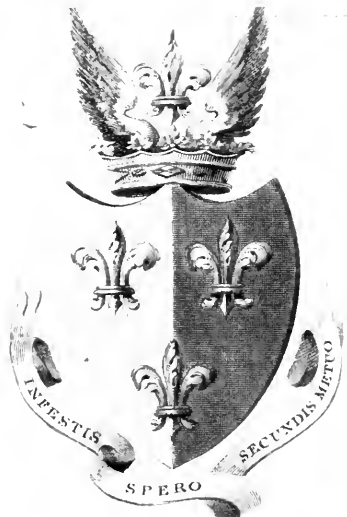




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Frank Bedford

1870



REFLECTIONS  
UPON *Whitaker's*  
Church-Government:

OR, AN  
ENQUIRY

Into the  
Nature and Extent of the  
Several POWERS

Belonging to the

CHURCH,

AS A

*Religious SOCIETY,*

Both before and after its

UNION with the STATE.

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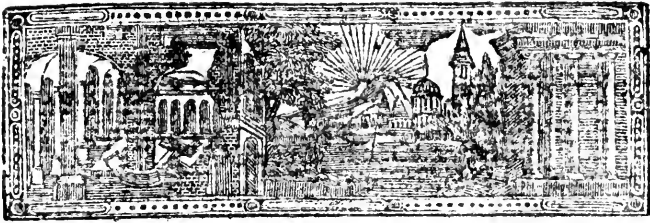
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L O N D O N :

Printed for R. DODSLEY, at *Tully's* Head  
in *Pall-Mall*. 1745.

The Reader is desired to correct the following  
**E R R A T A**, occasion'd by the Author's  
 Distance from the Press,

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>P</b> Age 49. l. 23. for <i>ot</i> read <i>got</i>.</p> <p>p. 54. l. 16. for his read <i>its</i>.</p> <p>p. 55. for Rules and Measures read Rule and Measure.</p> <p>p. 67. l. 15, 16. for ingenious read ingenuous.</p> <p>p. 72. l. 13. for coincident r. coinciding.</p> <p>p. 83. l. 16. for them read him.</p> <p>p. 87. l. 8. for Being r. Object</p> <p>p. 96. l. 12. <i>es</i>er done read or omitted.</p> <p>p. 110. before assemble add and.</p> <p>p. 114. l. 19. <i>es</i>er Happiness add and Misery.</p> <p>p. 128. l. 25. for Purity r. Piety.</p> <p>p. 148. l. 10. for work read produce.</p> <p>p. 154. l. 17. read constitutes.</p> <p>p. 160. l. 18. read Offices.</p> <p>p. 165. l. 13. for their regular read the irregular.</p> <p>p. 177. l. 18. after that read <i>if</i>.</p> <p>p. 178. l. 4. for in read to, and l. 18. a Comma after degree.</p> <p>p. 185. l. 11. <i>dele</i> they are fitted to.</p> <p>p. 189. l. 2. for on read <i>no</i>.</p> <p>p. 190. l. 18. before mind add human.</p> <p>p. 192. l. 21. for Things read Being.</p> | <p>p. 195. l. 11. for publick read Man's.</p> <p>p. 209. l. 23. read possess'd of.</p> <p>p. 238. l. 10. for Disorders r. Discords.</p> <p>p. 270. l. 10. for national read natural.</p> <p>p. 277. l. 10. for in read of; and l. 21. before by add and.</p> <p>p. 296. l. 23. for Interests read Rights.</p> <p>p. 298. l. 10, 11. for Truth read Utility, and for Utility read Truth; and l. 15. for Favourites read Favourers.</p> <p>p. 312. l. 11. for civil r. evil.</p> <p>p. 316. l. 18. <i>dele</i> So.</p> <p>p. 320. l. 20. read Deviation.</p> <p>p. 338. l. 15. for great r. greater.</p> <p>p. 372. l. 10, 11. for his Existence read it.</p> <p>p. 375. l. 23, 24. put a Comma after proposed, and <i>dele</i> Comma after Appointment; and l. 25. <i>dele</i> of.</p> <p>p. 377. l. 5. <i>dele</i> civil.</p> <p>p. 381. l. 9. for Reasons read Introduction.</p> <p>p. 385. l. 6. <i>dele</i> could.</p> <p>p. 390. l. 18. for Reception r. Introduction.</p> <p>p. 393. l. 23. for learning read leaping.</p> <p>p. 476. l. 21. for ann read and.</p> |
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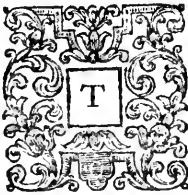
# REFLECTIONS

UPON

CHURCH-GOVERNMENT, &c.

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§. I.



THE general Complaint in all Ages of the World has ever been, that the Race of Men, then existing in it, were more debauch'd in their Morals, and run greater Lengths in Wickedness, than any that have already gone before them; and that Vice was never known to be more countenanc'd, or to be held in greater Credit and Esteem than it was at such particular Time; which Complaint, if now made, as it every-where is, and there be any thing of Truth in it, as un-

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doubt-

undoubtedly there must, otherwise it would not be so general, is, we presume, owing to the Little of Religion there is left amongst us; and to that visible Neglect and Disregard every where shewn and paid to moral Principles; and to all the great, important Branches of Virtue; none of which, notwithstanding the fine airy things ascrib'd to them, can, in Fact, be of any further Significancy, with respect to their Influence upon the Bulk of Mankind, than as they are founded on, and supported by the Aid of Religion. For upon Enquiry, as well into the Reason of the thing, as into the common History of all the various, distinct Nations, of which we have had Accounts transmitted to us, it will be ever found, that the Wickedness, and its immediate Consequence, Misery, of every particular Kingdom, will be greater or less in Proportion to the different Degrees of Irreligion subsisting in it, or, rather, in Proportion to its different Effects upon the Members of it. But what will surprize every intelligent, considerate Person, is, that Men should be publicly taught, how that they might live securely, either in, or out of Society, without the restraining Principle of Religion taking any hold of their Minds;

and



and that all Kinds of civil Establishments of Religion are direct Invasions of Mens Rights ; injurious in a high Degree to their civil Interests ; with much more to the like Purpose and Effect. These, we say, are Doctrines of a modern Growth, and but of late Invention. It must be own'd these extraordinary Doctrines, we call them extraordinary, upon account of the extraordinary Consequences, if generally adher'd to, they have necessary Tendencies to produce, meet with such particular Marks of Applause, as if the Truth of them were of the last Importance to Mankind ; highly assistant to the Support of civil Government ; most benign and friendly to its Interests ; and conducive to Man's chief and ultimate End. But however some Moderns may think, those great and wise Men, the Ancients, were, we may be sure, of a quite different Opinion, when we find them, as we do find by reading the particular Histories of those People, all, to a Man, concurring to make Laws in the first Place to keep up the Reverence due to religious Ordinances and Institutions : Well knowing, as being Persons intimately acquainted with human Nature, that taking the best possible Care of the Affairs

of Religion, was the most effectual Way, both to promote, and to secure, the temporal Peace, Quiet, and Happiness of Mankind. The outward Actions of Men being ever found in Fact conformable to the inward Cast of their Minds in respect of Matters of religious Belief and Opinion.

The Order we intend to observe in the following Treatise is, 1st to shew, by a Series of Deductions, drawn from plain, undisputed Principles of Reason, the absolute Necessity of the Belief of a governing Principle at the Head of the Whole to Man's present State of Being here, or, in other Words, that there could be no Possibility of Mens subsisting long together without the Influence of Religion: And we will endeavour to remove an Objection made against this Necessity, which is, that human Laws, rightly made, and duly executed, will, of themselves, fitly enough supply the Place of Religion. 2dly we shall shew, that Religion, necessarily, and by itself, composes a Society distinct from, and independent on the Civil. In which Section we shall enumerate in the Order in which they arise from one another, the Powers, Rights, &c. belonging to the Church as a religious Society. In the  
third

third Section we shall investigate the Motives that induced the Church and State to enter into Union with each other. And then we shall go on to deduce the several Rights, Duties, and Obligations consequent upon, and arising to each other from this Union. And this, with a few Words upon the Nature and Origin of Ecclesiastical Courts, concludes our first Part. The Second begins with an account of the State of the Jewish, and afterwards of the Christian Church; and examines how far each coincides with, and is conformable to, the general Idea laid down and established before, and by which the Enquiry has all along been conducted. Whether they enforce and corroborate, or weaken and destroy one another.

2. Agreeably to the Method propos'd to be observ'd in the following Treatise, the first Section begins with an Attempt to demonstrate from the plain Principles of Reason, that the Belief of a God, his Providence, and a future State of Rewards and Punishments, is indispensably necessary to Man's safe and comfortable Continuance in Being; or, in other Words, that he cannot be secure, nor, if he could, would he be able to live happily, with-

out such an affecting Sense of the Deity having Place in the World. To make out this, it will be proper to shew, that as every Effect must necessarily have a Cause, so every Action as necessarily supposes some Motive leading to it; and that the Motive or exciting Reason to Action, can be nothing but the Prospect of procuring Pleasure, or of avoiding Pain, we shall now demonstrate:

3. In every reasonable Action, or in every Action worthy the Pursuit of a rational Creature, some End must be intended; or there are certain previous Reasons determining us to the Performance of it; because from not Acting to Acting, or *vice versa*, there is a Change. And wherever there is a Change, there must be some Cause of it. The Cause of Change in the present Case, can only be a Desire of Change; and the Cause of that Desire, a Prospect of obtaining Pleasure, or of avoiding Pain, of some Kind or other. For whilst the Mind of any rational sensible Being neither receives, nor is under Apprehension of receiving, Pleasure or Pain, from any particular Action, she must be perfectly easy and indifferent about it. And whilst she continues in such a State of Indifferency, no Change will follow. Be-

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cause,

cause, as we observ'd, there can be no Change without a Cause, *i. e.* without a Desire of that Change. And no Change can be desired, because all Desire is towards some attainable Good, or avoidable Evil; Desire being only an Affection of the Mind consequent upon, and arising from, an Apprehension of possessing a Means of Happiness, or of avoiding a Means of Misery. Hence as there can be no Action without a Change, no Change without a Cause, that is, Desire and no Desire, without some apprehended attainable Good, in which it terminates, and from whence it arises; so when the Mind feels no present, and has no Prospect of obtaining any future Good, no Things, or Consideration of Things, can give her the least Concern, or influence her at all, either to Motion or Rest; and therefore nothing but Pleasure or Pain, or the Causes of them, can be any Reasons for, or Motives to Action. Hence these Corollaries.

4. Corol. 1. The Strength of Motives determining us to the Pursuit of any Action, or, which is the same, (since there can be no Motive without an Obligation, nor Obligation without a Motive, both being evidently founded on a View to Happiness,) the Degree of

our Obligation to such Action will be ever in a direct Ratio of the Quantity of Happiness suppos'd to accompany it in its real Existence.

5. Corol. 2. If nothing but Pleasure and Pain, or the suppos'd probable Causes of them, can be any exciting Reason to Action or Forbearance; and if the Degrees of our Obligation to any particular Action, be in Proportion to the Quantity of Good apprehended to be obtain'd, or to the Quantity of Evil apprehended to be avoided, by it: The Consequence is, that there can be no possible Motive or Excitement to any Action, when pure Pain and Misery are conceiv'd not meerly as the probable or likely, but as the proper and genuine Consequence of such Action; unless a Man can think Misery more eligible than Happiness, that is, can reverse the Order of Nature, and make himself a different Sort of Creature from what he knows and feels himself to be. 'Tis the necessary, or, at least, the probable Connection of Actions with our Happiness, or with such a Degree of Happiness as is judg'd to be worth our purchasing, which influences the Mind, and engages our Pursuit after them.

6. Having demonstrated private personal Happiness, of some Sort or other, to be the sole, proper End of all human Actions, taking the Nature and Constitution of Mankind to be what we have suppos'd it, we shall now endeavour to shew, from Fact and Experience, that Man by the Make and Structure of the Organs of his Body, and by his Situation among material Objects, stands related to them in such Ways and Manners, as that the Use and Application of some of them will necessarily give him Pleasure; the Use and Application of others will as necessarily give him Pain. Those likewise, which create him Pleasure, tend, if not possess'd beyond a certain Degree, to his Preservation; those which create him Pain, tend to his Destruction. Now Man is, as we have shewn, by the Constitution of his Nature, oblig'd to pursue the former, and to avoid the latter. And, as he grows up in Years, he finds within himself a Power or Faculty (call'd Reason,) in the Cultivation and Use of which he is in some measure qualify'd to attain the one, and to prevent the other. If we therefore consider a Number of such Beings, each in Pursuit of his own Happiness, and consequently each

having

having a private, distinct End of his own in View; it cannot be, but that those Ends, or, to speak more properly, their Pursuits after such Ends, must necessarily interfere; since upon Supposition that they partake of the same common Nature, which they actually do; and have the same Avenues and Capacities for Happiness, which they really have, it must needs frequently happen, that what makes a Part of A's Happiness, makes also at the same Time a Part of B's, or at least is presum'd so to do; in consequence of which clashing of Interests, and of Mens suppos'd natural Right to whatever they can possibly make themselves Masters of, it is unavoidable, but that there will be a general Contest and Struggle betwixt them in respect of one and the same thing; and this general Struggle must necessarily end in general Misery and Confusion. “ From Mankind therefore having the same Wants, and for the most part the same Desires and Appetites, which generally aim at the same Object, arises the Expediency, and consequently the Reasonableness of crossing one another's Designs and Views in the Gratification of them; in all which Cases it may properly enough

“ be



“ be said, that their Differences and Contention-  
 “ tions frequently result from an Agreement  
 “ of their Wants; and consequently that their  
 “ Agreement in one respect is made the  
 “ Foundation of their Disagreement in ano-  
 “ ther.”

7. Again; A is in Pursuit of a certain End which he cannot arrive to, or obtain, upon account of B lying in the Way to it; Reason therefore shews him how, and Self-love will put him upon making all the Efforts in his Power, to remove this Obstacle to his Happiness; that is, the one directs, and the other moves him, to destroy B, (if he cannot compass his End any other Way;) for Reason is of no other Value to a Man, than as it leads him the shortest way to the Object of all his Wishes, his Aims and Pursuits, Happiness: And if there be no State of Being after this, he certainly makes the properest Use of it, who makes himself Master of as many of this World's Goods and Pleasures as he can, let his Means of attaining them be what they will. To say, as perhaps some will be ready to do, this is naturally and essentially unfit, unjust, &c. is saying nothing to the Purpose: Since nothing is good or evil,

fit or unfit in itself, but is so in Reference to some End (for the Attainment or Non-attainment of which it comes under the Denomination of fit or unfit, &c.) which End can be no other than Happiness. And consequently upon Supposition that there is no future State, no Prospect of Existence beyond the Grave, that Conduct in Man would be term'd, and most justly so, the fittest and most reasonable, that procur'd him the greatest possible Sum of Happiness during his Continuance in this Life. The Case lies here; if there be a God, who superintends human Affairs, the Rewarder of Good, and the Punisher of Ill, Reason tells Man, that if he would be finally happy, he must endeavour to conform himself in all his Actions to the Will of that Being; if there be no God, then having no Superior from whom to hope or to fear any thing, Man can have no other Rule to act by, than the satisfying his Wants, and such Appetites as yield him Pleasure in the Gratification of them.

8. Further; should we suppose, (and the Supposition is not barely possible but probable, as Multitudes of such Opportunities would often present themselves,) that A has

It in his Power of enriching himself, and consequently of procuring all or many of the Comforts and Conveniences of Life, and that by distressing B, his Fellow-creature, which he sees he can do with Impunity: In such a Case we ask, what is there in Nature to restrain him from it? Self-love predominates; is not only the highest, but most probably the only Principle woven into his Constitution; and as such both must and will be gratify'd, in Preference to all others whether natural or adventitious. And to say, that a Man ought not (if this Life was the whole of his Duration in Being) to deprive another of his Happiness, in order to increase his own, is absolutely false: Since it is the same as to say, that a Man ought to prefer another's Happiness to his own, that is, that Self-love is not his proper Principle of Action; contrary both to Reason and to Fact. The Matter rests here. As there can be no Action without a Motive; so every Man ought to act, as he is a reasonable Creature, from that Motive which is the most reasonable; for the Reasonableness of the Motive constitutes the Reasonableness of the Action. But that will ever be esteem'd the most reasonable

sonable Motive to Man which is best adapted in its Nature to make him the most happy; because Happiness is the End of his Being, and the more happy he makes himself, the better he obtains this End, that is, the more reasonably he acts. To the above we beg Leave to add the following Words of an ingenious Writer. “ The Restraints of Conscience, says he, in such a State, would no ways check Men in their Pursuits: For Conscience being nothing, but the Judgment which a Man passeth on the Reasonableness or Unreasonableness of his own Actions, and this Reasonableness or Unreasonableness being to be measur’d from the Subserviency of those Actions to his present Happiness; whatever appear’d to him, upon the best Judgment he could frame, necessary to his present Happiness, would appear highly reasonable; and his Conscience would be so far from blaming, that it would approve his Pursuit of it; nay, it wou’d blame him for not pursuing it.”

