bring Your Conscience over to the Church of *England*, though I shall not bring Your Conscience to Your Interest, yet I shall make them meet: for if that were satisfied, it is obvious on which side the Advantage lies. And though upon the Supposition of Conscience being satisfied, Interest might be admitted as an accessional Motive; yet I shall entirely wave all worldly Considerations, and disdain any Assistance that is Foreign to the cause of Religion, and if I did not, I am sure Your Highness would.

And therefore I shall only humbly crave leave to represent the true State of the Christian Church, and from thence remonstrate to Your Princely Wisdom, that Your Highness can have no Reason either as a Christian Man or a Christian Prince, to concern Your Self for the Interest, or join with the Communion of the Church of *Rome*, and that on the contrary

you have all the Reason in the World, upon both Accounts, to love and value the Church of *England*.

First then Christianity supposes the Temporal Power of Princes; Civil Government being settled in the World by the general Providence of God antecedently to our Saviour's particular Institution. And as he found it, so he left it, with an express declaimor of any Pretence to it, in the first place declaring that the Kingdom that he came to establish was not of this World: that is, that he was not invested with any Temporal Jurisdiction. And the truth is, if he had laid claim to any such Power, his Religion had stood upon no better foundation than *Mahumetanism* it self, that was at first propagated, and hath been hitherto maintained merely by the Power of the Sword. But the Design of our Saviour's Institution, was pure and unmix'd Religion, and therefore abetted it Self and its Laws with no other Sanctions than only the Rewards and Punishments of the Life to come. And the same Power that he exercis'd himself, he devolv'd upon his Apostles, from them to descend upon their Successors to the End of the World; so that all their Power, whatever it is, is of the same Nature with that which himself claim'd whilst on Earth, that is purely spiritual and void of all temporal Coertion.. And for this Reason it is evident, that if any Church pretend to any such Power by Virtue of his Grant or Commission, that it is not only a Contradiction to the Nature of Christianity, but an Atheistical Abuse put upon the whole Design of his Institution.

Now upon this Supposition, there are and must be in all Kingdoms and Commonwealths where Christianity is entertained and protected, two distinct Jurisdictions, so as that if one entrench upon or invade the other, it is an equal Violation of Christianity; for if the temporal Prince assume to himself the Exercise of that Power that is peculiarly invested in the Officers of the Church, instead of governing the Church he destroys it: when every Church, as a Church, is capable of no other Government but what is purely spiritual, and

delegated to it by our Saviour's special Commission, after the full Settlement of the Power of Princes. And the same Violation of Christianity is it, if any of the Governors of the Church should challenge any such Power by Virtue of our Savior's Authority, for that were to turn a spiritual into a temporal Kingdom.

Now these two Powers being so plainly distinct both in their Nature and Original, they must continue so notwithstanding the Union of Church and State into one Society. For if the Prince take upon him the sole Government of the Church as such, he acts not only without but against our Savior's Commission, who hath appropriated that Power to another Order of Men; and if the Priest challenge any temporal Jurisdiction as deriv'd from our Savior, he in effect disclaims him, in that he becomes our Savior purely by Virtue of his spiritual Power, and Supremacy over his Church; and therefore to pretend to any other Power deriv'd from him as Head of it, is another way of turning Christ into *Mahomet*.

But tho the Civil Magistrate have no share of spiritual Authority, yet hath he a Sovereign Supremacy over the Ecclesiastical State; otherwise he would abate of his Power by the coming of Christianity into the World; which contradicts the first Principle of a Christian Church, that it makes no Alteration as to Civil Rights: but then this Power over the Church is purely civil too, and relates only to the Ends of Peace and Government in this Life, and is the same that every Prince would have had, tho our Savior had never come into the World; but as for that which he hath peculiarly granted, as he hath granted no part of it to the Civil Magistrate, so it is plain that he hath designedly settled it upon another Order of Men, and it is they alone that have any Right to exercise it. But notwithstanding this new Power, they are never the less Subjects than they were before; and therefore all Christian Princes have the same Supremacy over all the Powers of the Church, as to the Ends of Civil Government, and as far as

concerns the Affairs of this Life, as they could have had if there were no such Powers at all.

The grand Difficulty in this Case is the Danger of Competition between these two Powers; for if they happen to contradict each other, as they too often do, Which shall over-rule? If a Man obey his Prince contrary to the Prescription of his spiritual Guide, he may endanger his Soul; if he obey the Bishop, he disobeys his Prince, and so deservedly forfeits his Neck to Justice. But this Difficulty, as big as it may appear, is clearly remov'd by this one Consideration, That the Christian Church, and all the Authority in it, is founded upon the Cross of Christ, and that not only claims no Power in this World, but obliges to an entire Submission to all the Powers of it; so that no Opposition can lawfully be made, even to the most unlawful Commands of Sovereign Princes, but all Christians are still bound to do as they did in the Primitive Times, to lay down their Lives with all manner of Meekness, if their Governors, whether right or wrong, require it. This is the true and honest State of the Christian Church, That every Christian Man be faithful to the Laws of his Religion, and if he suffer for it he shall be compensated for it with those Rewards that his Religion promises. So that in all Cases of Competition both Powers so prevail, as to attain their respective Ends. The Civil Power over-rules as to all Effects of this Life, and being thus gently submitted to, secures the Peace and Quiet of this World, and that is the End for which it was instituted. And the spiritual Power attains its Effect as to the World to come, the Salvation of the Souls of Men by their conscientious Loyalty to their Religion; and that is all that it aims at, or pretends to; and every Man that professeth Christianity, takes it up upon this Condition. So that all Resistance to secular Powers upon pretence of Religion, is a direct Contradiction to the Nature of the Christian Faith, and another open Apostasy from Christianity to Mahumetanism: And that I am afraid will prove a gross Blemish upon the

Church of *Rome*, that it pretends to a Power not only equal, but superior to Princes: so that the Popes, as the Vicars of Christ, may not only contend with them by force of Arms, but may in some Cases depose them from their Thrones; which if truly consider'd, is no less than rank Blasphemy against our blessed Savior, by turning his pure Religion into an Artifice of secular Interest.

But beside this, this Point of Competition is to be chiefly determin'd by the Matter about which it is employ'd. If the Contest be about an Article of Faith, or any Fundamental Rule of Religion, and the Prince will interpose his Power, tho no Man is oblig'd to obey him, because it is certain he never was entrusted with any such Power by our Saviour, yet is he to be submitted to with all Meekness, by virtue of the former Principle, that requires peaceable Submission to Government from Christians in all Cases, for the quiet of the World. But if the Contest be about a Ritual of Worship, or an emergent Rule of Discipline, about which the Governors of the Church have a Power in themselves to make Canons and new Provisions, yet are they indispensibly bound to submit the Exercise of it to their Prince, because that's the first Principle of Christianity, as far as they can without Violence to the Laws of their Religion, to comport with Civil Government; so that tho this Power be seated properly in the Church; yet out of that great Respect and Duty that the Christian Law requires to Princes, they are bound to make use of it with all Deference to Sovereign Authority; especially because the Church is accountable to it for its peaceable Behavior in the Commonwealth, and therefore ought to give Security that it will neither disturb the State, nor invade the Sovereign Prerogative upon this Pretence; which because it is possible for them to do, and some have done, they are concern'd both in Duty and Modesty to submit all their Proceedings to his Judgment. And this, as far as I understand, is the true State of the Church of *England*, in the Act commonly called the Submission of the

Clergy, in which they do not alienate or grant away their Power of making Canons, but only for preventing all future Jealousies in the State against them, they give all the Assurance they can, that they will not presume to publish their Decrees without their Sovereign Lord's Consent and Approbation. This short Account is the true State of the Bounds of Civil and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, and that being settled, the next thing to be considered, is to find out what was the true and original Settlement of the Christian Church; and by that we shall be able to inform our selves of the good or bad state of any present Church, as it agrees, or disagrees with it.

First then, there is no one thing more clear and evident in the Christian Religion, than that our Saviour vested the whole Apostolical Order with a Supremacy of Power over his Church, and that they in pursuance of this his Divine Institution ordained Bishops to succeed them in their Supremacy of Power through all following Ages.

That the Apostles were superior to all other Officers in the Church, is out of question, and granted on all hands; and that the Bishops succeeded them, is as unquestionable, from all the clearest Records of Antiquity; their Succession, especially in the most famous Churches, being derived by the most ancient Writers from the Apostles themselves, and was as easily and certainly known to those Men that have transmitted it to us, as any learned Man may know the Succession of the Archbishops of *Canterbury*, from the Reign of Queen *Eliz.* to this time.

But as this Power was at first given to the Apostles, so was it equally divided among them; so that every one exercis'd supreme Power within the Bounds of his own Jurisdiction, and all together in the Catholick Church; or as *S. Cyprian* states it, *Epist. 52*, that as there was but one Church founded by Christ throughout all the World, but this Church was made up of several distinct Members, so was there but one Episcopacy, and that consists in the Agreement and unan-

imous care of all Christian Bishops: So that the whole Body of the Church was governed by the whole Body of the Apostles and their Successors, but the several parts of it were allotted to the Charge of single Bishops, who governed them with particular Care, but so as to have regard to the Peace and Unity of the Whole. This is the only Notion that this wise and good Man (than whom there is not a more eminent Example for both upon Record) seems in all his Writings to have had of the Catholick Church. And as for the Apostles, who were the first Representatives of it, I cannot find the least Footsteps in all the holy Gospels of any particular Prerogative granted to one above the rest. It is true indeed that our Savior often addresses himself to *S. Peter* in particular, but then it is evident that this is done upon particular Occasions, and as evident too, that all the great things that are occasionally spoken of him, are in the Scripture ascrib'd to all the other Apostles. Thus where as *Matth. xvi.* our Savior gives him the Keys of Heaven, upon his confessing him to be the Messias, He vests all the Apostles with the same Power, and that with particular solemnity, *John xx. 21.* And whereas he stiles *S. Peter* the Rock, or Foundation, upon which he would build his Church, the same Title is given to all the Apostles in other Scriptures, as *Ephes. ii. 20.* *Built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner Stone.* And *Revel. xxi. 14.* *The Wall of the City had twelve Foundations upon which were the Names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.* And in all the Gospels, unless when he applies himself particularly to *S. Peter* upon the Occasion of his Zeal, and Forwardness in the Faith, our Savior invests them all with an equal Power, especially when he gave them their grand Commission to convert all Nations, *Matth. xxviii. 19, 20.* So that the Men of the Church of *Rome* strein the Scriptures with too forc'd a Violence, when out of such slight and accidental Occasions of our Savior's particular Speeches to *S. Peter*, they would settle such great and high Privileges

upon his Person, so as to make him sovereign Lord of all the other Apostles, and sole Monarch of the Universal Church. This Foundation is too slight for the Weight of so great a Building, and so big a Claim requires somewhat a clearer Evidence of Title; and if our Savior had intended any such absolute Sovereignty to *S. Peter*, and made that the Fundamental Principle of his Church, certainly he would have declared it a little more expressly, and not have left so weighty a Point to be merely surmis'd out of occasional Discourses, of which there are such easie and obvious Reasons to be given, without his ever intending any such design: So that in truth to make so much Noise as the *Romanists* do about the personal Privileges of *S. Peter*, upon such poor and slender Pretences, is at once to impose upon the Wisdom of God, as if he had laid the Foundations of his Church so slightly, and to affront the Understandings of Men, as if they thought them so weak as to be persuaded to any thing by such poor and precarious Arguings.

But yet however I will grant more than can with any decent modesty be demanded from these Texts, and yield that our Savior designed some considerable Precedency to *S. Peter*, above all the other Apostles. Yet what is this to that omnipotent Sovereignty that His Holiness challenges over the whole Christian Church, who takes upon himself not only the supreme, but almost the sole Disposal of it; whereas it is too well known, that *S. Peter*, after the Privileges granted to him, was commanded by an Order of the other Apostles, *Acts* viii. 14, which could never have been done, if his Power had been Monarchical over them all. Neither do we find him any where exercising any such Sovereignty over them; for tho' by reason of his ready Faculty of Speech he was usually the first Speaker, yet we do no where find, that he either challeng'd or practis'd any other Precedency. So that tho' he was the first that delivered his Opinion in the Council of *Jerusalem*, yet it was *S. James* that determined and pronounced the Decree,