9. Hence we see, that if there were no Principle capable of influencing Men in the Dark, of restraining them upon such Conjunctions

junctures of Time and Place as afforded them Opportunities of being Rogues to Advantage, there could be no living. From A's Situation in Life, or from his superior Skill in the Arts of Tricking and Diffimulation, arise ten thousand Ways by which he may build his own Ease and Advantage upon the Ruin of that of B's. And his own Happiness, the Ground and Measure of all the Obligation he knows, or can know, wou'd necessarily bind him to it. To make the Matter short; the various Wants, real or imaginary, Men labour under, and are almost unavoidably subjected to, will, of Course, produce an Opposition of Interests and Pursuits among them. Hence at some Junctures, A's Happiness will be found to be B's Misery; and his pursuing *that*, will necessarily create *this*. And if Men be not firmly persuaded in their Minds of the Being of a God, who will make every Creature, in one Period or other of its Existence, accountable for all the Good or Ill it designedly introduces into human Life; if Men, we say, are not under strong Convictions, and consequently live not in the firm Belief or Persuasion of the Being of such a Principle,

ciple, every Man's private Pleasure will necessarily be esteem'd his real Happiness; and what appears to him, *i. e.* what he judges to be his real Happiness, will ever be his Rule and Motive of Action; or what he is oblig'd to make Provision for, and to act in Pursuit of: And there is no other Way of reconciling those jarring Views and clashing Interests, but by taking into Consideration the Belief of a God, his Providence, and a future State; the Belief of that Being, who will sooner or later make it the final Interest of every Individual, under all the various Circumstances in which he may happen to be plac'd, to observe such Ways of acting with regard to others, as will best promote the general Happiness. For upon Supposition of the Reality of such a Being, it must be always the Interest, and by Consequence ever the Duty, to act conformably to his Will, and in Furtherance of it.

10. Agreeably to the Light in which we have view'd the Case (and for the Truth of our Representation we appeal to the unprejudic'd Reader;) in this View of Things, we say, no Man could be safe either in Person or Property from his Neighbour; Men would  
 shew

shew themselves to be greater Savages than the Beasts below them, and grow more fierce and unruly for being reasonable. The intellectual Powers Man is possessed of, point out to him many Advantages in various Ways to be made of his Fellow-creatures. And as Self-love prompts him to every thing connected, or which is but suppos'd to be so, with private Good, so hereupon every Man necessarily becomes his Neighbour's Enemy. And thus Mankind would ever be in a perpetual Struggle, and reciprocally put each other into the most deplorable State of Fraud and Rapine that can be imagin'd. For as a very learned and most judicious Prelate of our Church justly observes, "The Floodgates  
 " to Rapine, Oppression, Violence, and every  
 " injurious Work are open'd, as the Restraints  
 " upon Conscience, and Motives to Duty  
 " are taken away."

II. But were we to suppose that A would abstain from Acts of Fraud and Violence, and from injuring B either in Person or Property; (but this, tho' supposable in our Minds, and as a Matter of Speculation, will never hold in Practice, since such Fear can never take Place in Cases where A could be

a Rogue with Impunity, which, as we before observ'd, would frequently happen;) supposing, we say, A would abstain from Acts of Fraud and Violence to B, yet, notwithstanding that B's Life might thus be secure from Danger, Existence would still be very far from being any Comfort and Satisfaction to him; and Being, upon the Whole, would be nothing but Misery to such a Creature. For Man, we find, is a weak, dependent Creature, unable to live without the good Offices and Assistance of those of the same Species with himself; this every one knows and finds to be true by his own Experience. His Wants and Necessities, both, many in Number, and importunate in their Cravings, oblige him to have Dealings, and a Correspondence with others; but no good Correspondence can be begun, carried on, and establish'd, but upon a Principle of natural Justice and Equity, that is, without a Sense of Religion. And besides this, it must be further considered, that Man's Happiness and Well-being are not barely the Effect of the strict Observance of the Rule of Right; but arise partly from thence, and partly from the Kindness and Benevolence of others; which



which Kindness and Benevolence he cannot oblige them to afford him any further than his own Interest is suppos'd to be connected with theirs, and the Effect of it; but this it would oftener obstruct and interfere with; since no Man can promote another's Happiness, but he must at the same Time neglect his own, unless Acts of Favour continually reciprocated, and ever flow'd from one to another, which in such a State of Things, as we have now under Consideration, there is no Ground to suppose will ever be the Case in Fact: For allowing, that A would do B a Favour, in hopes that it would excite him to repay it with another; yet if B expects no more Favours from A, no Consideration of past Kindnesses would ever affect him; however not affect him in that Degree as to make him think himself under an Obligation to make him any Return, especially if the doing of it was in the least inconsistent with his own Happiness, present or at a Distance. Because no one would think himself oblig'd, and therefore could not be induced to postpone his own Happiness for the Sake of another's, or, in other Words, Gratitude, in this View of

Things, would be an impracticable, if not an impossible Duty. Besides; what is fit to be done in Favour of A, may not be a Thing fit for B to do; nor what is fit for B to do, may be a Thing fit to be done for A. In the former Case nothing will be attempted to be done; in the latter, if any thing be done, the doing of it will be against A's Happiness; however not at all in the Prosecution and Furtherance of it.

12. Some there are who will be ready to maintain, that the best Way for every Individual to promote his own Interest, is, by promoting, as much as he is able, the great Interest of the Whole; because if the Whole be happy, the Parts which compose it must be happy also. Since the Good of the Whole is no other than the Sum total of the several Degrees of private Good which every Individual or Part of that Whole enjoys. In Answer to this, we must observe, that if all would be virtuous, and promote the common Good preferably to any private Consideration, and would do to others as they could desire to be done by in like Cases; then indeed all wou'd be happy; and a general Harmony, or a good Agreement of Actions, would run thro'

thro' and prevail in the World. But here lies the Case; Men are always free, and consequently have it always in their Power to act either as Profit, or Pleasure, or Inclination shall draw them. And therefore tho' some, for the Sake of this Connection of Private with Publick Happiness, may act in Pursuit of the latter, yet the Generality will ever deviate from such a Course of Action. And from such a Collision of Interests, and untoward Concurrence of Mens Actions, the Consequence is, and necessarily will be, that an inflexible Adherence to the Cause of Virtue in all its Branches, will many times be attended with great Disadvantages and Embarrassments, and, in some Cases, with the Loss of Life itself. And in all Instances where more Misery than Happiness flows from a virtuous Course of Action, and no Consideration of future Happiness is to be set over against it, that is, thrown into the other Scale, in order to turn the Ballance in Favour of Virtue, Men must of Course desert her Interests, and go over to the other Side; unless Misery, pure absolute Misery, can be suppos'd more eligibile to Man than Happiness; which we presume will never be asserted.

13. In Consequence also of this unfriendly Mixture of Wills and Actions it would necessarily, and therefore frequently, happen, that Vice shall flourish, whilst Virtue was neglected, despis'd, distress'd; and that the good, the sincere, and honest Man, would oftentimes suffer, meerly upon account of those Qualities; and so Virtue be made to recoil upon herself, and to become her own Adversary. For by this Means the honest, upright Heart thinking, and therefore fearing no Ill (for all Men judge of others according to the Workings of their own Minds) is laid open to the Frauds of every Deceiver, who will be ready to improve any Opportunity of making his own Ends out of the other's Simplicity. *They, says an ingenious Writer, who know how to practise the greatest Crimes with the most Dexterity and Cunning, will doubtless be able to procure to themselves the greatest Advantages, and laugh at the poor simple, virtuous Man, whose Courage is exercis'd in bearing his Misfortunes, which his Integrity and Adherence to Truth and Justice expose him to.* Now we would ask, what can oblige a Man to Virtue, when it is once become an Enemy to his present Happiness? Nothing surely, but the Be-

belief of a superior, invifible Cause, who, as Guardian and Procurator of his Creature's Happinefs, will reward and make a Man happy fometime or other, either in this Life or the next, according as he has contributed towards the Good and Welfare of his dependent Brethren; and who will punifh all thofe who wilfully oppofe this Happinefs in a Degree fuited to the Nature of fuch Oppofition.

14. This little that has been faid, is, one would think, enough to fhew us, what would be the miserable, the diftracted State of Mankind, not living under the affecting Senfe of Religion, that is, without all Senfe of a fuperior Being, inviting Men to Virtue and difcouraging them from Vice, by Rewards and Punifhments, to be difpenfed either in this Life or in the next. 'Tis the not living under a Deity's Animadverfion, which is the Cause of all the Diforder and Mifchief that has been committed in the World.

15. It has been the Opinion of fome, that human Laws are of themfelves fufficient to provide for human Safety and Convenience; and if fo, may fitly enough fupply the Place of Religion. But if it can be made to ap-

pear, that neither 'civil Government can be fram'd at first, nor supported afterwards (granting the former to be possible) without the Sense of a Deity's Animadversion; and 2dly, that human Laws neither are, nor can be, commensurate to all things in which human Beings are interested: This, we judge, will be sufficient to shew their Deficiency for that Purpose. In every well-fram'd Government there are two things necessary to be secured, so far as they are capable of being secured by human Foresight and Provision, which are, Protection and Obedience; the former being due from the Governor to the Governed; the latter from the Governed to the Governor. The one is the only legitimate End of civil Government; the other is the necessary Means of attaining and securing this End. Protection against all Encroachments directly or indirectly made, upon the temporal Liberty and Property of Man, being the Reason why Men enter into Society, and which therefore they must have a Right to claim at their Governors Hands. But if Governors have not a sufficient Power assign'd them to provide for the Safety and Happiness of Society, such Protection, as by the End of

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Association they (the Governed would) have a Right to claim cannot be afforded, that is, the End of Government cannot be obtained. Consequently they must have a Right to, and a Claim upon Society for, such a Power, that is, the End of civil Government vests it in them. And if there be a Power lodg'd in Governors to be exercis'd for the Good of the Governed, it must be answer'd by a suitable, correspondent Degree of Obedience from the People. Since all Sorts of Authority, justly founded, may lawfully claim an Obedience and Submission proportioned to its Extent and Comprehension. Protection and Obedience therefore are primarily and essentially contain'd in our Idea of all civil Governments, form'd and instituted for the End for which all civil Governments ought to be. And as all Men are naturally fallible, it is absolutely necessary that both Governor and Governed should give each the other proper means of Security that their respective Claims shall be satisfy'd. What Tokens or Pledges of Security can be given, so as that each shall safely acquiesce in them, is the next thing that must be consider'd: That the annexing temporal Penalties to the Breach of publick Faith will not answer  
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the End, is evident from hence. 1st, Because in many Cafes fuch Trust may be violated with absolute Privacy, and in all fuch Cafes human Penalties can be of no Force.

16. Supposing, fecondly, that it fhould by fome means or other come to be known, yet matters might be fo carry'd on, and Schemes concerted, that the Offender could never be brought to an account for his injurious Proceedings, and fo would efcape the juft and due Defert of his Actions. To give an Inftance, how both Prince and People may be thus injurioufly (and yet unavoidably, if religious Reftraints come once to be fet afide) affected by each other. Every Governor or Prince will, of Courfe, have Numbers applying to him for Places of Honour and Profit vefted in him by the End of Government. By the Difpofition of which Places, among fuch Perfons as by Principle and Intereft are led to profecute his favourite Views, he attaches them to himfelf, who, from the time of their Admiffion into them, may properly be call'd his own Creatures, and faithful Executors of his Will. Others alfo he may win over by Bribery, or with the large Promifes of future Favours; by means of whom, and  
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with whose Concurrence, he will be sure, in every Instance of Competition, to make the Good of the Community truckle to his own Humour, and give place to it. And private Interest (whatever he makes it to arise from) will always be pursu'd in Distinction from the Publick's. Experience is a standing Evidence of this, "That Men over-grown in  
 " Power generally commence Tyrants, and  
 " from being absolute Masters of the People's  
 " Money, as to the manner of levying it for  
 " the Publick's Use, they easily, and almost  
 " naturally, become absolute Masters of their  
 " Lives and Fortunes." And how can it in Reason be expected to be otherwise? A Person vested with the Force and Power of a whole Society, and who has Thousands at his Nod, ready to execute whatever he shall be graciously pleas'd to order, whether it be the Result of Caprice and Passion, or of a fixt settled Purpose and Determination to be as mischievous and tyrannical as possible, such a Person, we say, and so circumstanced, would never, one may be sure, suffer any thing to controul his Will, to thwart his Inclinations, or frustrate his Designs; because what is against Will, is against Happiness, that is, the  
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Disappointment of Desire is sure to be attended with Uneasiness proportion'd in degree to the height of such Desire; which Disappointment, if possible to be avoided, he will never submit to. And he richly deserves the Name of Fool, who having the Means of Happiness in his Power, suffers himself to be made uneasy upon any account whatsoever. Such a Governor therefore would expect all Submission (tho' ever so much against the common Happiness) on his Subjects side; and make no Compliance or Condescensions (tho' ever so beneficial to the Governed, on his own. And thus the Liberty and Property of the Nation would soon be swallowed up and lost by Violence and Oppression. Hence if there were no Laws superior and antecedent to human Laws, and from whence those Laws derive all their binding Force and Efficacy, what is there that an absolute Prince would not do? For having no Law but his Will, and no other Rule to act by than his own capricious Fancy, he can have no other View, in whatever he undertakes, but his own Satisfaction and Delight, whatever he makes them to consist in. *To what a deplorable Condition* (says the Author of the Poem entitled CRE-

ATION,) *would Mankind be reduc'd, should those irreligious Principles be universally received and embraced! If so many Kings and Potentates, who yet profess the Belief of a God, and of Rewards and Punishments in a Life to come, do notwithstanding from boundless Ambition, and a cruel Temper, oppress their Subjects at home, and ravage and destroy their Neighbours abroad, should think themselves free from all divine Obligations, and therefore too from the Restraints of Oaths and solemn Contracts: Those Fences and Securities remov'd, what a Deluge of Calamities wou'd break in upon the World? What Oppression, what Violence, what Rapine, what Desolation, would finish the Ruin of human Nature? For if mighty Princes are once satisfy'd that it is impossible for them to do wrong, what Bounds are left to insatiable Avarice, and exorbitant Thirst of Power?*

17. On the other hand, what should hinder but that a number of Men sharing in common the same Principles, and acted by the same lawless, ungovernable Passions, should combine together, with a View to shake off the Yoke of Obedience, tho' mild and gentle, and to distress the Government, tho' pursuing the  
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proper, perhaps (all things considered) the properest Method of obtaining publick Happiness, and for compassing all the valuable Ends and Purposes of civil Society? And it requires no great Strength of Fancy, nor a warm Imagination, to draw in lively Colours or Images the dismal Effects, which must necessarily attend an Insurrection of the People on the one hand, and an Act of arbitrary Power in the Prince on the other. All thinking People, all that will allow themselves the Time and Use of Reflection upon it, must necessarily be deeply affected barely with the Contemplation of it in their Minds. *Nothing, says an able Writer, can be a stronger Tye upon Men to obey the civil Power, than the Obligation of Conscience; nothing can influence the Consciences of Men, like the powerful Influences of that Religion which teaches Men for Conscience sake to be subject to the higher Powers, as Ministers of God to them for Good. Whatever therefore advances the Life and Power of Religion in a Kingdom, doth very much advance the Security of the State. For if there be nothing else but the Ties of Interest or Fear, without any inward Principle of Religion to keep Men within the Bounds of their Duty to the*

*civil*

*civil Powers, the Government will stand upon a very uncertain Foundation, and will be continually in Danger of being over-turn'd, when either the Interests of Men change, or the Grounds of Fear, whereby Men of factious Spirits are contain'd within the Bounds of their Duty, by the Increase of their Power, are taken away. Hence it is that he who converses with Books will find, that the Declension of the Power of Religion in a Kingdom, has usually been a bad Presage of the Destruction of the civil State. See an Essay towards a Comprehension, or a Persuasive to Unity among Protestants.*

18. To be short; neither Governor, nor Governed, if this be, as it actually is, a fair Representation of the Case, would be safe, if there were nothing to be found out of more universal Extent and Obligation than human Penalties. This therefore shews us, the Necessity of the Belief of some Principle, acting with that Force and Efficacy upon Mens Minds, as to render them, in Spite of all Temptations to the contrary, just and faithful. Now the Wit of Man can invent nothing more more sacred and binding than an Oath, explain'd and administred in that grave  
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solemn Manner in which it ought to be explain'd and administred: But what avail Oaths, or of what Significancy are they to those who disbelieve a Deity? Nothing at all: To impose an Oath upon an Atheist, or for him to offer to take it as a Foundation of Credit and Confidence with others, is to the last Degree ridiculous. Or the Matter may be set more fully and clearly in the following Light. As Society is liable to be affected in Cases of different Moment, so from hence arises the Necessity of different Men acting in different Relations, and consequently of entrusting them with a Power proportionate to the Nature and Importance of those Cases. And when Men stand thus differently related to Society, they will have different Ways and Means of raising their own private Fortunes upon the Spoils and Ruins of the Publick. To specify in some Particulars.

19. Every Government must have Laws and Provisions answering its various Wants and Exigencies of all Kinds. However, this is the only just and legitimate End for which civil Constitutions were first formed, and Bodies politick erected. The Design of which  
Laws,

Laws, is, to restrain Injuries by punishing Delinquents; to determine Differences relating to Life, Liberty, and Property, by some common Rule or Digest, comprehending under it all the various Cases (or the most material of them) which may happen betwixt Man and Man; and to raise Money for the Publick Service: ----- Those Laws must be made either by a single Man, or by a Body of Men, according as the particular Form or Constitution of the Government is, if any such Government can be established upon the Principles of Atheism, which, we presume, is conceivable in Idea only. The renowned *Plato* says, *without the Certainty of those Truths, or, the Existence of a God, his Providence and Justice, it is to no Purpose to make any Laws at all.* If the Form of Government be an Absolute Monarchy, that is, if the Laws be made by one single Person, in the drawing up, and framing of those Laws, he would suit them (if no Sense of a superior Principle, obliging Men by the strongest Penalties to the strict Observance of natural Justice, Faithfulness, &c. prevail'd in the World) to his own fantastical Humour, and his own Will might pro-

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perly enough be substituted in the Room of them, or he might be said to rule and move altogether by it. If the Form of Government be Democratical, that is, if the Laws are made and executed by a certain determinate Body of Men, then nothing hinders, but that those, enjoying the sovereign Power, and subjected to no Restraints in their Wilis and Actions from the Principles of Religion, might conspire together, and enter into Measures, by mutual Consent, for the better adapting those Laws to their own real or imaginary Interests, whenever those Interests could be carried on, and promoted, in Distinction from the Interest of the whole Body of Individuals. In both these Cases, those Laws must be against the common Good, and absolutely incompatible with the End of all such civil Affociations.

20. And when Laws are once made, some must be entrusted with the Execution of them; for they cannot execute themselves. And all the salutary, beneficial Effects of Society flow from an equal and impartial Execution of equal and impartial Laws. Some must be commission'd to inspect subordinate civil Offices, and the Management of them;



them; to take Cognizance of such Matters as have any Reference to the Good or Ill, either of Individuals, or the Publick itself; to see when the Laws are violated, and how far, or to what Degree, they are so; and then to make their Report accordingly, to such as move in a superior Sphere, and under whose Animadversion the Male-Administration of them properly falls. Others must be appointed to hear Causes, to decide Controversies, and to punish Delinquents, agreeably to what the Laws have decided in Cases of *such* or the *like* Nature. The King also must have his Council to advise with about Affairs of State; to conclude what is requisite to be done in relation to foreign Courts; especially when the Interests of the Nation are some Way or other, whether immediately or remotely, concern'd in the Steps those Courts take, and to send the Result of their Deliberations, with the other necessary, concomitant Powers and Instructions, to their Ambassadors residing there. There must be Officers also, both civil and military, to execute whatsoever shall be resolv'd upon by the Senate, or great Council of the Nation; and lastly, there must be Receivers

of the Publick's Money, Collectors of Taxes, &c. --- Let us go back again, and observe how easily, and almost necessarily, those Officers will be corrupted, if no religious Checks be set on the other Side, against the Impulses of Self-Love, in order to restrain the Impetuosity with which it hurries Men on in the Pursuit of what they like, and which breaks down and over-powers all other Considerations and Arguments, but those fetch'd from another World. To begin therefore; There is no Improbability in the Case, but that a Judge, for the Sake of a Bribe, or thro' Favour and Attachment to the Party, should pervert Right, and establish Wrong, *i. e.* declare in Favour of it; or that Witneses should be suborned, Juries corrupted (tho' strictly speaking, in a Herd, it cannot justly, and with Propriety, be call'd a Society, of Atheists, Jury and Witneses, and all Depositions made upon Oath, are but fictitious chimerical Sounds and empty Characters) by which undue Influence the Innocent would suffer, whilst the Guilty got off free. And yet at the same Time, the Forms of Proceeding might in such Manner be laid, and Matters so manag'd, that both Judge

and Jury, and Witnesses, shall be able to cover their Injustice with the specious Appearance of the contrary Quality, or Course of Acting. And thus Integrity, Innocence, and Simplicity of Manners, will be trampled under Foot, whilst Violence, Fraud, and Oppression shall ride triumphant; and notwithstanding all Appearances to the contrary, have the Law on their Side. Such a Condition is infinitely worse than theirs who live in a State of Nature, because then the Struggle generally lies betwixt Man and Man, and not betwixt a single Man and the whole executive Power in a Society, which, when corrupted and abandon'd to Prostitution, renders Government intolerable, and is one of the greatest Evils that can possibly befall Mankind. There is no Presumption, not the least Degree of Presumption to the contrary, but that an Ambassador negotiating on such Affairs of publick Concern as War and Peace, or the exciting and preventing Causes of them, with foreign Powers interest'd therein, should have Proposals made him from those Powers, of much greater Moment and Consequence to himself and Family, than what he could possibly expect, even upon

Supposition that he acted the most uprightly, from his own Country, provided he would betray the weak Side, and reveal (so far as it was in his Power to bring it into Light) what was resolv'd upon, and intended to be carry'd into Execution by the Prince and his Council, which above all Things ought (whilst any Differences arising from a Competition of Interests subsisted betwixt them) to be kept a Secret; because, if known, Precautions might be us'd, and proper Means taken on the other Side, in order to confound and baffle, and, in many Cases, actually would baffle and confound those Designs, and break the wisest, and to all Appearance, the best-concerted Schemes of human Policy. It is not improbable, we say, (when no Apprehensions of a Discovery intervene to prevent him, before he has made his Bargain, or entered into an Agreement, for his Perfidiousness) that he should accept those Offers, and by such a Breach of Trust go near to ruin the State; the Improbability indeed lies on the other Side, and it would be a much greater Wonder, if he refus'd such tempting Overtures. Nor is it unlikely that Collectors, or Receivers  
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of the Publick's Money, should by joint Contrivance and Consent, mis-state Accompts, and so enrich themselves with the Government's Money, without any Possibility of being call'd to an Account for such publick Roguery. We might go on to instance in the almost infinite Number of publick Offices and Employments with which Society has to do, but that we think what has been said will enable any one to form a just Idea of the Condition of Mankind living under no Sense of the restraining Principles of Religion. And without a regular, conscientious Discharge of those Duties arising from the several Relations Men stand in to Society, and paying a strict impartial Regard to the Good of the Whole, in the Execution of all publick Offices without Distinction, the Society must soon be dissolv'd, and come to nothing. *Religion, says a late judicious Author, is as necessary to the Welfare of Society, as moral Virtue; and the only rational Obligation of Conscience to the one, must be deriv'd from the other.*

21. As the Variety of Cases therefore, in which Society is interested, necessarily requires that some act in a publick Capa-

city, so nothing but the Sense of a Being, who will make every Creature, one time or other, accountable for the good or bad Use of the Powers it is entrusted with, and for the Pursuit of those Means of Happiness and Misery which lie within its Power to procure or avoid: Nothing but this Apprehension, we say, of future Rewards and Punishments, can be, in all Cases, a sufficient Motive to act with a disinterested View for the Good of the Community, where Men can better serve their own particular Ends in this World by acting in Opposition to publick Interest, and in Violation of the great Trust repos'd in them: We say, when they can do it with Impunity (and strong Temptations will ever flatter sanguine Minds with full Hopes of Security) there is nothing from *without* that can possibly prevent or hinder them: For being by Supposition out of the Reach of human Discovery, they come not within the Influence of human Laws. Neither is there any Thing from *within* capable of restraining them. For what avails Conscience, when Men live under no Apprehension of an invisible Cause, and of those Rewards and Punishments, which are to be dealt

dealt out and distributed in another Life to such as by their Conduct have merited the one or the other? The urging in Answer to this the Sacredness and binding Force of Oaths, is frivolous and insignificant; because all Oaths, and the Security founded thereupon, necessarily presuppose the Belief of a God and his Providence, to be regularly administered either in this World, or in the next. Take but once away this Belief, and the Obligations immediately cease, and are at an End.

22. From the Account we have given above, the Reader will be enabled to judge what Confusion and Disorder must necessarily, and in Fact, arise in the World, upon Supposition, that the present fashionable Doctrine of the State's being able to subsist without the Influence of Religion, was to take Place and be observ'd. It being strictly demonstrative, "That when the private Interest of the principal Members of any politick Body is carry'd on, and pursued at the Expence of the great Interest of the Whole, that, that Whole must be nearly ally'd to Ruin, or its present Condition or State of Being very deplorable."

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And this shews the Impossibility of supposing any State being able to subsist long, unless we previously suppose the Members thereof influenc'd in their Conduct by some higher and more powerful Principle than the Dread of human Punishments. *Plutarch*, somewhere or other in his Writings, has dropp'd an Expression much to the following Effect; which is as just and pertinent to our Purpose, as it is true, *viz.* *That he would sooner believe a City might be built without any Foundation, than that a Government could be fram'd or supportea without the Belief of a Deity.* Of the same Opinion also was *Tully*, who, in his Book *De Natura Deorum*, has the following remarkable Words; *Sunt enim Philosophi, & fuerunt, qui omnino nullam habere censerent humanarum rerum procurationem Deos. Quorum si vera est sententia, quæ potest esse Pietas? quæ Sanctitas? quæ Religio? atque haud scio, an Pietate adversus Deos sublatâ; Fides etiam & Societas humani Generis, & una excellentissima Virtus, Justitia, tollatur.*

23. We took Notice before of the Improbability that the Legislative Power, whether vested in one single Person, or in a Number of them, chosen



chosen by the People out of their own collective Body: we took notice, we say, of the Improbability that such a Legislature, void of all Sense of a Deity's Superintendence, should ever frame a System of just and equitable Laws, or such as were primarily and wholly directed for the Good of the Publick, but that Self would be *principally* consulted in the drawing them up, and *universally* regarded in the Execution of them. We are for once willing to allow, that the Legislature would adapt all its Laws and publick Acts, as much as possible, to the Wants and Necessities of the State; yet notwithstanding this Concern for and Care of the Community, manifested in the Provision made for it by the Law-making Power, human Laws would still be found inadequate to all things in which human Beings are interested; and being so, must be very insufficient of themselves for the procuring and advancing of publick Happiness. For as the Welfare of any Society, or Body of Men, is made up of, and consists in, the Happiness and Welfare of every Individual in that Society; and as all human Beings include, in our Idea of the Nature and Condition of them, Finiteness and Dependency, and consequently an absolute Inability

lity to acquire *Singly* and *Apart* such a Degree of Happiness and Security as will render Society a Comfort and Satisfaction to them ; (for every Day's Occurrences are sufficient to convince the most careless Observer (if he observes any thing at all) how much we stand in need of the Assistance and Concurrence of others, in almost every thing we go about, whether it be for obtaining Happiness, or avoiding Misery ; all Ranks and Orders of Men being equally necessary, for the Support and Subsistence of each other : Publick Happiness therefore, or the Happiness of the whole Body or Community, must be the Produce or Effect of a joint Union and Tendency of Acts intended for, and directed towards this End, as well as of abstaining from all Acts publickly hurtful and injurious. But the Design of human Laws is not so much to promote the positive Happiness of one another by an Enforcement of Acts of Kindness and Beneficence (in which Man is left, as indeed he ought to be, free and unrestrain'd) as they were intended to be Bars against all Encroachments upon Mens Liberty and Property. And thus, in this View of the Case, appears a very great and visible Defect in the Provision human Laws have made for human Happiness ;

ness; and which is worse, this Defect is irremediable by all the Arts of human Policy and Contrivance; and can no ways be supply'd, but by calling in the aid of Religion. For Man, upon Supposition that there was no After-reckoning, no Prospect of Existence beyond the present State of Being, could be no further under Obligation to promote publick, than as it was productive of private Happiness. As the Proportion of one to the other on either Side varied, so would Mens Obligations vary also. Hence the Necessity of establishing some general Principle for the better uniting the common Interests of Mankind, and to cause them to prosecute each other's, and therein the publick Good with a suitable Ardency and Degree of Affection—But tho' human Laws do not bind Men to instruct the Ignorant and Illiterate, to succour the Distress'd and Unfortunate, and to be as charitable to the Poor as their Circumstances will admit of: Yet are they not sufficient to, or do they not in Fact, answer their End in being made? Previous to the determining which Question, we shall make the following Observations, which ('tis presum'd) will set the Matter in so clear a Light, as not to admit of any further Doubt or Dispute, as  
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to the Sufficiency or Insufficiency of human Laws for this Purpose.

24. And first we observe, that as it is the Sanctions which attend the Observance or Non-observance of Laws, which induce the Obligation, and enforce an Obedience to them; so it is necessary, that the Penalties annexed by human Laws to the Breach of Publick Trust, or to the Violation of civil, constitutional Rights, do over-balance the Pleasure or Profit that draw the contrary Way, *i. e.* which flows from a Breach or Transgression of those Rights; otherwise there would lie an Obligation upon Men in such Cases to the Violation of them, and consequently those Penalties would be ineffectual to attain the End aim'd at by them.

25. As human Knowledge is limited to, and consequently circumscribed within, certain Bounds, and therefore, in such Circumstances, cannot foresee what will, in all Cases, and to what Degree, make for the Good and Hurt of Society; so human Legislators cannot provide suitable Remedies for and against all such things in which civil Society is concern'd.

26. Tho' Happiness, private Happiness, be the true ultimate End of all human Actions, Men notwithstanding differ very much in their Pursuit

suit after it; and the Reason is, because they place their Happiness in different things, which, of necessity, will require different Means of Acquisition.

27. The Quantity of Happiness or Misery produc'd by any Object, Action, or Event, is ever in a compound Ratio of the Degrees of Good and Evil in such Object, Action, or Event, and the Susceptibility of the Subject, or Person affected; or is in Proportion to the Powers of producing Happiness in the Object, and to the Capacity of receiving it in the Subject.

28. A Difference in Mens Opinions concerning the Tendencies of Actions to their Happiness or Misery, constitutes a Difference in their Desires and Aversions, in their Likings and Loathings; and consequently occasions different Degrees of Happiness and Misery in respect of the same Actions. For, to use the Words of that incomparable Metaphysician, Mr. *Lock*,

“ As pleasant Tastes depend not on the Things  
 “ themselves, but on their Agreeableness to  
 “ this or that particular Palate; wherein is  
 “ great Variety; so that the greatest Happiness  
 “ consists in the having those things which  
 “ produce the greatest Pleasure; and in the  
 “ absence

“ absence of those which cause any Distur-  
 “ bance, any Pain. Now, those to different  
 “ Men are very different Things. If Men in  
 “ this Life only have Hope; if in this Life  
 “ only they can enjoy, 'tis not strange, nor  
 “ unreasonable, that they should seek their  
 “ Happiness by avoiding all things that displease  
 “ them here, and by pursuing all that delight  
 “ them; wherein it will be no wonder to find  
 “ Variety and Difference. For if there be no  
 “ Prospect beyond the Grave, the Inference  
 “ is certainly right, *Let us eat and drink, let us*  
 “ *enjoy what we delight in, for to-morrow we*  
 “ *die.* This, I think, may serve to shew us  
 “ the Reason why tho' all Mens Desires tend  
 “ to Happiness, yet they are not all moved by  
 “ the same Object.” To which we beg  
 Leave to add, that tho' all necessarily shun  
 Misery, yet what is Misery to A in *this* or *that*  
 Degree, may not be Misery to B in the same  
 Degree; but in a Degree either above or be-  
 low it, who accordingly will be differently  
 affected by it.