in that he was Bishop of the Place, as is undeniably evident from the most undoubted Records of Antiquity. Which yet he ought not to have done, if *S. Peter* had been endued with the same Superiority over all the rest of the Apostles, that the Bishop of *Rome* challenges over all the other Bishops of the Christian Church. But not to insist upon these remote and obscure Footsteps of *S. Peter's* Primacy in the Scriptures, I will freely grant him out of the Holy Text it self some considerable Precedency: tho when I have done that too, what is it to the Bishop of *Rome*, more than it is to the Bishop of *Antioch* or *Alexandria*, or the Bishops of several other Places, in which *S. Peter* first planted the Christian Faith: so that the Bishops of all those Places have as fair a Title to be *S. Peter's* Successors as the Bishop of *Rome*. And yet this great point I shall be so civil as to admit, and grant that the peculiar Right of Succession to the Privileges of *S. Peter* (if any such there were) was appropriated to the See of *Rome*; but still, What is this to that universal Jurisdiction that is challenged by the Bishops of this See, as the supreme and infallible Governors of the Catholick Church? For after all other Disputes, 'tis this that is the only dividing Point between us; 'tis this that is the only Fundamental Article of their Church; 'tis this for which they load us so heavily with their honorable Titles of Hereticks and Schismaticks. And so no doubt are we if his Holiness be vested by Divine Right, with that universal Supremacy that he challenges over the whole Christian Church. In a word, if we take this one Controversie away, I, for my part, know no other difference between the Church of *England* and the Church of *Rome* as to Ecclesiastical Constitution. But now if this one Point of the Supremacy of the Bishop of *Rome* were the great Foundation of the Christian Faith, (as it must be, if his pretences to it by divine Right are true) it is a very strange thing that there should not be so much as the shadow of any such Authority in all the Records of the Primitive Church. Is it not very odd, that when so many

Controversies were started in the Christian Church, both in the Apostles own time, and in the Ages next and immediately following, and that when Almighty God had appointed *S. Peter* and his Successors in the See of *Rome*, the certain and undoubted Judges for ending all Controversies, that yet none of the Apostles or Primitive Doctors of the Christian Church, that labor'd so much against Schisms, Heresies, and Divisions, should ever so much as think of or mention such an effectual nay infallible Remedy against them all? One Appeal to the Bishop of *Rome* had put an End to all further Trouble, and certainly had God vested him with that Power over the whole Christian Church, they could never have been so stupid, as never to have taken any notice of it, And yet we find not the least mention of it for many hundred years, after the settlement of Christianity in the World. And perhaps the Bishops of *Rome* themselves had never thought of it, had it not been first put into their Heads by the Bishop of *Constantinople*, by whom it was (as I shall show in the sequel of this Discourse) first claimed. Some small glimmerings indeed we meet with of some honorary Preeminence or Dignity allowed to the Church of *Rome* upon the score of its being the Imperial City, and by reason of the great resort to it, of its being one of the most competent Witnesses of the true Tradition of Christianity: But that it should have any Jurisdiction over any other Churches out of its own Province, much more such an universal power over all Churches in the World as is now challeng'd, is a Notion so utterly strange and unknown to all Antiquity, that the bare silence of it alone is an irrefragable demonstration of the Novelty of the Pretence. But for the greater Evidence of this thing (which indeed is the first point of Controversie between us) I shall make bold as briefly as I can, to give Your Royal Highness a true and impartial account of the State of the Christian Church from the beginning: and then of the several and gradual Alterations that were by Ecclesiastical Constitutions made in it in after times:

and lastly how, and how late the Popes of *Rome* climb'd up to that infinite Authority, that they have for some Ages exercised, and still claim over the Christian Church. And when I have done all this, I may safely leave it to Your Royal Highnesses Princely Wisdom to judge, what Obligation You can have in Conscience to leave the Communion of the *Britannick* Church for that of *Rome*.

And in the first place, there is nothing more evident in all the Records of the Primitive Church, than that the Apostles and first Doctors of the Christian Faith modell'd the first Settlement of Churches according to the then present State and Division of the *Roman* Empire. For though our blessed Saviour settled the Supreme Government of his Church upon his holy Apostles and their Successors, yet he no where prescribed the bounds and limits of every Man's Jurisdiction, but left it, as indeed the Nature of the thing required, to Humane Prudence to divide the Provinces among themselves, as they should judge most convenient for the Advantage of their common Christianity. And accordingly we find from the very beginning, that they formed the Jurisdiction of Churches, according to the Civil Judicatures of the Empire; common Prudence directing them so to do, not only for the more speedy Propagation of Christianity by the resort of all People to the Metropolis of the Province, which they therefore constituted the Mother Church of it, but that whenever the Powers of the World should come into own Christianity, the better Correspondence might be maintain'd between the States, Civil and Ecclesiastical. And beside this by making the Head City of every Province the Metropolis of the Church within that Province, upon which the inferior Cities depended as the Centre of Communion, they thereby admirably secur'd the Unity of the whole Body, while every Episcopal Church exercised ordinary Jurisdiction within it self, but was bound, either in cases of great

Difficulty, or such as concerned the common Christianity, to have recourse to the Mother-Church.

And this was apparently, the Original of the Privilege and Preeminence of some Churches above others from the beginning; not that they ever pretended to any Sovereignty over them in their particular Jurisdictions, but only as the Centre of Ecclesiastical Unity, so as to decide Controversies, whenever any inferior Church appealed to them for their Advice, or to summon Councils, and preside over them in all Debates that concerned common Christianity. And that this Distribution of Provinces and Bishopricks was settled by the Apostles, seems evident from their own Writings, who every where describe the bounds of Churches, according to the Constitution of the Empire. Thus St. *Peter* directs his Epistle to the several Churches of the Christian *Jews*, with respect to so many several Provinces, *Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bythinia*, which as they were distinct Provinces in the Civil Division of the Empire, so were they from that time forward, so many distinct Provincial Sees, in the Communion of the Church. And nothing is more obvious in the Epistles of St. *Paul*, than that whenever he makes mention of any Church, he either calls it by the name of the Province it self, or the Metropolis or Head City of it. And as this design of conforming the Ecclesiastical State to the Civil, was first set on foot by the Apostles; so was it carefully prosecuted by their Successors, of which we have an eminent Instance in the Apostolical Canons, (which though they were not compiled by the Apostles themselves, yet they were by Apostolical Men, and such as immediately succeeded them) where it is decreed in the 34 Canon, That the Bishops of every Nation should acknowledge their Primate or Metropolitan, and honor him as their Head, and do nothing of moment in the Christian Church without his consent, nor he without theirs. Now that this was prescribed by the Apostles themselves, is evident in that, as this Canon was made a very short time after their Decease, so

it is not a new Law, but a Ratification of an old Custom, as indeed most of the Apostolical Canons seem to be. This was apparently the Constitution of the Christian Churches in all places of the Empire for the first three hundred years, or the whole interval of time from our Saviour to *Constantine*, that as every City was governed by its own Bishop, so was every Province by its own Metropolitan in his Synod of Bishops, of which there are many Instances in the Records of the Church, though I shall mention but one, as the most eminent of all, and that is, the several Synods that were called about the Paschal Controversie, not long after the time of the Apostles themselves: which as it was canvassed all the World over, so was it debated in so many Provincial Synods in each whereof the Metropolitan presided; in *Palestin*, *Theophilus* Bishop of *Cæsarea*; in *Pontus*, *Palma* Bishop of *Armastris*; in the Proconsular *Asia*, *Policrates* Bishop of *Ephesus*; in *Italy*, *Victor* Bishop of *Rome*; in *France*, *Irenæus* Bishop of *Lyons*; where every Synod judged for it self, and made its own Decrees, only *Victor* would have been meddling with the Church of *Asia*, though as far as appears from Records, not from any Authority he pretended to over it, but out of an intemperate Zeal for his own Opinion. But in this he is quickly check'd by the other Churches especially that of *France*, though of the same Perswasion with himself as to the matter of the Controversie, as he would not break the Unity of the Christian Church, which was to be maintained by no other means, than keeping up the Rights of every part of it. And this they admirably preserved by their communicatory Letters between Church and Church, so as no Member of one Church might be admitted to Communion with another without his Letters Testimonial, whereby it was so ordered, that who-soever was Excommunicate out of a particular Church, was shut out of the Church Catholick. Neither could a Bishop exercise any part of his Office in any other Diocese than his own, much less any other Province; and if he did, his own

Metropolitan was obliged to throw him out of Communion, and all other not to take him in. And this was the occasion of that sixth famous Canon of the first Council of *Nice* under *Constantine* the Great, that confirms to the three great Churches of *Rome*, *Alexandria*, and *Antioch*, their ancient Privileges and Preeminences. For though some learned Men both within and without the Church of *Rome* have been pleased to dispute that the Power here abetted in this Canon was Patriarchical, and not merely Metropolitan, yet that it was not Patriarchical is notoriously evident, because there is not the least mention of any such Office in all the Records of the Christian Church before the Council of *Calcedon*, which was above an hundred years after that of *Nice*, and yet this *Nicene* Canon only confirms the old, and accustomed Rights of Churches. And that this power was Metropolitan, is manifest, because it was made purely in pursuance of the fore-mentioned 34th Apostolical Canon, that requires the Subjection of all other inferior Bishops to their National or Provincial Bishops. The occasion of it was this, That *Meletius* Bishop of *Nicapolis*, within the Province of *Alexandria*, being deposed by his Metropolitan in a Synod of Bishops, as for divers other Crimes, so particularly for Sacrificing to Idols, notwithstanding that takes upon him to Ordain new Bishops himself, and so violates all the Preeminences of his Metropolitan, both by slighting his Censure, and invading his Power. Now complaining of being brought to the Council, they decree that the ancient Prerogatives of the Church of *Alexandria* over the inferior Churches within its Province, shall be kept as inviolable as those of *Rome*, and the same for *Antiochia*, and not only so in those great Sees, but in all other Provinces whatsoever, for so the Canon expresly runs, that not only at *Antiochia*, but that in all other *ἐπαρχίαι* or Provinces their ancient Privileges should be preserved. So that here is nothing peculiar to these three great Cities determined, because the Jurisdictions of all other Provinces that were in force at that

time, were as much ratified by the same Authority, and that was only this, That whatever Superiority greater Churches had by long Custom enjoyed over less, should stand confirmed for the time to come. And accordingly we find it decreed in the second Canon of the second general Council held at *Constantinople* as a clear Interpretation of the sixth Canon of *Nice*, that all Bishops should contain themselves within the known Circuit of their Jurisdiction, and not thrust themselves into other Diocesses, especially that the Bishop of *Alexandria* should be confin'd within the Diocese of *Ægypt*, and *Antiochia* within that of the East, and that the Churches of *Asia*, *Pontus* and *Thracia*, should enjoy the antient Power of Government within themselves, as well as those that had invaded their Right; this being the occasion of the Decree of the Council, that *Miletius* Bishop of *Antiochia*, had made *Gregory Nazienzen* Bishop of *Constantinople*, and *Peter* Bishop of *Alexandria* had done the same for *Maximus*, whereas *Constantinople* was in *Thrace*, that was a Diocese by it self in the Civil Division of the Empire, and therefore exempt from the Jurisdiction of those great Prelates, having the same supreme and independent Power within it self, as they had within their Provinces, as had also the lesser *Asia* and *Pontus*, which that they might not be enroach'd upon, or swallowed up by their Potent Neighbors, were here guarded and settled by the Decree of the Council in the Possession of their ancient Rights, against all future Invasions. And the same Decree we find in the next general Council held at *Ephesus*, Canon the eighth, upon the like occasion, the Bishop of *Antioch* taking upon him to Ordain in the Isle of *Cyprus*, that was an head Province by it self; This Usurpation therefore the Council severely censures and forbids, and withal orders that no Metropolitan should challenge any further extent of Jurisdiction that he could not prove by long and immemorial Prescription, left under the Pretence of their Priestly Office, they should introduce a secular Sovereignty into the Church.

Infinite are the Instances in the Records of the Church of the Metropolitan Supremacy of Churches, but these that I have already alledged are enough to shew the true Primitive and Apostolical Constitution of the Christian Church, which lasted the same even as to the bounds of Jurisdiction till the time of *Constantine* the Great. But the casting the Civil Government of the Empire into a new Model, gave occasion to the Church in pursuance of its Primitive Rule of conforming to the Civil Government, to add to the old Ecclesiastical Hierarchy; for the whole Empire being divided into thirteen Diocesses, each Diocese containing many Provinces, in all to the number of 120, and every Province several inferior Cities. And therefore as every City had its Judge for Civil Government, so had it its Bishop for Ecclesiastical, and every Province its President, so its Metropolitan; and every Diocese, which then contained several Provinces, its Lieutenant, so its Primate. Which indeed was nothing else, but raising up a superior Order of Metropolitans in conformity to the new Model of Civil Government; and therefore was at first nothing else but an honorary Title that gave them Precedency to the Metropolitans, but not Jurisdiction over them. For the very first time that we meet with any mention of any such Order in the Church is in the second Canon of the second general Council held at *Constantinople* under *Theodosius* the Great, where at the same time that it institutes this new kind of Dignity, it secures the old Jurisdiction of Metropolitans. So that notwithstanding this new Order was brought over their heads in conformity to the Empire, yet was every Metropolitan Church to be governed by it self, and its own Synod, in the same manner as it was accustomed of old, and was confirmed by the decree of the Council of *Nice*. Which Council positively asserts the Supremacy of Power, to every Metropolitan within his own Province. And therefore all the Preeminence of this new Order of Men above them could consist in nothing but Title and Dignity. And it is sufficiently known to all that know