29. From whence we may gather, that the  
 Penalties or Degrees of Punishment, annex'd  
 by human Laws to this or that particular sett of  
 Actions, will not, whilst they are of Force to  
 deter

deter some from the Commission of them, be found effectual to restrain others. For whilst the Passions of Shame and Remorse (if such Passions could be acquir'd in a Place where no Sense of a Deity is to be found) with the necessary concomitant Pain and Misery, which a tender, susceptible Nature, viciously dispos'd, is apprehensive of feeling, and consequently suffering from the Breach of publick Rules and Orders, make him shudder and tremble at the Thoughts thereof, and consequently are sufficient in most Instances to secure his Obedience to them, yet will they not act with that Force and Efficacy upon a sturdy, harden'd Rogue, wholly immers'd in Vice, and grown hoary in Wickedness, that is, upon such as have contracted strong, inveterate Habits of them. Hence appears the Impossibility of annexing Penalties, and consequently of distributing Punishments, strictly proportioned to Men's Vices and Demerits.

30. But should we suppose this Inconveniency got over, and that human Laws weigh'd out Punishments in Proportions exactly suited to the Nature and malignant Tendency of human Actions; still how many Holes have crafty, designing Sinners to creep out at? and how

often would a Sinner go *sinning on*, and even after the Commission of a whole Series of Crimes, make his Exit, and go off the Stage undiscover'd? And what can be a more powerful Motive, or stronger Excitement than this, that others, attach'd to the same Principles, and influenc'd by the same exorbitant Desires, should betake themselves into the same Road, and to follow in the same Steps? for every Exemption from Punishment; or Evasion of Justice, becomes an additional Motive, both to the Offender and others to pursue the like villainous and pernicious Practices. A worldly, self-interested Disposition, spurr'd on by a Prospect of Gain, and supported by the Hopes of Impunity, will most certainly, if not check'd and restrain'd by a higher Principle, break thro' all the Laws of human Establishment, so far as it is in his Power to break thro' them, and he finds his Interest in so doing.

31. We know but of one Objection that can be rais'd against the Sufficiency of Religion for all the Ends and Purposes of human Life; which is, that tho' we have a Church by Law established, and all under certain Penalties are oblig'd to be Members of it, and join in her Communion, or in the Communion of some  
 other



other religious Society existing in, and tolerated by the State : Yet we have the same Instances of the Breach of publick Trust, and of the Rules and Ties of civil Government amongst us, as have been given in and complain'd of above. But what is the Reason, the best assignable Reason for it? Is it the too deep and affecting Sense of an omniscient and all-superintending Deity, that occasions this want of Integrity in the Execution of publick Offices, and in Mens various Dealings and Intercourses with each other, and which causes them to transgress the Duties, and violate the Bonds and Obligations laid upon them by civil Society, whenever they can do it without Detection? It is, we presume, the very Reverse of this. And this Objection leads us to consider, what Influence the Belief of a God, and of an equable, impartial Retribution to be made hereafter, will necessarily have upon the Conduct and Behaviour of Men.

32. By Religion we would be understood to mean a design'd Conformity of Action to the Will of the Deity ; or, it is the doing of such Things as God hath enjoined, and avoiding those which he hath forbidden ; and for this plain Reason, because he hath enjoin'd the

one, and forbid the other ; and that Man shall be rewarded for the doing or avoiding of them, that is, because such a Conduct will entitle, or give him a Right, to divine Favour and Acceptance. Now the Will of God (as will appear by viewing him in his Works of Creation and Providence) is that every Being introduce into the World a Degree of Happiness suited to his Circumstances and Situation in it. And if so, then if all unanimously, and with one accord, would be religious, all would then be compleatly happy, or as happy as it was possible for Creatures of such a Class in the Scale of Beings to be; that is, a strict, universal Observance of those Duties proper to rational Beings, would be the Parent of universal Happiness. Therefore, whatever, as a Means, tends to make Men more religious, tends of Course to make them more happy, and, in such Cases, must be a Contributor to, and a Promoter of, human Ease and Conveniency, and therefore, by the Terms, desirable.

33. When a firm Belief, and strong Persuasion, that the Universe is not only the Workmanship, but also that it is constantly under the Guidance and Direction of an all-wise and an all-powerful Being, who orders and disposes

disposes of all Events, both in the natural and moral World, for the Good and Benefit of his Creatures; who, by an all-seeing Eye inspects every Occurrence in human Life, and can penetrate into the remotest Corner and deepest Abyss, and who will most certainly reward or punish in another Life according as Men have behav'd in this; and tho', by reason of the confus'd Jumble of human Acts, there may Appearances, in some Instances, turn up in Favour of Vice, yet the Balance shall finally be on the Side of Virtue: when such a Sense, we say, as this prevails, we need not mention, or, to speak truly, we cannot determine, what Influence it will necessarily have upon the Lives and Conversations of Men; how strongly it will dispose them to the Pursuit of Virtue, and to the careful, regular, conscientious Discharge of those particular Duties; and to the Observance of all such Acts, and Methods of Acting, as are judg'd agreeable to the supreme, governing Intelligence, and sovereign Will of the Lord of the Universe ---- Who can consider that stupendous Work, the Creation, and the several Creatures, and Ranks of Creatures, brought into Being, each of which by certain Instincts, and Laws of Procreation, are prompt-

ed to propagate their Species, and so, in some sense, to leave themselves in their Generations behind them; and that all those Beings and Orders of Beings, should be formed, adjusted, and situated with such a Relation to, and Dependence upon, each other, as to be made subservient to one another's Good, and so consequently to the common Happiness of the Creation; who, we say, can consider this, and not revere the Hand that did it? It seems indeed naturally impossible, that a Being made conscious of, and consequently affected with a suitable, becoming Sense of its State of Dependence upon God, the greatest of Beings, as well as the best of Fathers, should be so careless of his own true Interest, as by a wilful Disobedience, and Contempt of his Authority, to lose the Favour of him, from whom every Comfort and Satisfaction in Life proceeds.

34. And the more lively and awful Sense Men live under of the Being of a God, and of his Perfections so beautifully display'd in the Works of Creation and Providence; of the many great, and unmerited Favours so liberally conferr'd on them; and consequently of their Obligations to serve him, and the like; the more studious will they be in the imitating

ing of his Example, in copying of his Perfections, in making his Dispensations and Acts (the Imperfections of human Nature considered and allow'd for) the Rules and Measures of their own—Hence Men, considered as rational, dependent Beings, their Religion, or, which comes to the same, as to the material Part of Religion, their Obligation to observe all social and publick Virtues, will ever hold proportion to their greater or less Sense of the Superintendency of a first great Principle, and of those Rewards and Punishments which are to be dispensed suitably to Mens Virtues and Vices, and according to their Obedience to, or Violation of, his Laws and Institutions.

35. But the Necessity of Religion appears no where so conspicuous as in the Influence it is found in Fact to have upon a virtuous and vicious Disposition. Human Laws, as we observ'd, were visibly defective in those two Points; they could neither accommodate the Degrees of Punishment to the pernicious Tendency of human Actions; neither if they did this, could they in many Cases be impartially executed; because the Effects of Justice would frequently be suspended, and its Course diverted out of its proper Channel; and diverted

by those whose Office and Situation in Society, at the same time that it gave 'em Opportunities of doing this, seem'd to lay them under an Obligation to an equal and impartial Distribution of it. Now with regard to a vicious Disposition, we have this to observe, that some Men by being habituated to evil Practices are grown so bold and desperate in their Wickedness, and to such a degree harden'd in Vice, that they have Spirits enough not only to undertake, but also to go thro' with any Villainy, tho' Punishment, capital Punishment, is not only apprehended, but actually known to be the sure Attendant. And to work a Reformation in such as laugh at the Magistrate's Sword, and are content to take their Fortunes at the Gallows, nothing but the Apprehension of a Being, who will be sure to vindicate the Honour of his Laws, and maintain the Reverence due to them, by letting (without making any Distinction of Persons) all such feel the just Effects of his Wrath as have wilfully offended against them; nothing, we say, but the Sense of such a Being will prove effectual for this purpose. And such an affecting Sense of the Supreme Being, who has our whole Happiness and Misery within his Reach, and at his Disposal, and who will exhibit

hibit a different Treatment, that is, exercise a different sort of Government towards those who have differently behaved themselves under it, may have this good Effect. And it has been found in Fact, that such Persons have sometimes by the Consideration of a Hell, a State of everlasting Destruction, an unquenchable Fire, and a Worm that never dieth, been even terrify'd and scar'd into a Compliance with their Duty; This has effectually done the Business, and answered the End. Such a Sense, when it has once taken Root, grows stronger, and operates more and more upon them; demands their Attention, and changes their Pursuits to different Objects.

36. When Virtue, instead of recommending us to the Love and Favour of all around us, is made by crafty designing Knaves a Snare to trepan and catch us in, it naturally produces a Sourness of Temper and Discontent of Mind, and in Room of the good-natur'd Principle (if it be possible for any such Principle to be acquired in a State void of all Religion, which if conceivable, yet is not practicable by the Bulk of Mankind) and instead of the good-natur'd Principle, we say, which comes by Degrees to subside, and grow less and less influential, succeeds

succeeds Peevishness, a certain Fretfulness of Temper, attended with a suspicious, captious Turn of Mind, which generally ends in an absolute Indifferency to all that is good, venerable, &c. But the only proper Remedy to raise the sinking Cause of Virtue, and to preserve Men from falling into a State of Despondency, and Abjection of Mind, is to produce in them a Sense of some superior, invisible Cause, and in Consequence of that, the Belief of another World, where Vice, tho' now triumphant, shall be brought low; and Virtue, tho' at present sunk under a Cloud and eclips'd, shall break forth and brighten out to all Eternity. For when Religion interposes, and creates the Belief of a Deity's Animadversion, in order to reward the Good and to punish the Bad, then the Difficulties and Embarrassments which attend the Good and Virtuous *here*, vanish at the Thoughts of an *hereafter*. The Mind can with a certain Firmness and Constancy bear such Evils, tho' at present they feel very grievous and pressing, which draw after them an Happiness infinite in Duration.

37. From all which we may gather, how necessary the Belief of another World is to promote and secure the Order and good Government



ment of this; to support the Interests of Virtue, and to preserve the Relish for Benevolence in every State of Sufferance, and under every Temptation of falling off, quick, vigorous and durable.

38. And this, by the way, shews us the Reasonableness of such Institutions as in their Nature and attendant Circumstances are fitted to recall Men from a too close Attachment to the Things of this World; to preserve in their Minds a lively and affecting Sense of the Being of a God, his Providence, and a World to come, had they no other Authority than human to recommend them.

39. From the Relation which religious Acts have to human Happiness arises the Right which civil Governors have to oblige every Individual in Society to go to Church, or any other religious Assembly appointed by general Consent, there to make their Acknowledgments publickly of their Belief of the three great Truths abovemention'd; and to hear their Duty to God, to their Fellow Creatures, and to themselves, with the Grounds and Reasons of their Obligation, fully explain'd and set forth. For if the careful Observance of those Truths, and the Duties imply'd in them,  
have

have such a Tendency to the common Happiness of Mankind, as we have shewn those Truths and Duties, if adher'd to and practis'd, to have; then Governors, as Guardians of civil Happiness, have a Right to use the best means in their Power of obliging Men to the Use and Observance of 'em. Hence appears both the Absurdity and Falseness of those Mens Arguments who would deprive the supreme Magistrate from the Exercise of all Power in religious Matters, upon account, that the Promotion of civil Peace and Happiness is the proper Object of his Care, and the legitimate End of all his Pursuits: since his Relation to Society makes it is Duty to interest himself in all such things as tend to its Advantage; which how much, and in what various ways, Religion does, has been largely shewn above---

“ Religion (says a very strenuous Advocate for Liberty of Conscience, and the Right of private Judgment) “ is properly the Province of the Magistrate in those Cases, where “ the Interests of Society are affected: In such “ Instances, indeed, the civil Power, as Guardian of the State, is obliged to provide for “ its Safety and Preservation against the Shocks “ it may suffer, either by a mistaken Con-

“ science, or the Pretence of it. These are  
 “ Truths of so great Evidence, and such clear  
 “ Consequences from the Nature and Ends of  
 “ Society, and the Institution of civil Go-  
 “ vernment, that a Man who disowns them,  
 “ must either run headlong into Atheism,  
 “ and an universal Subjection of Conscience  
 “ to the Dictates of Men, or at least into  
 “ very absurd Mistakes about the Origin and  
 “ Nature of civil Societies.” See a Pamphlet  
 intitled the Vanity of believing too much,  
 or too little.

40. In Place of those beneficial Consequences of Religion, as explain'd above, some would substitute a Principle of Honour, as the more active of the two Principles, and of greater Force and Efficacy in the Determination of human Actions to the Advancement of publick Good, and as being a stronger Fence and Security against those Deluges of Evils which necessarily flow from Fraud and Rapine, and every Species of lawless Tyranny and licentious Faction. What this Principle of Honour is, or what, in Truth, is intended to be meant by it; whence it had its Rise, and how it came to be introduc'd into Man's Nature, and to make one of his active, governing Principles, we probably shall give  
 some

some Account of in one Part or other of this Treatise. At present, we shall take no further Notice of it, and the only Reply we shall make to it, will be in the Words of the Author of the Poem entituled, *Creation*, whom we have quoted once before. “ But  
 “ since the Gentlemen who own no Obligations of Religion for the Rule of Behaviour, set up in its Stead a spurious Principle, which they call Honour, and a Greatness of Mind, that will not descend to a mean or base Action; let them reflect, whether that Term, as they use it, is not an empty Sound, without any determin'd Meaning. If Honour lays a Man under any Obligation to perform, or forbear any Action; then 'tis evident, Honour is a Law, or Rule, and the Transgression of it makes us guilty, and obnoxious to Punishment: And if it be a Law, it must be the Declaration of some Legislator's Will, for this is the Definition of a Law, that it regulates the Manners of a moral Agent. Now I ask a Man of Honour, who denies Religion, what, or whose Law he breaks, if he deviates from what he imagines to be a  
 “ Point

“ Point of Honour? ’Tis plain, there can  
 “ be no Transgression, where there is no  
 “ Law, no Regularity where there is no  
 “ Rule; nor can a Man do a base or dif-  
 “ honourable Thing, if he lies under no  
 “ Obligation to the contrary. Honour there-  
 “ fore, abstracted from the Notion of Re-  
 “ ligion which enjoins it, is a mere Chi-  
 “ mera, which can have little Power over  
 “ any Man, that does not believe a divine  
 “ Legislator, whose Authority must enforce  
 “ it.”

41. From what has been said above, we may draw, in the Manner of Corollaries, the following Truths.

42. That as Mankind can have no Dependence upon, nor consequently place any Confidence in, the Words and Promises of an Atheist, so they ought to avoid all manner of Commerce and Dealings with him; for as his Principles lead directly, and by necessary Consequence, to the Destruction of mutual Trust and Confidence amongst Men (which are so necessary in the present State of Things, that without a just Regard and Observance of them, there could be no living) so, upon that Account, he ought to  
be

be excluded from all human Converse. Agreeably hereunto, that great Philosopher, Mr. *Locke*, in his incomparable Letters concerning Toleration, says, “ They who deny  
 “ the Existence of a God should not be to-  
 “ lerated ; because Promises, Contracts, Oaths  
 “ and Faith, which are the principal Bonds  
 “ of Society, are no Tie upon an Atheist  
 “ to keep his Word ; and because, should  
 “ the Belief of a Deity be banish’d the  
 “ World, nothing but a general Confusion  
 “ and Disorder must inevitably be intro-  
 “ duc’d.”