any thing of the ancient Records of the Church that they had their *πρεσβεία τῆς τιμῆς* their Preeminences of Respect, and *πρεσβεία τῆς ἰξείας*, their Preeminences of Power and Authority. And it was usual upon particular occasions to give the former without conferring the latter, as the great Council of *Nice* gave to the Church of *Jerusalem*, Metropolitan Honor, because it was the Mother of all Churches, without giving it any Metropolitan Jurisdiction, for that was reserved entirely for the Bishop of *Cæsarea*, which after the Destruction of *Jerusalem* had been made the Civil Metropolis of *Palestin* by the Emperor *Vespasian*, so this present Council of *Constantinople*, of which we are speaking in the Canon next following that we last mentioned, gives the *Πρεσβεία τῆς τιμῆς*, the Preeminencies of Honor, next to the Bishop of *Rome*, to the Bishop of *Constantinople*, because *Constantinople* was new *Rome*, and yet gives it nothing of Metropolitan Power, because it expressly confirms the old Rights of the three Metropolitans of *Asia*, *Pontus*, and *Thrace*, to which it belonged, in the Canon immediately foregoing. In short, all the Privileges of the ancient Metropolitans were divided into two sorts, those of Honour and those of Power; the former the Fathers of this Council gave to the Bishop of *Constantinople* out of Complement to the new Imperial City, but neither could nor would give any thing of the latter; because that was not to be done without violating and alienating the real Rights and Priviledges of other Men. But yet however, when once they had got an higher Title, it easily made way to advance themselves to an higher Power, insomuch that in a short time after he swallow'd up all the three Metropolitans of *Thrace*, *Pontus*, and *Asia*, into his own Jurisdiction.

And now this superior Order of Primates to Metropolitans, being thus set up by Ecclesiastical Constitution, it in a little time made way for the Patriarchical Dignity; the Title whereof was at first borrowed from the wandering Jews of those times, who wherever they settled in any considerable Number, after

their dispersion from *Jerusalem*, chose a supreme Governour, whom they stil'd their Patriarch; but about the fourth Century, or somewhat after, this Title and Authority was taken from the Jews, and applyed to the new *supra*-Metropolitan Bishops, that it seems as yet had obtain'd no peculiar Name in the Christian Church. Thus *Socrates*, the Historian of the Church at that time, reckons up *Nectarius* of *Constantinople*, *Helladius* of *Pontus*, *Gregory* of *Nyssa*, *Ottreius* of *Melitina*, *Amphilochius* of *Iconium*, *Optimus* of the *Pisidian Antioch*, *Timotheus* of *Alexandria*, *Pelagius* of *Laodicea*, *Diodorus* of *Tarsus*, and many more. Tho in a little time the Title came to be appropriated to the five most eminent Sees, *Rome*, *Constantinople*, *Alexandria*, *Antioch*, and *Jerusalem*; and they were made superior, not only in Title, but in Jurisdiction to all Metropolitans within their Diocess, because it seems, those Cities being the five chief Cities in the World, had their Claims to higher Dignity in the civil Government than all others. *Rome*, the Seat of the Empire; *Alexandria*, the head City of *Africk*, and Seat of the Great *Ptolomys*; *Antiochia*, Queen of the East, and Seat of the Great *Seleucus* and his Successors; *Jerusalem*, the Mother City of all Christian churches; and *Constantinople*, the new *Rome* of the Empire, that had at that time over-topt old *Rome* in Greatness and Authority. Now the Rights that were peculiar to these Patriarchs above Metropolitans, were these,

First, that whenever they presided, they had many Metropolitans under their Jurisdiction.

Secondly, that they only had right to ordain the Metropolitans within their own Patriarchate, as Metropolitans had Bishops within their own Province.

Thirdly, that as Metropolitans had power to call the Bishops of their Province to Synods, so had Patriarchs to call their Metropolitans.

Fourthly, that they were the supreme Judicature within their own Patriarchates, no farther appeal being to be made from a Patriarch.

And thus was the Church for a long time govern'd, every Patriarch enjoying supreme Power within his own Precincts, and no farther; insomuch that the Rule was adopted into the imperial Law, *A patriarcha non datur Appellatio*; No Appeal from a Patriarch; and yet that alone is a plain Bar to the Supremacy of the Pope, or any other, over the whole Christian Church.

But then, as for the Bounds of Jurisdiction, they still follow'd the Division of the State; and there it so happen'd, that the Bishop of *Rome*, tho' for the sake of the old imperial City, he had Precedency in Honour above all the rest, had one of the narrowest Jurisdictions of all, his Patriarchate extending, at the farthest, not beyond *Italy* and the adjacent Islands; tho' according to the true account, it was not at first above half so great, *Italy* being divided into two Parts under two Governours, one residing at *Rome*, who governed the Suburbicarian Provinces, so call'd, because of their lying nearest to the City; the other at *Milain*, who govern'd the more remote Parts. And after the same manner was the Government of the Church divided into the *Roman* Diocess, that was subject to the Bishops of *Rome*; and the *Italic* Diocess, of which *Milain* was the Head; over which we do not find that the Bishop of *Rome*, in antient time, ever pretended any Patriarchal Supremacy; nay, on the contrary, that *S. Ambrose* was ordained in the Year of our Lord 555. Bishop thereof, by a Synod of Bishops of the *Italic* Diocess, which he could not have been, had the Bishop of *Rome* been his Patriarch, the power of Ordination being the chief Branch of Patriarchical Jurisdiction. But how great or little soever was the Circuit of his Patriarchate, it was limited within certain Bounds, as the other Patriarchates were. And as the Patriarchs were Supreme within their own Diocess, so were most of the Metropolitans within their own Province: For tho' where Patriarchs were erected, the Metropolitans, within the compass of their Patriarchate, were subject to them, yet all the other Metro-

politans of the Christian Church enjoy'd their own antient Supremacy, and continued, as they were before, Head-Churches, exercising Supreme Power within themselves: Of which there were great Numbers in the World, and some of as large Jurisdiction as the Patriarchates, especially in *Asia*. But as for the Patriarchate of *Rome*, it never extended its Power beyond *Italy*, and its adjacent Islands: And therefore it is very observable, that the Writers of the Church of *Rome*, care not that it should be known to the Christian World: So that hereafter, all their Brags of Universal Pastorship, when they come to make it out, their Manuscripts still fail them. *Carolus à Sancto Paulo* hath taken most Pains of any in this Argument, and hath done well enough in other Parts; but when he comes to the Church of *Rome*, there his Manuscript is so worn out and defective, that it was not worth publishing.