43. And Secondly, Whoever propagates Doctrines against the Being of a God, or which, in their necessary Consequences, tend to destroy the Obligations of Religion ; such as the representing it to be the Invention of Priests, in order to enslave Mankind, and under a Pretence of benefiting Mens Souls, to hurt their Bodies, and to plunder their Estates ; or to be the Trick of crafty, over-reaching Statesmen, with Design to be an additional Motive or Inducement to the Observance of their Laws, or to take in such Things as human Policy could not provide a Remedy for : Whoever, we say, advances  
 such

such Doctrines, does, *ipso facto*, affect the Vitals of Society, and consequently ought to be treated as one of the greatest Enemies to civil Peace and Happiness. — *As the Sovereign*, says an Author we have quoted before, *is to be considered as the Guardian of the State, every Opinion or Practice in Religion which affects the common Good and Advantage of Society, comes properly within his Sphere and Cognizance. As the Belief of a Deity is of the greatest Consequence to civil Society, being the Foundation of all those moral Obligations, by the Observance of which it is preserv'd and made happy; all those Doctrines are obnoxious to civil Authority, which tend, either directly, or by necessary Consequence, to the Overthrow of this fundamental Truth, or which imply a Denial of Providence, and lead to Profaneness or Contempt of Religion; and so have a Tendency to render that Belief ineffectual.*

44. Since if all would be religious, all would be happy, it follows, that the more or less religious any Nation is, the more or less happy; or the greater or less Conveniences it must constantly abound with. And if we will but look into the State of the

World, what it is, and what it ever has been, and be at the Pains of consulting the History of Mankind, as it has been transmitted down from Age to Age to us, we shall find it to be universally true in Fact.

45. And if universal Happiness in this Life be the Consequence of the universal Observance of those Duties proper to rational dependent Beings, that is, of Religion, it is evident, that the entire Absence of all Religion must be the entire Absence of all Happiness, that is, pure, absolute Misery.

46. To what has been said above, it may probably be objected, that we have a Principle of Right, as well as a Principle of Self-Love implanted in our Nature, and growing up together with it; a moral Sense or Conscience, which we cannot violate, or act in Contradiction to, without feeling great Remorse, and Compunction of Mind, that is, without being self-condemn'd: that this moral Sentiment including a practical Sense of Virtue, as well as a speculative Perception of it, causes us to approve of virtuous Actions and Characters,

and



and to disapprove those of a contrary Nature and Quality, independently on the Consideration of their being the necessary or probable Means of Happiness or Misery to us. And Approbation and Disapprobation from the Nature of them, imply Pleasure and Pain, Satisfaction and Uneasiness in the Person so approving or disapproving moral Representations. This therefore is a Check, an intended seasonable Check, upon the other Principle of our Nature, and must necessarily restrain us from any such unbounded Excesses in the Gratification of it, as have been given in above. In giving such an Answer to this Objection as what ingenious Minds can securely acquiesce in, one is naturally led to enquire into the Nature and Origin of the human Appetites and Affections: But tho' such an Enquiry is proper to solve the above mention'd Objection, yet is it not proper to be made now at this Time, since it would detain us too long from the main Scope and profess'd Design of our Subject. We therefore choose to consider this Matter in an Appendix, to which we beg Leave to refer the Reader; presuming he will allow us to

take for granted *here*, what we hope we shall *there* demonstrate, *viz.* that this moral Sense or Conscience is of our own making; that it is wholly form'd upon, and consequently takes its Rise from, the Notion of an animadverting Deity, obliging Men under the Penalty of losing his Favour, and consequently of forfeiting future Happiness, to such a Conduct as in the Upshot, that is, to such a Set of Actions, as by frequent Repetitions of them will produce in us such a Taste, Disposition, or Sense, as we stile moral; which most Men forgetting how they came by, or first acquired, are apt to look upon as natural, and the necessary, the immediate Effect of our inward Frame and Constitution, as it came out of the Hands of our Creator; consequently no such Sense as this can prevail in the World, if no Belief or Notion of a God has place in it. And if this Sense be acquired, and it cannot be acquired in a State void of all Religion, then all Arguments drawn from, or Objections urg'd upon its suppos'd Innateness, are manifestly inconclusive, and such as will never stand the Test of an Enquiry, when properly begun, and steadily prosecuted.

47. But should we suppose the benevolent Disposition Natural, and consequently Universal, we must, for the same Reason, suppose all those Dispositions and Appetites Man is possess'd of, to be natural, and consequently universal likewise; and as all those various Appetites have their proper Objects, so each of them, in proportion to its Height, will be urgent for the Enjoyment of its Object; and proportionably to the different Strength of those Appetites, will Men be acted by some one or other of them. And be it further observed, that as the smallest Degree of Good, if present, is sure to be enjoy'd, or the Enjoyment of it desired; so the weakest Appetite, of what sort soever, if it has an Object at hand, will be for possessing it; and the Reason is, because the Enjoyment of every Object, with which there is a Correspondency of Appetite, affords some Pleasure, more or less. Consequently, to suppose Mankind as much under the Influence of the benevolent Principle, as they are under the Influence of all those which stand oppos'd to it, we must be oblig'd to make a further Supposition; which is, that this Principle is not only equal in Strength of Operation to every other Appetite of the contrary Sort, but

also that it exceeds all other Appetites in the Means of Gratification, as much as they exceed it in the Number of them, that is, as much as the Sum of all the other Appetites, when added together, surpasses Unity. But neither of these Suppositions can be made, as being contrary to every Day's Observation and Experience. If we impartially survey the Actions of the Body of Mankind, (and from thence our Estimate, if we would form a true one, must be taken) we shall find this Principle greatly overmatch'd by those of a contrary Tendency; in some it operates not at all, in others very weakly in Comparison of the others; and in the best of Men, 'tis scarce sufficient with the additional Aid of Religion, to keep them constantly in the Paths of Obedience to all the great Duties of Morality. What then could it do, or what in Reason can be expected from it, without the Support and Assistance of this most powerfull Ally? But in the Appendix before mentioned, we hope to make it appear that this Sense, Taste (or whatever Name it goes by) is acquired, and that the human Soul is as much a mere *rasa Tabula* in respect of all implanted Appetites, Affections, &c. whatsoever, as she is in regard to innate Truths.

## § II.

1. The Design of the foregoing Section was to shew, not the Truth, but the Usefulness of Religion to the temporal Interests of Mankind; in this we shall endeavour to prove the Reality of Religion, or that it has a Being founded in the Nature of Man, and consequently resulting from the Relation he stands in to all such Things with which his own Existence has a necessary Connection and Dependence. And afterwards we will shew how Religion necessarily, and of itself, composes a Society distinct from the civil.

2. To go about to demonstrate the Being of a God, his Providence, and a future State of Rewards and Punishments, after so many, and such successful Attempts made that Way, by some of the greatest and most learned Men in all Ages of the World, would be needless, and of no Significancy: All sensible Persons, all Persons, without Distinction, who have allow'd themselves the Liberty of reflecting coolly, and without Partiality, upon them, must be convinced of their Certainty. And we do not see, how, or in what Way, a greater Affront could be offer'd the letter'd World, than by endeavouring

vouring to demonstrate Truths so readily assented to, and firmly established in Mens Minds, as those are. What then wants to be enquired into, and which concerns us most nearly, as rational dependent Beings, to know, is this, "What End could the Deity have in View in creating the Universe, and what are the Motives which induc'd him to it?" The right solving of which Question is of the greater Importance to Mankind, as their chief and final Interest plainly lies in framing a Conduct suitable to, and coincident with, those Motives---- For finding out the exciting Principle of Creation, as it discovers to us the Deity's Will or Intention therein; so it leads us directly on to our Duty, that is, it shews us that Rule of Action which God hath prescrib'd, and mark'd out for us, and what it is which he requires at our Hands, in an Agreement of Actions with which our Happiness plainly consists.

3. In order to have full Satisfaction in this Particular, it is necessary that we consult the Universe, and view his Will in the Workmanship of his Hands; which Works, upon a careful Survey, will be found to  
 carry

carry along with them the strongest Evidences of the Benignity of the Author of them: When we take into Consideration all the various Orders of Beings, and the bountiful Provision the great Author of them has made for the Preservation and Happiness of each Class, and of every Individual in it, (provided they act in Prosecution of each other's Good, which in the Intention of their Creator they are obliged to do), when we take a View, we say, of all those Creatures, and the comfortable Means of Subsistence which lie within their Reach, we cannot but conclude, that the Deity could have no other End in producing those Beings at first, and afterwards in continuing to preserve and govern them, but that they might be happy, or enjoy the Provision made for them with Pleasure and Delight; and consequently, that he was mov'd thereunto by a Principle of infinite Goodness, conducted by infinite Wisdom, and supported by all-mighty Power.

4. Another Argument, that Happiness is the grand End of the Creation, may be fetch'd from the Nature of Man. Man, as a rational sensible Being, cannot pursue Misery,

fery; as such; it is against the Make of his Constitution that he should; and if so, he can be no longer in Love with Life than whilst the Sum Total of his Happiness exceeds the Sum Total of his Misery. But it is plainly apparent, that Ninety-nine in an Hundred, if it were offered to their Choice, at their Departure out of this World, would (if there was no other State of Being after the present) take this Life, bad and wicked as it is, with all its Hardships and Sufferings, and think it good to be here, that is, would think Existence a Blessing to them. A sure Sign, that Happiness prevails in the World, notwithstanding some Appearances to the contrary. What is it which makes us so surpriz'd with reading, or with hearing of the Miseries of others? nothing, but the Novelty or Uncommonness of them. For what we are not accusom'd to, or the like of which falls not within the Compass of our Observation, is apt to raise our Wonder and Admiration.

5. Whatever God proposes, or has in View to be done, that he designs should be accomplished by Means properly fitted, in his Appointment, for it; and if he has contriv'd the

the



the present System in that particular Manner, that the End to be brought about in his Intention can only be effected by the Instrumentality of Men, it is his Will, that they direct their Acts and Pursuits in such a Way as is best suited for the Attainment of it. Now an absolutely perfect Being must, for that Reason, be absolutely invariable, that is, absolutely incapable of Change; he cannot will one Thing to-day, and another Thing to-morrow; consequently all his Dealings with, and Dispensations to Mankind, however discovered to them, and whether exhibited by way of Reward or Punishment, must each be subservient to, and promotive of his primary Will, or what gave the first Rise to the Creation, the Desire of communicating Happiness.

6. Having discover'd in Nature's Works the Will of its great Author, and the Obedience he expects should be paid to it from all such as are qualified to find it out, we now pass on to enquire into the Nature of Man, and the Obligations he is laid under to act agreeably to this his Maker's Will. For it is not the bare simple Knowledge of the Will of God, but the Conse-

sequences (the Consequences thereof to Man) of the Observance or Non-Observance of it, which induce the Obligation, and enforce a Conformity of Action to it. Now what these Consequences as to Man are, will be best understood by observing, that Man is so fram'd, as to be susceptible of Happiness and Misery; and so it is, that Happiness and Misery, or the procuring and preventing Causes of them, cannot be indifferent to a Being, who knows, and has tasted what these Terms mean; but consequently, that one necessarily becomes the Object of his Pursuits, the other as necessarily of his Aversion, as we before observ'd. And Man must know, that, as a dependent Creature, his Happiness can only arise from the Will and good Pleasure of him from whom he derived his Faculties, and Powers of Action, with Being itself; his Reason therefore, if he consults it, will tell him, that, if he would be ultimately happy, he must observe and practise, as much as in him lies, all such Things as are commanded by his Maker, and upon this very Account, because that they are commanded by him, and that he shall be rewarded for the doing of them.

And

And the Reason is, that so far as the Will is unconcern'd in any Action, so far is that Action of an indifferent Nature, and the Being, to whom it belongs, or who was the Doer of it, strictly speaking, no Subject of Esteem or Disesteem, of Rewards and Punishments; but stands properly upon the same Footing with necessary and mechanical Causes.

7. Or, the Thing may be taken and view'd in this Light; A, for Instance, goes to Church, or performs this or that religious Act, or he abstains from certain Practices, merely upon account of temporal Punishments, which otherwise, *i. e.* upon the Commission of them, must be submitted to. Since therefore, the avoiding Punishment is the sole Motive of his doing, or not doing those particular Actions, such Performances or Omissions, under those Circumstances, will secure him from that Punishment. Because every Action merits that, for the attaining which it was first taken in Hand; or, it entitles the Agent to an Exemption or Deliverance from that, for the avoiding which it was perform'd. Consequently every Action, whose proper Concern or Business was to

pro-

procure Happiness, or the Means of it, gives the Agent a Right to such Happiness, or its Means; if design'd to avert Punishment, or a Means of Misery, it entitles him to an Avoidance of that Punishment, &c. But tho' they will do this, yet such Actions or Omissions cannot obtain divine Favour, or avert divine Displeasure; that is, they cannot procure future Happiness, or prevent future Misery: Because the avoiding of present, not of future Misery, was the Thing aim'd at by A; and whoever attains the End for which any Action was undertaken, has nothing more to expect from it; that is, he has the Merits of it.

8. It is the Will and Intention of the Agent therefore, and that only, which gives him a Title to the Favour and Esteem of others; and therefore, if in the Performance of any Action, we look not up to God, and so consequently have not his Acceptance, as one of the main Ends of our acting, in View, however agreeable as to the material Part of it such Act may be to him, still we have done nothing that can in Reason recommend us to his Favour, and give us a Right to a Reward from him.

him. Since nothing in Reason can recommend us to the one, and entitle us to the other, but what was done out of sincere Obedience to his Will, and with a full Design or Intention to please him. And this by the Way teaches us, what Quality it is in Actions which gives the Agent a Right to the Esteem and Favour of others, that is, to a Disposition in them to promote his Happiness.

9. Not that we are able (nor is it necessary that we always should) have the divine Favour and Acceptance constantly in View, or be able to deduce every particular Action from a Consideration of its Acceptableness to the Will of God, in order to make it rewardable by him. “ It may, “ ’tis hoped, (says an ingenious Writer) be “ sufficient, if we have a general Intent “ of serving him in the Whole of any “ considerable Undertaking, and an express “ Regard to him, whenever he appears to “ be particularly concerned in any Part of “ it; our imperfect Understanding will not “ allow us to trace every Thing to our ultimate End. We find it necessary, therefore, to fix several inferior and subordinate

“ nate ones, wherein we are forced to ac-  
“ quiesce, both in our Knowledge and Prac-  
“ tice : And it is sufficient to justify and  
“ recommend an Action, if it can be fairly  
“ deduced from any one of those inferior  
“ and subordinate Ends, and have some Con-  
“ nection with what is manifestly our Duty.  
“ Nay further, some Actions which are  
“ directed to no distinct End at all, tho’  
“ in themselves they be no proper Subject  
“ of Rewards, yet they may become such  
“ by virtue of certain Habits, whereof they  
“ are Consequences, and for which Habits  
“ they are properly accountable. And the  
“ Reason of this is evident ; as we cannot  
“ have our main End constantly in View,  
“ ’tis necessary for us to acquire such Ha-  
“ bits of acting, as may lead us almost  
“ insensibly to it, and carry us on in our  
“ Journey, even when we are not think-  
“ ing of it : Those Habits, therefore, if they  
“ be rightly founded, and directed, must en-  
“ title us to a Reward for all the several Ac-  
“ tions which flow from them, even when  
“ the first Foundation is forgot. Thus a Ser-  
“ vant sufficiently deserves both the Title and  
“ Reward of being faithful, if he have ac-  
“ quired

“ quired such Habits of Labour and Diligence,  
 “ as will carry him regularly thro’ with it,  
 “ tho’ he seldom considers the End of all  
 “ his Labour, or thinks of his Master in  
 “ it.” From whence flow, in the Manner  
 of Corollaries; the following Truths.

10. That divine Favour and Rewards follow those Actions, and those only, which were undertaken, carry’d on, and perfected, purely upon the Deity’s Account, or with Intent to please him; unless such Acts be the Consequents of certain Habits form’d at first by acting with a View to his Favour, or in Obedience to his Will, which, in such a Case, have all the Valuableness, or Merit, with the Foundation on which they are built.

11. That the Use of Liberty, upon private Conviction that it is Man’s Duty so or so to act with regard to the supreme Being, is, in such Degree, necessary in the great Affair of Religion, that without it no Religionist can have any Title to God’s Favour upon the Score of the religious Services he does him; that is, no religious Performances, nor the Observances of those Duties respecting God, are any further meritorious

rious in his Eye, than as they are founded in Conviction and Choice.

12. That tho' coercive Power may oblige to outward Compliance and Conformity, yet as it is not fitted in its Nature to produce inward Dispositions correspondent therunto, so every Bias of this Kind laid upon the Mind is improperly apply'd. And Means improper and unfuitable in their Nature and Tendency, ought not to be made Choice of, or us'd, because the End aim'd at by them cannot be come at. Whence we learn, that the Exercise of temporal, coactive Power, or the Use of Force in Matters relating to divine Favour or Displeasure, cannot be right; therefore, by the Terms, must be wrong; and

13. From hence arises the unalienable Right of Toleration, or the Liberty of worshipping God according to Conscience; that is, in such a Way, and after that particular Manner, which every Man thinks most acceptable to him. And every Attempt in any Church, or Body of Men, united together upon a religious Account, to bring over others to their Persuasion in Matters of Religion, otherwise than by Reason or Argument,



ment, is a direct Breach or Violation of this Right.

14. And from hence likewise it appears, that all Punishment *pro salute Animæ* is inconsistent with the Nature of Religion, directly repugnant to the Condition of Mens Acceptance with God, and which cannot attain the End design'd by it, *i. e.* the Salvation of Mens Souls.

15. Religion, which takes in the Whole of Man's Duty to God, denotes a design'd voluntary Concurrence of Acts with the Purposes of Creation; or, it is an intentional co-operating with the Deity towards forwarding those Ends, in order to our being rewarded, and made happy by them. The Question then which naturally offers itself, is, what are those Ends? We have before shewn, that the End of Creation, and of all the divine Acts consequent thereupon, is the common Happiness of his Creatures. To promote this, therefore, in their several Stations, and according to their respective Abilities, is the proper Business of rational dependent Beings, and the Sum and Substance of their Religion; looking only therein up to God, and proposing his Fa-

vour, and their Happiness, as the ultimate End of their Actions. But the Vigour of Religion, as we shall shew presently, cannot be maintain'd, nor consequently itself have its proper Effect, without a Church; or, in other Words, nothing tends more to engage Men in the Pursuit of publick Happiness, and so much oblige them to a regular, conscientious Discharge of all those Duties which flow from the Relation of a Creature to its Creator, as Worship; which was the Thing intended by the Deity in making Worship to be a natural Duty.

16. Or thus; Man's Happiness, on the Whole, must not only arise from, but will ever be strictly proportion'd to, the Conformity of his Actions to the Will of the Deity: This Conformity varies, is found in Fact to vary, exactly as the View he has to serve God thereby varies; and this View is more or less perfect, consistent, and regular, according as the Sense he lives under of a superintending Principle is stronger or weaker. And this Sense can only be preserv'd and kept up in Mens Minds active and vigorous (as will appear presently) by Worship. Worship, therefore, as it is a

Means

Means of Happiness, must be a Duty, a proper Duty of rational sensible Beings. In short, our Imitation of the Deity (in which consists the Whole of Religion) will be universally, as is the Sense of our Dependency on God; and that this Sense cannot rise to, nor be preserv'd in, a Height sufficient to be a constant Principle of Action within us, shall, after defining what we mean by Worship, next be consider'd. By Worship we mean, Mens publickly testifying their Acknowledgments of the Belief of a God, and his Providence; their praying to him for such Things as they want; and their offering him Praise and Thanksgiving, the Tribute of a grateful Heart, for what they have receiv'd from him; and lastly, their paying him such Services, and in such particular Way or Manner, as either Reason or Revelation, or both, discover to be most acceptable to him, or what best comports with his Design in framing them.

17. There have been some, who have founded the Creator's Right of Worship on his Power and Sovereignty over Mankind: But, not to insist on any Arguments drawn

from hence (since no Man can be oblig'd, properly speaking, to concur with the Will of any Being any further, than such Concurrence is necessary to induce that Being to interest himself in his Favour) not to insist, we say, on Arguments drawn from Power and Sovereignty, which, as such, can be no Foundation of a reasonable Service, we shall deduce the Necessity of religious Worship from these two Points: 1st, Because the Sense of a superintending Principle cannot be kept up in its proper Height and Strength (agreeably to what we observ'd before) without it: And 2dly, From the beneficial Effects it has a necessary Tendency to produce. Both which shew it to be necessary to our Happiness, and consequently a proper Duty of Mankind.

18. First, Worship is necessary to keep up in Mens Minds a lively and affecting Sense of the Supreme Being. The Reason why Men forget any particular Thing, or, that such Thing hath not its due Influence upon them, is, the Want of attending frequently to it, and the not bringing it into their Minds, and taking a full View of it there, with all its various attendant Circumstances,

stances, Consequences, and the Relation it bears to their real or apprehended Happiness; consequently, whatever creates or encreases our Attention to this or that particular Thing, or Object, suppos'd to be connected in such or such Degrees with our well or ill Being, makes the Idea of such Thing or Being operate proportionably upon the Mind; and so consequently leave both vigorous and durable Effects of itself behind it. But this, Repetition, or common Use and Practice, always does in some Degree, be it more or less. Actions we have been long accusom'd to, whether they relate to Things of a moral, a religious, or civil Nature, are constantly attended with very sensible and lasting Impressions; and, if repeated at certain, fixt, stated Intervals, or Distances of Time, the Impressions grow gradually strengthening, till at last they become so confirm'd, as not to be effaced but with extreme Difficulty; and the Habits, or active Principles founded upon, and taking their Rise from those Impressions, grow stronger and more influential. And in nothing does this hold more universally true, nor is ever Repetition found in Fact

to be more necessary than in the Case of Religion: For, without frequent solemn Acknowledgments of God's Presence with us, of his Power and Sovereignty over us, and his Goodness and Munificence to us, the Sense of our Obligation to obey and serve him would, by Degrees (as it is found in Experience so to do) grow flat and languid, and in Time lose all its Influence over us. And in Proportion to Mens Coolness and Remissness in Religion, will their Negligence and Non-Observance of all social Duties, and publick Virtues be also. On the other Hand, there have been some (and we hope there are at this Time many others) who by a constant Attendance upon the Service of God, and conscientiously frequenting (so conscientiously as to think the Neglect of any Opportunity given them that Way a Sin) such Places of religious Worship, as have been agreed upon, and appointed by common Consent; there have been some, we say, who by this Means have settled in their Minds such a Sense of their Dependence upon God, and of the absolute Necessity of a good and holy Life, as to be uniformly and regularly determin'd

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by it, even in Cafes where an Inconfiftency or Competition of Purfuits has lain betwixt Inclination and Duty; and which has kept them inviolably attach'd to the Cause of Virtue, in Spite of all Temptations to draw them off from it; however, fo far, and up to that Degree attach'd to it, as the neceffary and unavoidable Infirmities of human Nature will give Leave, or allow of. So beneficial and friendly to publick Happinefs is this Senfe of Religion! And yet what is more furprizing, is, that beneficial and friendly as it is to Man's Good and Welfare in Life, it has been expos'd to Banter and Ridicule, and met with repeated Infuls and Attacks, and even from thofe who make loud Pretences of being the fatteft Friends to Liberty, and the ableft Advocates for the civil Happinefs of Mankind. But nothing better proves the Neceffity of religious Worship, than thofe good and happy Effects which naturally flow from it. For the Exercife of this Duty in a fuitable and becoming Manner has a natural Tendency to work in the Petitioner's Mind fuch a lively and affecting Senfe of God and Religion, as to exprefs itfelf in proper and  
fuitable

suitable Influences upon his Passions, and so in a proper and suitable Direction of his Behaviour towards his Fellow-Creatures: Which Habit or Frame of Mind alone can render us lovely and delightful Creatures in the Sight of a lovely and delightful Creator, whose Desire is, that our Love and Gratitude to him may be express'd in a tender and affectionate Concern for the Good and Welfare of our dependent Brethren: For in every Act of religious Worship, perform'd with that Seriousness and Attention of Mind that every Act of religious Worship ought to be, we own God to be the Creator, the Preserver, and Governor of the World; that we are indebted to him for every good Thing we enjoy, and for the Supply of those we stand in Need of; and that we are every Moment of our Lives upheld and supported in Being by the same Almighty Power which first gave us it; and no rational Creature can possibly profess to believe this, without being suitably affected by it. The Apprehension of God's being so present with us, as to be intimately conscious of what we think, speak, and act, makes us shudder at the Thoughts of speaking,



ing, moving, and acting any thing, which may be just Matter or Foundation of Offence to him. The Sense of his Eternity and Infinity, of his Power and Majesty, of his Intelligence and Wisdom (which every Act of religious Worship naturally tends to produce and excite) raises in us the highest Astonishment and Admiration at the Excellency of such a Being, and possesses us with just and becoming Sentiments of our own Little-ness and Insignificancy, whenever we look up to him, and view him, as sitting upon his Throne of State, cloath'd with those essential Attributes. His Justice demands our awful Fear and Reverence----His Veracity secures our Trust and Confidence----- His Mercy and Goodness produce the most lively Sense of Love and Gratitude. Thus are we affected with the Consideration of what God is in Himself, and what with regard to his Creatures.

“ 19. There's something, says a fine Writer, in human Nature, that's very hard to be quite suppress'd, and can't be reconcil'd to apparent Baseness. The Sight of a Friend, to whom we have been ungrateful, will give us some Uneasiness; how much  
 “ more

“ more may be expected from the Presence  
 “ of the All-mighty, when we have been so  
 “ to him? That Presence we are always in,  
 “ but do not always consider it: Solemn Ap-  
 “ plications to him make us more immediately  
 “ sensible of that Presence, and leave such  
 “ Impressions as (if duly repeated) will keep  
 “ us from forgetting it.” *Rymer's* general  
 Representation of reveal'd Religion.

20. As to Prayer; if it be considered as the Address of a Creature to its Creator, it naturally tends to possess us with an awful and becoming Sense of God's Being and Majesty; of his Power, Supremacy, and Dominion over all Things; of his Superintendence, and Direction of all Events to his own special Purposes; it reminds us of our Obligation to him for all the good Things we enjoy, and consequently brings into our Minds our Incapacity of providing and furnishing ourselves with the Necessaries of Life. And as we know we cannot *oblige* the Deity to supply our Wants, or to confer his Favours on us, such a Sense of our Dependency will necessarily produce Resolutions in us of acting in such a Manner as will *dispose* him to it: That is, it will make us benevolent, the great Thing in-  
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tended by this, and every other Species or Act of Worship.

21. By praising the Deity, and returning him Thanks, we thereby acknowledge that we have no Right to his Favours, or to the Benefits he confers on us; and consequently cannot lay the least Claim to them upon the score of being what we are, but that they proceed absolutely from his Good-will and Pleasure: And as he is at Liberty, and under the Power of no one Thing or Being in Nature, so he may choose whether he will bestow them or not. The Conscioufness of which will excite in us a Desire of rendering ourselves suitable Objects of his Kindness, by engaging us in a Pursuit of the same End with himself; that is, it will make us benevolent.

22. Fasts, Humiliations, Contritions for Sins, Festivals, Thanksgiving for Favours receiv'd, or Dangers escap'd, and the like, have each in their own Natures (as all Sorts of Religious Acts, upon a little Reflection, will be found to have) a direct Tendency, either to produce, or, if produc'd, to encrease in us, a Sense of our Dependency upon God; and consequently, at the same Time, a Tendency to produce in us Desires of approving ourselves to  
him;

him ; and of avoiding those which are offensive, and against his Will---and if they have those Effects, or those Tendencies, they must be natural Duties.

23. And from hence we are furnished with an Answer to those who demand, that tho' God, consider'd under the Notion of Creator and Governor, may have a Right to oblige his Creatures to all such Actions as he is pleas'd to prescribe, yet what End can a Being, whose Happiness is compleat and perfect, and therefore incapable of any Enlargement, have in requiring such and such outward religious Performances, or stated Acts of Worship, at his Creatures Hands ? Is he the better, or conduces it to his Happiness, to be worship'd ? Or can he be made more glorious, by being glorify'd ? Or, does he want the Addresses and Applications of his Creatures to be inform'd of their Necessities, or their Prayers in order to incline him to relieve them ? Did but those who talk in this or the like Strain, consider seriously with themselves, what Tendency the regular Exercise of this important Duty has both in *Reason* and *Fact*, to draw Men by degrees to a closer Imitation of the Divine Perfections, they would readily see that they are the

Persons

Persons who talk foolishly and at Random. And did but they perform this Duty more faithfully, and attend it more frequently than they do, their own Experience, that is, the Disposition of Mind necessarily, tho' gradually, form'd by it, would be a standing Confutation of all such sort of Objections; and they would be happily convinced that there is no manner of Ground or Foundation for the raising of them.---For in every succeeding Intercourse with the Deity, we have fresh Motives and Encouragements to write after his Copy; to be tender-hearted and compassionate to the Distress'd; to be kind and charitable to the Poor; candid in our Constructions of other Mens Actions; easy, humane, and affable to all. And when Men live under such a Sense of God and Religion, they will be afraid of offending him in the least, as well as in the greatest Matters.

24. Prayer, notwithstanding it has those useful and beneficial Effects before-mention'd, has been stil'd by some a sort of an Impiety against God; unbecoming of him to receive, and consequently of Man to offer. For, say they, since he must be allow'd to know our *real* wants much better than we can be suppos'd to

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to do ourselves, it argues much Presumption in rational Beings, and seems to bear hard upon his Attributes of Intelligence and Goodness, to teaze him with our Impertinences, and to think to move him with our Importunities. To which we answer :

25. That tho' God knows what is most suitable to be done or omitted in all possible Situations of his Creatures, and will certainly, in every assignable Instance, do, or omit doing, what is best and fittest, upon the whole, to be done, yet it seems but reasonable, that Men should ask before they receive. For a Favour, one would think, should be worth the asking for.

26. All Ends, be they of what Nature or Kind they will, are brought about by certain Means; and the Author of Nature does nothing without them. This is Fact. Who knows therefore, but that Prayer is the Means, the Means we believe on Man's Part, which God has instituted for the obtaining his Favour, and the Supply of such Things as his Circumstances require? the great Means of possessing the Benefits of *this* as well as of *another* Life? And that *asking* is made the Condition of Mens *receiving*? Sure we are, that it would

be monstrous Arrogance and Presumption in an Order of Beings conscious of their absolute Dependence upon the Supreme Being both for what they are, and for what they enjoy, to assert the Contrary.

27. The Deity's Favours are not to be obtain'd but upon certain Conditions, that is, they cannot be enjoy'd to any Advantage, all things consider'd, but by Men who have acquired such a particular Frame or Habit of Mind, as necessarily qualifys them for the Reception and Use of them; or, unless there be some peculiar Analogy, Correspondence, and Suitableness betwixt the Petitioner's Mind and the Thing petition'd for; and the Reason is, because Things are to Men, as they are in State and Disposition of Mind towards them: This Disposition or Habit of Mind, Prayer has a Tendency to produce and preserve; and therefore must be a Means, a Means however of that which is itself a Means of receiving God's Favours, and under that Notion of it, a proper necessary Duty of rational, dependent Beings.

28. But, not to multiply Words: The End of Prayer is not so much to move the Deity, who, considered as an unchangeable Being, is not capable of being moved or affect-

ed at all ; as it is in its natural Tendency adapted to dispose the Petitioner for making a right Use, and having a full and proper Enjoyment, of what he makes his Prayers to God for ; and for his being a fit and suitably-inclin'd Subject of receiving those Communications of Goodness which he design'd for a Creature in such Circumstances. And this proclaims how necessary Prayer is to our Happiness, and is one Instance, out of many, of the divine Goodness in making it the procuring Cause of the Benefits he confers on us, and without which it is plain we can have no Reason to expect them at his Hands ; or rather, that they could be no Benefits to us but under that peculiar Turn or Cast of Mind, which, in his Appointment of Things, God has made Prayer the necessary Means or Instrument of forming. But to proceed.

29. Since the Worth, or Value of Things, is ever in Proportion to their Usefulness, or to the Moment of Good produc'd, or of Misery avoided, by them, (for the Avoidance or Prevention of any given Degree of Misery is equivalent, if not prepollent, to the Introduction of the same Degree of Happiness) and since this Moment is always in a compound  
Ratio



Ratio of the Number of Enjoyers, and the Quantity of Happiness each one possesses ; so Things, whose Influence is of greater or less Extent do, according to those their different Aspects upon human Happiness, come under different Denominations. What is productive of Good to private Persons only, becomes the Object only of particular Men's Pursuits ; and what affects large Bodies or Societies of Men, ought to be the Aim and Pursuit of such Bodies. What belongs to private particular Persons, therefore, is of a private particular Nature, or Concernment ; and what concerns Men in general, is of a general Nature and Significancy. And as a private Interest demands private Endeavours, Pursuits, Applications, &c. so does a publick Interest require publick Endeavours, &c. For if God in his Conduct and Government of the World, orders and disposes of Things in such a Manner, as to give Men no Reason to expect private Favours, unless they ask them first privately of him ; Persons, who in a publick Capacity have publick Concerns, have no Reason to expect publick Favours, unless they ask them publickly of him likewise. Consequently, when Men are jointly concerned, they are

oblig'd to join in one common Prayer, if they expect one common Benefit, and to make common Acknowledgments in Consideration of Favours received in common ; that is, Men ought to pray to God, and to praise him publickly, or there ought to be a publick Worship.