Now doth not this look oddly, that their Books should fail them thus, only in their own Cause; and doth it not rather give suspicion, that themselves are too well aware, that they would do them no real kindness. However, it is a very preposterous thing, for a Man to pretend to a Title to a great Estate by virtue of some antient Writings, and yet when he comes to try his Title, should only plead, that indeed such Writings there once were, but that they are now so impair'd that they are not legible. And yet, this is the very Case of the Church of *Rome* here. All Christendom, at least the Western Empire, ought to be subject to him as their Patriarch. Why so? Because he ever was so. How doth that appear? By the antient *Notitiæ* of the Church. Produce them. So we can for all the other Patriarchates, but those that concern the Church of *Rome* are unhappily lost. Are they so? Then you have lost the Evidence of your Title, and for ought you do, or can know, never had any.

But instead of this shifting and prevaricating that we meet

with in the Writers of the Church of *Rome*, there is not long since published by a very learned and a very honest Gentleman of our own Church and Nation, an accurate Description of all the Patriarchates, out of an ancient and authentic manuscript, which reckons to the Patriarchate of *Rome*, only *Italy* and the adjacent Islands; but not a syllable of *Spain* or *Germany*, or *Gaul*, or *England*, or any other of the large Territories in Europe; which, if they had belonged to this Patriarchate at that time, could never have been omitted in this exact Catalogue, that hath so carefully set down every petty City in *Italy*. Mr. Beveridge.

In this posture stood the Government of the Church for many Years, without any considerable Alteration: For tho some of the Bishops of *Rome* would have been usurping upon the Churches of *Africa*, by pretending to a Right of Appeals from them, they were repulsed with great Shame and Dishonour. And were it not that I am unwilling to trouble Your Highness with any more Disputes, than what concerns our own Church with the Church of *Rome*, there is nothing more easie than to shew, that this Controversie with the *African* Churches is a notorious Instance of both the Frauds of the *Roman* Church, and of other Churches abhorring his remotest aim at any Supremacy. But tho he missed his design at that time, his Successors were ever after watchful of all other Opportunities to compass it: And to that purpose they happen'd to have two very lucky Advantages; the first was the fatal Division of the Empire into East and West, from whence *S. Gregory Nazienzen*, a Man both wise and pious, foretold a more fatal Division in the Church; and accordingly, in a little time it came to pass, that the whole Body of it was divided into East and West, as well as the Empire; and the Division was quickly heightened by the mutual Jealousies of the Emperors, who would not suffer the Bishops under one Government, to repair to Councils conven'd under the other: And that in a short time grew to alienations of Minds; so that they kept

their Councils apart, and if any Bishop of the East repair'd to a Synod of the West, and so for the contrary, He was looked upon as a Betrayer of his own Church. And this was the occasion of the after-greatness of the Church of *Rome* in these Western Parts; because that alone of all the five Patriarchates happen'd to go along with the Western Empire. For having no Competitor for the Supremacy, or so much as the equality of Power in the Western Church, it was no hard matter to advance it self to any degree of Power that it pleased to challenge, especially when the Western Churches were forward enough of themselves to advance its Dignity, for the Honor of their own Patriarchate, in opposition to that of *Constantinople*; which being the Seat of the Empire, and enjoying the Favor of the Emperors, soon over-top'd all the other Eastern Patriarchates; so that all the Competition that remain'd was between *Rome* and *Constantinople*: Till at last in the Sixth Century, *John* Bishop of *Constantinople* first obtained of *Mauritius* the Emperor, the Title of Universal Bishop, which very Title was quickly and vehemently oppos'd by *Gregory* Bishop of *Rome*, as a Piece of Antichristian Pride and Insolence. But *Mauritius* being murdered by *Phocas*, and *Cyriacus* then Bishop of *Constantinople*, being fallen under the new Tyrant's Disfavor, for declaring against his execrable Murder, the Bishop of *Rome* seizes that Opportunity to flatter and caress him in all his Wickedness; for which Civility the Usurper takes the Title of Universal Bishop, and settles it upon the See of *Rome*. And when once they had obtained the Title, they resolv'd to make it good, by gaining the Power too. Tho by what degrees they encroach'd upon other Churches, it is not at all to my purpose here to represent, it is enough to have shewn the late Original of the Title, which was never given them till above 600 Years after our Saviour.

This then being the true and real state of all the Christian Church, the Conclusion plainly makes it self, as to any *English* Christian's Obligation to communicate with the Church of

England or the Church of *Rome*. For as it is the indispensable Duty of every Man to joyn in visible Communion with the Society of the Church, so is the first visible Society of the Church settled in the Communion of the Bishop of the Diocess. And thence evident it is, that the first Duty of every Christian, as to external Communion with the Church, is to joyn in Communion with the Bishop of the Place where he lives. For if our Saviour settled the Government of the Church in the Apostles, and if the Episcopal Order succeeded them in their Office, then hath every Bishop Apostolical Authority. And then is every Christian Man bound to submit to his Bishop, as to an Apostle, from whence the Bishop derives the Succession of his Order of Authority. So that the Episcopal Society is the first visible Communion of the Christian Church, and a Man becomes a Member of the Church-Catholic, by joyning in visible Communion with the Church Episcopal; for it is impossible to be a Member of the Universal Church, without being first a Member of some particular Church, both because the Universal Church is made up of the Combination of particular Churches, and because there is no way of Communicating in the Offices of Religion, but under some limited Societies. The Bishop then in every Diocess is, as Successor in the Apostolical Office, Head of the Communion within his own Diocess, and for that Reason, the ordinary Judge and Guide to all Christians within his Jurisdiction. So false is that Calumny, of which the Romanists pretend to make so much Advantage against the Constitution of the Church of *England*, that She doth not so much as pretend to any living Judge of Faith: For what Judge She owns, as to the Catholic Church, I may shew in its proper place. But as for every particular Christian, She commits him to the Care of his Bishop, as his ordinary Guide and Governour in the things that concern his Salvation.

Now if this be the settled Constitution of the Christian Church, as it was from the beginning, I cannot understand

how any Christian can leave the Communion of his own Bishop, to communicate with any other, without being guilty of Schism against the Church that he lives in.

For tho he may advise with any other Bishop about the Welfare of his Soul, and follow his Advice as a Friend; yet by the original Constitution of the Church, none but his own Bishop can have any authoritative Commission for his Guidance and Instruction. So easie is the Answer to that solemn Question, Who is the living Judge and Guide of your Faith? For if it be put to a private Christian, it is plain, that from the Constitution of the Catholic Church, as it was settled by the Apostles, that it is the Bishop under whom he lives, to whom God hath committed the ordinary means of the Salvation of his Flock, and promised to be assistant to him and the Successors in his Office to the end of the World.