30. Publick Worship has also a natural Tendency to interweave and knit the Interests of Mankind together ; and consequently, to promote each other's, and therein the common Happiness : For when a Number of them unanimously join in a Petition to the Deity, either for the Acquisition of some Good, or the Prevention of some Evil, if they expect their Requests should be granted in a Manner suitable to their respective Circumstances, they must in all their Movements and Actions endeavour to approve themselves to him, by behaving after such a Fashion as will of Course dispose him to it ; that is, as will render them proper Subjects of his Favour. Now, as God's Approbation will necessarily follow such Pursuits as are conformable to, and promotive of, his primary Motive, or exciting Principle of Action ; that is, must attend Acts of Beneficence, perform'd with a View

to please him, and to merit his Favour; so an Endeavour to approve themselves to him, must be no other than a design'd voluntary Endeavour after the Production of the Happiness of his Creatures; that is, in other Words, an Endeavour to be benevolent.

31. Publick Worship is not only necessary to publick Happiness, but likewise to publick Security. For, without Dependence upon one another's Words in their several Dealings and Intercourses with each other, Mankind cannot subsist (since Man's Preservation and Happiness, and the Means leading to them, unavoidably oblige him to a Multiplicity of Business, and Transactions with others :) But we have shewn above, that there is no Room for placing any Degree of Confidence in the most solemn Promises and Affeверations of an Atheist; and if not, then to have Credit with others, in all those Cases where *such* Credit has no other Foundation than the Word or Declaration of him that proposes it to rest on; in such Cases, we say, to have Credit with others, it is necessary that a Man profess his Belief of a Deity's Animadversion, as the Patron and Protector of Integrity and Truth, and the Avenger of Falshood and

Perfidy ; and for the same Reason, that it is necessary that he should profess such a Belief, is it also necessary, that he make those Professions or Acknowledgments in a publick Manner, otherwise Mankind can have no Assurance that he lives under the Influence of the Sense of such a Being ; that is, it is requisite for the Sake of mutual Confidence, that there be a publick Worship.

32. It has been an Opinion, (of late) generally received, and pretty warmly espous'd, by a sett of Men, remarkable for their steady Opposition to all old Usages and Customs, whether relating to Matters of Speculation or Practice, and for an implacable Hatred and Aversion to all establish'd Tenets ; it is their Opinion, we say, that an inward Veneration and Esteem for the Deity, rendered more intense and affecting by frequent and serious Meditation on the Excellency of his Nature, and on the Relation he bears to his Creatures in general, and to them in particular, is, of itself, sufficient, without any stated, publick Forms of Worship ; and is all that is fit for us to perform, or our Maker to expect. And consequently that Religion is properly and purely Mental, and expresses  
not

not itself in any outward Acts or Modes of Worship. To which we answer,

33. 'Tis highly probable, that there are many Ranks of Creatures within the Confinés of the Universe, rising gradually in Perfection above us ; and 'tis, we presume, strictly demonstrable, that all Orders of Beings, conscious of their Derivation from the first supreme Cause, are obliged to make him such a Tender of their Homage and Service, as is suited to the Sense of their Dependency upon him, and of their Obligation to him : But the way or Manner in which this is to be done, must be fetch'd from the Nature of those Beings, who are to pay him such Homage, &c. For the same Kinds or Methods of religious Worship do not suit all Ranks of Beings alike. A mental Religion, or one abstracted from all external Modes and Forms, is best adapted for the use of Beings purely intellectual : In Truth, no other sort of Religion can possibly suit Beings of this Complexion, or if there could, would any such fit with a becoming Grace upon them. But rational, sensible Beings, are oblig'd to worship their Creator in a rational sensible Manner ; that is, tho' in all their pub-

lick Addresses to Almighty God they must use external Forms, &c. yet their Minds must constantly go along with, and accompany all such Expressions, Declarations, &c. and it would be equally absurd, and as much out of Nature, for those Sorts of Being to pretend to aspire up to the Region of pure Intellect, and occupy the Province of unbodied Spirits, as it would be in those latter, to sink into Matter, and to move, and act accordingly. “ Time and “ Place” (and we may add, stated Forms of Worship, and Publick Officers, to have the Care and Management of it, are in some Degree, if not in the same Degree, necessary) “ Time and Place, says the learned and ingenious Dr. *Cave*, in his primitive Christianity, are Circumstances inseparable from “ religious Actions : For Man, consisting of a “ Soul and Body, cannot always be actually “ engaged in the Service of God ; that is “ the Privilege of Angels, and Souls freed “ from the Fetters of Mortality. So long as we “ are here, we must worship God with respect to our present State, and consequently, “ of Necessity, have some definite Time and “ Place to do it in.” But we observe further in Confutation of the Opinion above,

34. That the more our Awe and Reverence of a Deity grows up into a Habit, and the stronger this Habit is, the greater Influence it must necessarily have upon the Lives and Actions of its Subjects, or of those who have acquir'd it. But Habits, we see, are not easily, and at once, generated and produc'd; unless the general Current of Education and Morals be turn'd that way; frequent Repetitions are found necessary for the making of them, and much Care, and Thought and Attention for the right fixing of them; and external Objects are always at Hand, ever forward and ready to gratify any corresponding Appetite, (and, which is carefully to be considered, and, in some Cases, much to be lamented) the Inclination or Appetite grows more violent and pressing for Gratification, the nigher the Object approaches. Whence it will necessarily happen, that Meditation must frequently be interrupted, and the Mind's Attention to the Concerns of another World withdrawn from thence. For, whether she likes it or not, external Objects will obtrude and force themselves upon the Mind, and make Impressions there. Add to this, that the greater Half of Mankind are extreemly ignorant in matters  
of

of Religion, and know but little of the Rule of Conduct as it respects themselves, their Fellow-Creatures, and their God; unavoidably occasion'd by their present unavoidable Situation in Life: which at the same Time that it shews the Impossibility of religious Habits taking their Rise from Meditation on the divine Nature and Attributes, shews also the absolute Necessity of a publick Instruction in the great Affair of Religion; and consequently, the Necessity of stated Times and Places, and of proper Persons chosen for Attendance on this very Business. And it is confirm'd by Experience, that solemn Addresses made to God, in this publick Manner, have a much greater Aptitude to fix in Men's Minds awful Thoughts of God's Perfections; lasting Impressions from the Sense of their Dependency on him, and of their Obligation to him; than loose, interrupted, and occasional Reflections can possibly be suppos'd, or ever were in Fact found to have: And if so, then to be preferr'd to them. There is, however, this undeniable Advantage arising from publick Worship, that it preserves in Men's Minds (and so keeps the World of Mankind from falling into a general Confusion) a constant

Sense



Sense of a Deity, and of the important, unchangeable Obligations of Religion. And this shews the extreme Folly and Absurdity of those who so loudly exclaim against all social Institutions or Appointments in Religion; and that Religion taken and considered in this Light, cannot be of any Service to Society, a view to which was the sole Thing that constituted it a Duty. And therefore, as it never was intended by the Deity that it should, so it ought not (if the Case was practicable, as it is not) to be reduc'd to a Matter merely personal; as some late Writers, in Characters of Champions for human Liberty, have strenuously contended for. And this brings us to observe, that if religious Worship would make due Impressions, and so have its proper, intended Effect, upon Men's Minds, and consequently dispose to a suitable Practice; that these four Things, as Circumstances of it, are both necessary and expedient.

35. *Some certain Portion of Time and Place set apart and appropriated for this very Purpose.* For Man, in his present Situation, has a Multiplicity of Engagements (and which are of so different and contrary a Nature, as  
not

not to be perform'd but at different Times) on his Hands: The Calls of Hunger and Thirst, returning at their proper Seasons, and appointed Intervals, must be answered; the Claims of Relations, Benefactors, and Friends, founded on particular Actions done to each other, ought to be satisfied; and the Duties we owe to God, arising from the Relation subsisting betwixt a Creature *so constituted as Man is*, and his Creator, must be fulfill'd. As the *one* ought to be done, so the *other* must not be left undone. A great Part of Man's Time, therefore, will necessarily be taken up in discharging those Duties he owes to himself and others. Now the great Design, and principal Aim of publick Worship being to disengage Men's Minds out of those worldly Affairs in which they are apt to be too much entangled; to withdraw them from a too close Attachment to the Interests of it; and to fix them on Things above; the Rewards of good Men, and the Punishments of bad, which shall be dealt out and distributed to those who have voluntarily forwarded, or oppos'd the Ends of God's Creation, that is, to such as have been of a benevolent or malevolent Disposition; this, we

say,

say, being confessedly one of the main Ends of publick Worship, it follows, that God cannot be rightly worshiped at all *Times*, for then he must be *sometimes* worshiped amidst a Noise and Hurry of Business (to withdraw Men from which at some certain Junctures and Seasons was, as we have shewn, one great Design, and the proper Concern, of all religious Appointments or Conventions;) and if not rightly at all Times, then it is fitting that certain Parts or Portions thereof be set apart for that Purpose.

36. And as all Times are not alike, so neither are all Places; consequently, *some Places will be found more convenient for the Exercise of this Duty than others can in Reason be suppos'd to be*; but the more uniform and consistent, or the more compos'd and settled, the Mind is in her Meditations, and the greater Attention is us'd, and the more Humility observ'd, in the Performance of every Act of religious Worship, the more intensely does it contemplate the divine Nature and Attributes; views more narrowly, and considers more seriously, Man's own State and Condition; the Relation he stands in to his Maker, and his absolute Dependence, in every Respect,

upon

upon him ; and has a stronger practical Sense of those Truths, and such others as are necessarily connected with them. Whence we draw, in the Manner of a Corollary, this Truth, that those Places which by their Make and Situation are least liable to discompose the Mind, and to draw off her Attention to what is said or signify'd, are the fittest and most proper to be made choice of and appointed. To the Quotation above from Dr. *Cave* we shall subjoin the following one, as it stands connected with the other. “ Now  
 “ that Men might not be left to a floating  
 “ Uncertainty in a matter of so great Impor-  
 “ tance, in all Nations and Ages Men have  
 “ been guided by the very Dictates of Nature  
 “ to pitch upon some certain Places and  
 “ Seasons, when and where they might meet,  
 “ assemble together to perform the publick  
 “ Offices of Religion.

37. *A proper Gesture or Position of Body, suited to the particular Nature and Tendency of each Act of religious Worship to be perform'd.* There is certainly a manifest Difference in the outward Gestures and Positions of a Man's Body, universally taken and understood in those Cases to be signifi-  
 tive

tive of Men's different Sentiments. Hence some are constantly acknowledg'd to be Marks or Indications of a Sense of greater Degrees of Dependency than others. Now, as the Gestures of the Body with which we worship the Deity should flow from a Sense of our Relation to him, and Dependence upon him, and correspond *as nearly as may be to it*; so in Return, this Sense of our Dependency will be increas'd and heighten'd by those Gestures: Consequently, the more humble and devout we are in our Worship, or the more expressive our Postures, adapted to the particular Nature of each religious Act, are of *Humility* and our *dependent State*, the higher will our Sense of Dependency on God rise, and the more we shall be dispos'd to obey and serve him, that is, the more benevolent we shall be.

38. The next Thing necessary to the due Performance of publick Worship, *is, some certain Form, or Forms of Words, significative of their several Cases, to be profess'd in common by every Religionist*. For, if rational, sensible Beings are, in Consequence of their respective Circumstances in Life, oblig'd to join together in making Application for such Things

as their Necessities call for, and in returning Praise and Thanksgiving for that Current of Benefits which keep continually flowing from the Deity towards them : the Form or Manner, in which such Prayer or Thanksgiving should be made and offered, ought to be previously agreed on amongst themselves, and the Words expressing the several Ideas composing such Form, or Forms, collected into proper, significant Sentences, and digested under well-tim'd Periods. Because, if either general or particular Cases were stated, and Occurrences provided for, in another Manner ; that is, in no Manner at all, how could the Devotionists suit each other's Mind, and the Words signifying their several Wants, Necessities, &c. in each Address to Almighty God ? To suppose they know beforehand what each other in the Congregation will say, immediately and without Consultation, is to suppose that all of them are endow'd with the Gift of knowing each other's Mind ; that is, that they are omniscient : A Property or Attribute, none of them, we dare say, will lay Claim to, as being the sole Prerogative of the first great Cause of all Things, and is itself incommunicable.

39. Again; some Things are so necessary to our Preservation and Being, that if God should with-hold them from us, we should immediately cease to exist in the Manner we do; others there be also, which, tho' less necessary, yet they are such, as that we cannot live either happily or comfortably without. Now the Case requires, that our Wants and Necessities of all Sorts be express'd in Terms suitable to the Nature, Quality, and Degree of them; and that all Applications made to the Deity should be offer'd up in Sentences expressive of the true State of our Condition. Which sufficiently shews, that in Matters of such general Concern, where the Thing or Things petition'd for have a Reference to the Production or Removal of a Means of Happiness, or Misery, to every particular Religionist; so it is requisite, that each Individual do join in the same Prayer for the Attainment or Avoidance of it. For *as Prayer, to use the Words of an ingenious Writer, is an asking of God the Mercies we stand in need of, so it is but reasonable, that those publick Mercies which we all stand in need of, should be petition'd for by all in the same Words.* Which cannot be done, unless there be

some common Form established by mutual Consent, comprehending the Subject Matter of such Petition.

40. Further ; in moral or religious Science, as well as in those which come under a physical Consideration, all Things are not alike, or equally, clear to all Men ; some there are (the Profession of which may in some Degree be necessary to their Happiness) wholly above the Capacities of a very large Body of Men ; and which, as lying out of the common Road of low, uncultivated Understandings, they cannot at all comprehend. Hence it is necessary for the Benefit of the Illiterate, that Men's Opinions concerning the Being and Attributes of God, and their Sentiments relating to his creating and governing the World ; and in particular, his Government over them, in all the various Ways of dispensing Happiness to them, be drawn out into Propositions, express'd in such clear, intelligible Terms, as to work Conviction in, and to draw Assent from, the lowest and meanest Understandings. And in having Recourse to which, it will serve them as a Resting-Place, or Standard of Faith, to adhere to upon all Occasions,

41. Who-



41. Whoever reads the civil and religious History of Mankind in the Times of Paganism, with any degree of Attention, will readily see, that to render the Heavenly Powers propitious to them, their principal Care was to form themselves, by an Imitation of the reigning Qualities of the God they worshiped, into a Likeness with them; to cloath themselves with the same Nature and Faculties; and to mold themselves into a Cast or Frame of Mind analogous to the leading Principle of that supreme Being, or Beings who had them in peculiar. Hence that surprizing Resemblance betwixt the Manners, Customs, &c. of the Inhabitants of any Nation, and the Temper or Genius of the God who presided over them; if the Numen was of a cruel, savage, implacable Nature, so were they; if of contrary Dispositions and Determinations of Nature, they were in conformity with them. So, that given the natural Genius and Propensity of the tutelar God of any particular Place, it was easy to collect from thence, the Usages, Ways of Thinking and Acting, of his Votaries; and *Vice versa*, knowing those last, we can discover the first. It is an unquestionable Truth therefore, as being founded

on an unquestionable Matter of Fact, that Men's Behaviour under the Sense of Religion, or their Conformity to the Divine Will, will be always according to the Notions they have fram'd in their Minds of the Nature and Perfections of the supreme Mind; consequently the juster and more agreeable to Truth those Notions are, the more perfect will this Conformity be, that is, the better and more extensive Influence they will have upon Men's Actions: And if so, Care must be taken, and proper Means us'd, to prevent the various and contrary Sorts of Infidelity and Superstition from mixing with them; in the Degree either of which prevails in the World, so much Detriment must unavoidably arise to it from such a monstrous and unnatural Conjunction. But there is no other way of doing this, except by having those Notions concerning the Deity carefully collected, and drawn up into Propositions or Articles, in the Nature of a Creed; and Men's Relation to him, and the Duties arising from it, express'd in suitable and correspondent Sentences; and the publick Profession of their Belief of the Truth and Reality of the one, and their Acknowledgments of the binding Force and Obligations

of the other, made the Terms of Communion, and the discriminatory Condition of Men's being received into it.—Before we dismiss this Article, we beg Leave to give the Reader the three following Quotations out of the Works of three very able and judicious Writers.