This is the first visible Society or Communion of a Christian Church, and was evidently laid and designed by our Blessed Saviour in his Institution of the Episcopal Office. The next is founded upon Apostolical Prescription, and that is the Association of the Bishops of a Province with their Metropolitan; for in the Plantation of Churches, as they cut out the Communion of Christians into particular Bishopricks, so they again united the several Bishopricks of every Nation into one Communion under one Head; who as he is superior to every single Bishop within his Resort; so is he in his Synod of Bishops Supreme Judge of all Controversies within the Province. These Provincial Assemblies, I have shewn, were the highest Power of the Primitive Church in all Places; neither indeed (setting aside the Promise of divine Assistance to them) is there need of any further Appeal upon humane accounts; for the Controversies in Christianity are not so monstrously difficult, but that a competent Number of grave and sober Men, may determine well enough, without calling together all the wise Men in the World; and if Twenty are not sufficient to decide any Controversie, I know not what Number

is. And as this was the standing ordinary Jurisdiction in the first Ages of the Church, so the Christians of those Times suppos'd the means of Salvation sufficiently secur'd in such Hands, and certainly, that which was sufficient to them, is so to us.

And as this was the highest Government in the Church for the first three Hundred Years, so those more diffusive Assemblies, that were afterward summon'd, and that we call general Councils, were really of the same nature; for as a Provincial Assembly was national, so were these Imperial, and therefore subject but to one civil Government. So that as the Empire was indeed but one great Kingdom, so was the Church in it but one great Province, they being both under the same extent of Government. And this is the true Use of Councils, whether greater or less, by the Decree of the Representatives of Churches to bind those Churches that they represent. And that is but a reasonable thing in all Societies, that they should be determin'd by their Governours, especially when they are set over them by the appointment of God himself. Neither is it so very material, how large Councils are, as to their Obligation; for whether they be greater or less, they equally bind all that are involv'd within the compass of their Authority. And tho there may be greater Presumption in the Decrees of the greater Councils, yet are they for the most part meetings rather of Grandeur than Necessity, but especially those that we call General Councils, are now so difficult to be summoned, that they are become almost impracticable. Whilst indeed the *Roman* Empire stood entire, it was not so hard to convene them, yet even then was it a Business of so much Time and Charges as made it too burthensom to be born, by any thing less than the *Roman* Greatness, and that too in very rare and extraordinary Cases.

But if so, it could never then be intended for the standing and perpetual Government of the Christian Church. But now that *Christendom* is divided into so many civil Governments,

the Difficulties are so great and so many, through the various Interests of Princes, either to promote or hinder it, as to render it next to impossible. Tho if it could be fairly had, the Church of *England* would not refuse her Concurrence in it, both as being assured of the Goodness of her Cause, in that she owns no other Rule of her Reformation, but the Practice of the Primitive and Apostolick Church, and as well knowing that the greatest part of the Church of *Rome*, would as willingly rid themselves of those Abuses that have been put upon them by the Court of *Rome*, as we have done. And this the *Spanish* and *French* Bishops had carried through, even in that packed Council of *Trent*, had not the Pope poured in a number of Titular *Italian* Bishops to over-vote them. But it is none of my present Business to rake into the Faults of the Church of *Rome*; 'tis enough to my purpose to vindicate the Communion of the Church of *England*. Granting therefore the Church of *Rome* to be a pure and uncorrupted Church, yet because it is a Foreign Church, no Man can be under any Obligation, to leave the Communion of his own to joyn with that.

In this one point I fix the State of this whole Address, and say nothing at present to persuade any Person that lives within the Communion of the Church of *Rome*, to forsake that; my only Concernment is with the Members of the Church of *England*, to keep them to their own Church, according to the Rule from the Beginning. If it be objected, That the Church of *England* be a narrow Thing in comparison of the *Catholick Church*; I answer, That the Church of *England* doth not pretend to be the Church Catholick, but only a Member of it: and in that Station it is as large a Church as any were in the Primitive Times. Neither then did the Communion of the *Catholick Church* consist in an Union of all Churches, under one Head, but in brotherly Love and Correspondence with one another: and for that the Church of *England* is ready to offer it to the Church of *Rome*, or any other, upon the old Con-

dition, that they will give her leave to admonish them of their Faults and Miscarriages, as Churches did one another of old. But this is a Civility that the Church of *Rome* is too proud to accept of; it must be all Churches, or it will be none at all. It allows no Equals in Communion, and condescends to no Treaty but upon Terms of absolute Subjection: neither is it content to enslave all its Neighbors to its own imperious Decrees, unless they be submitted to as the infallible Dictates of God himself. Now this seems too much for men to swallow that have any sense or care of their Salvation: for by this means the whole Faith of *Christendom* shall be left entirely at the Disposal of one single Person, and the Pope alone shall be the whole *Catholick Church*. This I say seems too much to venture upon one single Security, especially unless it were confirmed by some clearer Commission than those remote and obscure Texts of Scripture that are alledg'd for the Papal Supremacy. But to return from the Pope to the Church; As the first Constitution of Churches was conform'd to the civil Government, so indeed no other is practicable. For upon that Supposition, that Christianity makes no Abatement as to the civil Rights of Men, especially of Princes; provincial Churches cannot be justly extended beyond the Dominion of the State; because in that case if Metropolitans or Patriarchs have power to call their Subject-Bishops to Councils, the King's Subjects may be summoned out of his Dominions without his leave, which is not only to diminish, but to destroy his Power over his own Subjects; for when they are out of his Dominions they are none of his. So that the very State of Christianity naturally implies, as it would not be inconsistent with it self, the Conformity of the Church to the State in its bounds of Jurisdiction. And this is the true meaning of that known Saying of one of the Fathers, *That the Church is in the Commonwealth, and not the Commonwealth in the Church*; for the Civil Government being first constituted, and the Church being afterwards taken into it, it must for that Reason keep it self within it, other-

wise it breaks down its old Bounds of Settlement. But beside that the Nature of Government confines every Church within the Prince's Dominions in which it is; so it is highly convenient, if not absolutely necessary, to the due and effectual Exercise of Discipline, that the Society of the Church be confined within some moderate Circuit of Government: for great Governments are slow and unweildy in their Motions; the very distance of Place makes all Proceedings uneasie, and Determinations difficult; and of this our Nation was sufficiently sensible, when all Ecclesiastical Appeals were carried to *Rome*; the Journey was tedious and chargable; and by reason of the distance of Witnesses, and other Inconveniences, Proceedings infinitely dilatory, I might say endless, Causes depending there from Age to Age: this is too notorious, from the sad and open Complaints of those Times; and I my self enjoy a small Office in this Church, wherein my Predecessors had a Suit for a Privilege belonging to it, hanging in the Court of *Rome* for some hundreds of Years, till the very time of the Dissolution of the Pope's Power.

These are intolerable Grievances to Mankind, and heavier Burthens than were ever imposed upon them by the most barbarous civil Government. If therefore his Holiness will challenge a Supremacy over all Christian Churches, let him not exercise his Jurisdiction in ordinary Causes, that is contrary to all the Canons of the Church and Quiet of the World. We will not contend with him about his Patriarchical Preheminence, if that would give him Satisfaction, tho we know he hath not the least pretence of any claim to it over us. But when under that Pretext he takes to himself the Office of Universal Bishop, that is, to be all the Bishops of Christendom, 'tis that exorbitant Usurpation that is not our Complaint alone, but the universal Complaint of Christendom it self. And therefore if he would keep within his Patriarchical Bounds and Privileges, which yet he enjoys not by divine Right but humane Institution, we would give him all that Respect and Reverence that is due to

the Primacy of his See. But if instead of Brotherly Communion with us, nothing less will serve his Turn than absolute Dominion over us, and if Submission to that must be made our only Title to the Catholick Church, as if we had no Right to Christianity but by Subjection to the Bishop of *Rome*: these cannot but seem too hard Terms of Communion; or if they are not, it is enough that they are unwarrantable; or if they are not so, it is enough that they are not necessary. And that they are not, is evident from the Premises, where I have demonstrated, that the first Duty of every Christian, as a Member of the Christian Church, is to joyn Communion with his own Bishop, as the first Political Society of a Church. And that the next is a Combination of all the Bishops within one civil Government under one Metropolitan. That this Polity was set on foot by the Apostles themselves, and every where put in practice in the Primitive Church; that the Ecclesiastical Province cannot extend beyond the Precincts of the Civil without infringing the Authority of Sovereign Princes, and therefore, that no foreign Prelate can have or exercise any Ecclesiastical Power over his Majesty's Subjects, because that would give them Power to command them out of his Dominions: So plainly doth the Nature of Civil Government set Bounds to Ecclesiastical Societies; which one thing, if duely consider'd, must cut off all Claims of Papal Supremacy over this Church, because, by virtue of it he would have such a kind of Power over His Majesty's Subjects, as the Christian Religion doth by no means allow any its Officers. And as this was the Settlement of National Churches from the beginning of Christianity, so is it the present constitution of the Church of *England*, that is or would be govern'd by its Metropolitan in his Synod of Bishops subject to one Civil Government.

And as this is all the Political Society that a Christian Church is capable of, so all the Communion that it can have with other Churches, consists in brotherly Love and mutual Correspondence. And this way was the Christian Church, in

the first Ages of it, preserv'd in competent Peace and Unity. And whatever other Power was afterward erected in the Church, was founded upon humane Institution, and therefore is alterable in it self, at least not necessary to the Being of a Christian Church. Of this nature were the several Patriarchates; so that whatever Power the Bishop of *Rome* can challenge by virtue of his Patriarchical Dignity, is of an humane Original, and so not necessary to the Constitution of a Christian Church.

Nay, tho he once had such a Power, yet upon the Dissolution of that Civil and Ecclesiastical Government that gave it him, it ceases with it. For it was granted him by the Emperors, and Imperial Councils, and so extended only to the Subjects of the Empire; for they could not give him any Power in other Princes Dominions. The Empire therefore being broken into many independent Kingdoms, the Patriarchate dissolves with it, because otherwise a Foreigner would have an Authority in all Princes Dominions to the Prejudice of the Sovereign Power, which is the first thing that Christianity disclaims, and therefore is principally inconsistent with it. But however if the Pope have his old Patriarchical Power still, he had it not of old over us, and therefore cannot have it now, and though he have, yet it is but of Humane Institution. And then we are a true Church without it, and if we are, then can no Man be obliged in Conscience to forsake the Communion of this Church, that is settled as all other Churches were by the Apostles, to join with one another, only for the sake of some alteration made in it by Humane Authority.

And thus having truly and impartially laid before Your Royal Highness the State of the Christian Church, especially as to the prime Controversie between the Church of *England* and the Church of *Rome* concerning the Guide of Faith, I have so great confidence in the Power of Truth, over an upright and generous Mind, as to flatter my self with some Hopes

of settling Your Royal Highnesses Conscience in the Communion of this truly ancient and Apostolical Church. Nay, I hope not only to see You a Zealous Son, but an eminent Patron of the best, but most abused Church in the Christian World, so as to be the principal Author of rescuing her from those horrid Indignities and Oppressions that she daily suffers from the Barbarity of popular Atheism and Profaneness.

But whatever the Success of this small Endeavor may prove, it is not a little Satisfaction that I reap, from having done my Duty to Your Royal Highness and mine own Conscience. For I have no other design than to promote the Salvation of Your Soul and my own. But though I am so fully conscious to my self of mine own Integrity, yet when I reflect upon what I have done, I blush and am confounded in my self at the Presumption of obtruding my crude Thoughts upon the Wisdom of a Mighty Prince, and therefore had utterly stifled them after they were finished, had not the great Fame of Your Highnesses Princely Candor emboldned me to present them, as being at least secure of a gracious Pardon to a well-meant Presumption.

I intended, when I had shewn the No-Necessity of Communion with the Church of *Rome* upon his own Terms, because its Pretences are a manifest Usurpation upon the Christian Church, in the next place to have represented the gross Abuse that his Holiness puts upon Christianity, by pretending some way or other, directly or indirectly, to a temporal Power over Sovereign Princes; whereas to pretend to it, by virtue of any Power deriv'd from our Saviour, only over Subjects, is no less than Blasphemy against him; but over Princes, it adds to that Rebellion. (So that how many Notes soever there may be of a true Church, this is an infallible Note of a false one). But then considering with my self that Your Royal Highness is the second Branch of an Imperial Family, and Heir to several Crowns, I thought my self obliged, according to my Resolution declar'd in the beginning, to wave

the Advantage of this Argument: because Your Highness is here a Party, and it concerns Your worldly Interest more nearly than Your Conscience, to which alone I have made bold to make this Address, and in it I assure my self, that all the Kingdoms in the World would weigh nothing. And therefore without giving Your Royal Highness any farther trouble, more than once more of craving Pardon for this great Presumption;

I shall submit the Consideration of the Premises to Your serious and impartial Thoughts, and daily pray for Your Happiness both here and hereafter, and while I live shall ever be

*Your Royal Highnesses
Most Humble and
Devoted Servant.*

FINIS.



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