42. The first is a Transcript from the *Ecclesiastical Polity* of the ever-memorable and judicious Mr. *Hooker*, whose Words are full to our present Purpose, and whose Authority will ever be esteem'd, by all Judges of Candour and Impartiality, of equal Weight with any that can possibly be brought on the other Side of the Question. These are his Words; “ To him which consider-  
 “ eth the grievous and scandalous Incon-  
 “ veniences, whereunto they make them-  
 “ selves daily subject, with whom any blind  
 “ or secret Corner is judg'd a fit Houſe of  
 “ common Prayer, the manifest Confusions  
 “ which they fall into, where every Man's  
 “ private Spirit and Gift (as they call it) is  
 “ the only Bishop that ordaineth to this Mi-  
 “ nistry; the irksome Deformities, whereby  
 “ thro' endless and senseless Effusion of in-  
 “ digested Prayers, they oftentimes disgrace

“ in most insufferable Manner, the wor-  
 “ thiest part of Christian Duty towards God,  
 “ who herein are subject to no certain Order,  
 “ but pray both what and how they please:  
 “ To him, I say, which weigheth duly all  
 “ those Things, the Reasons cannot be ob-  
 “ scure why God doth, in publick Prayer,  
 “ so much respect the Solemnity of Places  
 “ where, the Authority and Calling of the  
 “ Persons by whom, and the precise Ap-  
 “ pointment even with what Words or Sen-  
 “ tences his Name should be call'd on  
 “ amongst them.” Thus far that great  
 Man.

43. The next is from a small Tract entitul-  
 ed, *The Faith and Practice of a Church of*  
*England Man.* “ As far as I can find (says  
 “ this ingenious Author) since Miracles ceased,  
 “ there always was a *Form of Prayer* and  
 “ Service prescribed, and it was never left  
 “ to every Clergyman to say what Prayers,  
 “ and use what Form of Service he pleased;  
 “ much less was any *Extempore Prayer* to  
 “ God in Publick ever approv'd of. For  
 “ besides the Indecency that will often be  
 “ committed in extempore Prayers (which  
 “ surely ought to be avoided if we can, when  
 “ we

“ we address ourselves to the infinite Ma-  
 “ jesty of Heaven and Earth in behalf of  
 “ his Church, as well as on the Concerns of  
 “ our Souls) it speaks Respect to God, when  
 “ we take all possible Care, that nothing but  
 “ what is well weigh’d be offered to him.  
 “ A prescrib’d Form also is the only way to  
 “ keep up Uniformity among ourselves. And  
 “ seeing whatever is fit for us to ask in Pub-  
 “ lick, is known sufficiently, why should not  
 “ the Expressions to be us’d on such Occasions  
 “ be defined also ? If the Matter be known,  
 “ why should not the Words ? Besides that  
 “ ’tis an Ease to my Mind, when I know  
 “ before hand what I am to join in. And  
 “ I confess there are very few Men with  
 “ whose *Extempore Prayers* I would willing-  
 “ ly join in. In *Extempore Prayers* also, it  
 “ is too often found, that he that prays will  
 “ often more express and vent his own pri-  
 “ vate Thoughts and Passions, than the  
 “ Desires and Wants of the Congregation,  
 “ and the Church ; all which Things are  
 “ utterly to be avoided in all religious  
 “ Offices.”

44. The last is a short Abstract from an Epistle of the famous *Calvin* to the *Protector*

of *England*. “As for the Forms of Prayers,  
 “and Ecclesiastical Rites, saith he, I much  
 “approve it, that there be one certain Form  
 “extant, from which Ministers in their  
 “Function may not depart. As well that  
 “thereby Provision may be made for the  
 “Simplicity and Unskilfulness of some; as  
 “also that the Consent of all the Churches  
 “amongst themselves may so certainly ap-  
 “pear; lastly also, that the petulant Light-  
 “ness of some may be prevented, who affect  
 “Innovations; to which End also the  
 “Catechism tendeth, as I have shown before;  
 “so therefore there ought to be a set Form  
 “of Catechism, of Administrations of the  
 “Sacraments, and of publick Prayer.”

45. And for a Demonstration of the Law-  
 fulness, not to say Fitness and Expediency,  
 of set Forms of publick Prayer, to the three  
 abovemention'd Authorities we will add ano-  
 ther, which is beyond all Exception; the  
 Authority of Christ himself; who, on pur-  
 pose as it were, to remove the Objections  
 which he foresaw, some out of a Spirit of  
 Perverseness and Obstinacy, more than from a  
 Love of Truth, might make against them;  
 our Saviour, we say, gave us an Instance of  
 one

one of his own framing, in that short but comprehensive Form which he commanded his Disciples, and by them (as the Subject-Matter of such Petition was of general Concernment) all succeeding Christians to use upon their daily Occasions. And human Nature always continuing the same, our Wants and Necessities must, and for ever will, continue to be the same, they were in our Saviour's Time; and therefore the same Words, which were necessary to express them at that Juncture of Time, will for ever remain proper to be us'd, even to the End of the World.

46. The *fourth* and *last*, necessary Property of Religious Worship, is, a Number of Men set apart for the Administration of those Offices, and to give their Attendance wholly upon them. If none were appointed for this Purpose, the Offices of Religion could not be performed, or not performed in that Manner as to obtain the intended Effect; and the Reason is, because all are not qualify'd to take the Management of those Things into their Hands: For the right Administration of any Office depends upon the Person's, with whom the Power of executing it is lodg'd, having  
a per-

perfect Knowledge of the Nature and End of it; this univerſally holds with regard to every particular Vocation or Employment in Life. In common Equity therefore, the Province of religious Matters ought to devolve upon thoſe Perſons, who after previous Enquiry made, both into their Abilities, and their Diſpoſition, for taking ſuch Office upon themſelves, are found qualified, and ſo conſequently fit to be ſet apart, to attend upon this very Buſineſs. Unleſs Affairs of the greateſt Weight and Moment ſhall be left at Random, to be adminiſter'd by every one who ſhall conceit himſelf to have the neceſſary Abilities for the right ordering and Management of them; a way of thinking, which the common Practice of the World, in the Nomination and Appointment of Perſons to all other kinds of Offices, abſolutely condemns.

47. Again; we have proved that all rational, dependent Beings ſtand oblig'd, by every Motive which can induce them to it, to worſhip the Deity: But ſince ſome of them, who, by their Situation in the World, are ſubjected to Labour and Drudgery, and conſequently forc'd to act very rugged and troubleſome Parts in it, are not qualify'd to  
under-



understand the whole of their Duty, that is, as it respects God, their Fellow-Creatures, and themselves; in Consideration of such a Deficiency in the Knowledge of their Duty, it is highly necessary that they be taught it by others, that is, that certain Persons adequate in Abilities to the Undertaking, be appointed to explain the several Duties of rational, sensible Beings, with the Grounds and Reasons of their Obligation.

48. One Reason, among others, of publick Worship being instituted, was, that Men might join in sending up one Petition to the Deity for Benefits belonging to them in common, and to make joint and united Acknowledgments upon Account of Favours enjoy'd in common from him: But there seems to be no possible way of Religionists joining in one Petition, &c. except by attending to one Speaker, who, as Mouth of the Congregation, is to offer up their Prayers and Praises to the supreme Disposer of all Things; consequently, &c. Besides, in a Body of Men, where all are Speakers, or at liberty to speak when and how they please, much Disorder will unavoidably arise, which will necessarily defeat the End for which such a  
 Body

Body assembled themselves. And therefore if the Church would avoid the Noise and Clamour of ignorant illiterate Members, they must limit the Reading of the general Forms of Prayers and Thanksgiving, and such like other Acts in which they are to join, to some one who is regularly appointed to such Ministrations.

49. These Deductions of Reason are confirm'd by Matter of Fact: It has been the constant, the invariable Practice of all Nations to have a distinct Order of Men set apart to administer in holy Things; to assist their Fellow-Creatures in their publick Devotions; to explain the several Duties of Religion; and to enforce the strict universal Observance of them upon Motives of future Happiness and Misery; for knowing how closely Man's Happiness, in every Period of his Existence, and in every Relation of Life, is connected with the strict, regular Observance of the Duties of Religion; and that this Observance very much depended upon the right Performance of religious Offices; so they thought, the best possible Provision ought to be made in regard to this Particular; which could only be, by making Choice of a Set of Men, whose sole Concern, and proper  
Work,

Work, shall be to attend upon this very Thing, and to take Care of it. For Men who have been bred up to any particular Profession, and have made it their chief Study to gain a competent Knowledge of that Profession, and of the Duties of it, must, in common Equity, be presum'd to know better how to execute the Duties attendant on it, than those whose different Callings and Occupations oblige them to apply their Thoughts and Skill a different Way, and to make other and different Improvements suitable to their different Circumstances and Situations in Life.

50. By this Time we doubt not but that the Reader understands what we mean by a Church, *viz.* A Body of Men united together upon a Religious Account; joining in the Profession of the same common Formulary of Faith; and who have certain Times, Places, and Persons set apart, when, where, and by whom, they may perform their various religious Services to their great Creator and Governor.

51. God speaks by the Tendencies of Things, and his Will, as a Rule of Action to his reasonable Creatures, can only be collected from them, except in Cases, where  
out

out of some particular Regard to some of his People preferably to others, and for Reasons becoming his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, he is pleas'd to manifest himself in some extraordinary Manner, above and beyond what the natural Course of Things suggests, and plainly implies. And if God delivers himself this Way, it follows, that publick Worship having a necessary Tendency to the Happiness of Mankind, is upon this Account to be look'd upon as a sufficient Declaration of his Will, that they worship him publickly. And every Thing becomes a Duty of rational Beings, which they can discover to be agreeable to their Creator's Will, and in their Power to perform. Publick Worship, therefore, or a Church, is of God's own Institution and Appointment. For, as he makes every Thing to be Man's Duty which is necessary to his Happiness; so, in this Sense, all such Institutions, Duties, &c. however brought to Light, may properly be said to be of divine Establishment, or to be his Ordinances. And in this View of the Case, it can plainly be no Matter of Indifferency (whatever some may pretend) whether a Man be Member of any Church,

Church, or not, provided he frames his Life agreeably to the Rules of Virtue, which Religion teaches; and preserves in his Mind a just, affecting, practical Sense of the Relation he stands in to God, and of those Duties evidently founded upon it, and necessarily taking their Rise from thence. And the Reason is, that such a Neglect disappoints the Design of God, who, one may be sure, would never have instituted a Church, of which he did not intend Men should be Members: And how that Person can be call'd a good, pious Man, who both knowingly and wilfully acts in Contradiction to one of God's own Institutions, is what will require some Difficulty to make out. And this, by the Way, is a pertinent Answer to those who ask, what Obligation are Men under to go to Church, and to join in external Communion with each other? And what Authority is there that can rightfully oblige them to it? We have seen what this Authority is, and from whence it properly arises, *viz.* from God himself. Men are no more left at Liberty in this Matter, than they are at Liberty to kill, or rob, or to commit any other immoral Acts which God

has

has expressly forbid. The Truth is, whatever makes for the Happiness of God's Creation, *that* he enjoins as a Duty to be observ'd by all such as are capable of discovering it; what makes for its Misery, *that* he condemns, and absolutely disallows of. And in Proportion to the different Tendencies of Things to human Happiness or Misery, are Men oblig'd by the Deity to pursue, or to avoid them. Divine Authority is more binding, and of infinitely greater Force, than the Sum of all human Authorities when collected together; and the resisting it willingly, and with Design, will most certainly be attended with severer, and much more terrible Consequences, as all wilful Oppugners of God's Institutions will one Day feel.

52. From what has been said above, we gather, that the Business of Religion, or the Reason why Men worship the Deity, is, to procure his Favour. But the End God had in making religious Worship a Duty, was, its necessary Tendency to Men's Improvement in moral Purity or Virtue; to the Advancement of their Nature to greater Degrees of Perfection, and so forming it, Step by Step,  
 into

into a Sort of Likeness with his own; that is, it was its Tendency to enforce the Practice of all social Duties, without Distinction, upon Mankind, as subservient to, and promotive of their common Happiness; which Tenor of Acting in his Creatures will necessarily, tho' gradually (as we shew how in another Place) end in raising the human into some Kind of Conformity to the divine Nature, or it will in Time produce in them the benevolent Principle, the same in Kind with, but infinitely different in Degree from, that we suppose the Deity to be influenc'd by. But more of this in another Place.

53. We shall conclude this Section with observing, that nothing can evidence greater Marks of Wisdom and Goodness in our Creator, than that he should require nothing at our Hands but what is connected with our Happiness; and should *so* couple our Duty and our Interest together, as to cause every Thing to become such that is our Duty, in the Degree in which it makes for our Happiness. Hence we learn,

54. That a Church, properly speaking, was instituted, not for God, who being infinitely happy in himself, could not possibly

receive any Advantage or Disadvantage by what we do, or not do; but it was instituted for Man, as it had a Tendency (by preserving in their Minds a lively Sense of Himself) to engage them to, or from all such Things or Actions, on the Commission, or Omission of which their mutual Happiness so much depended.

### §. III.

1. Having shewn in the last Section (and, as we hope, to the Reader's Satisfaction) the necessary Existence of a Church, supposing Mankind to be such Creatures as by Fact and Experience they know themselves to be, it will not probably be unacceptable to him, to see all her distinct Rights, Powers, &c. as they are connected with, and arise from each other, drawn out and demonstrated by way of Proposition and Corollary.

2. Proposition 1st. *The Church has a Right to make her own Rites and Ceremonies; to enact Laws relating to Matters both of Doctrine and Discipline; to prescribe publick Forms and Modes of worship, stated Times and Places, with all other Circumstances necessarily attendant on it; and likewise to alter all,*  
and



and each of those, when once made, as particular Junctures shall require. A Number of Men associated into a Body for the better compassing a certain End, will have a Right to employ those Means, and to exercise such Powers, as are judg'd to be best adapted for the obtaining this End ; for if they had not, the Association entered into would be to no Purpose : Consequently, if there be a Right to form such an Association, there necessarily arises a Right to the Use of the Means connected with the End of it. But publick Worship, in the very Nature and Design of it, requires external Forms, Modes, Rites, &c. Therefore, &c.

3. And since what is expedient, and, under that Consideration, the proper Subject-Matter of an Address and Application to the Deity, and therefore necessary to be express'd in *this* or *that* Form of Words; since what is expedient, we say, at one Juncture of Time, may be improper at another, or not proper in the same Degree, it is certain, that as those Forms, &c. must be suited to, and correspond with, so will they vary, accordingly, as Circumstances, or the Exigences of Times, alter, that is, they will be ever drawn up in an Agree-

ment with them. Whence we gather, that there must be a Power of repealing old Laws, and of making new ones in their stead, when Occasions require it, residing somewhere. But what concerns any particular Body of Men, and concerns them only in some certain Respect, that is, which belongs to them as a Body associated upon such or such an Account, and under those peculiar Circumstances, must be the proper Business of that Body to take care of, and to provide for; and they will have a Right to ordain such Laws, Rules, and other Methods of proceeding, as in Reality, or in their Apprehension, seem best accommodated for attaining the End for which they united into a Body; or in other Words, every Body has a Right of making Laws peculiar to its own Nature and Constitution, and consequently the Church must have the Right of making her's.

4. And if it be but *reasonable* that the Church *should* have such a Power, upon enquiring into the Nature and Design of her Appointment, it will appear that she *must* have it; for wherever there lies an Obligation to the Pursuit of any End, there, of Course, arises a Right to use the proper Means of  
com-

compassing such End. Since no Thing or Being can do what it has not an Ability for doing: Consequently as it is one part of the Church's Province to take Care of the Affairs of Religion, and to see that no Abuses or Corruptions creep into it, or it be made subservient to bad Purposes, and to operate contrary to its designed Tendency, so from hence she derives a Right of making such Rules, Ordinances, &c. as are judg'd best adapted to obtain and secure this End.

5. But we must not, upon any Account, omit observing in this Place, that as every Man is oblig'd to worship God in the Way he judges most acceptable to him, so, in Consequence of this Obligation, all those who by their Abilities and Situation in Life, are capable of judging in Cases respecting the divine Favour, or Displeasure, have a Right to be consulted before any Motion, Proposal, &c. be enacted into Law, whether relating to any particular Mode of Worship as fitting to be universally adher'd to; to Rites and Ceremonies as convenient to be observ'd and practis'd; or to any particular Form of Words, Doctrines, and Articles of Faith as proper to be profess'd in common by each Religionist;

or to Matters of Discipline, and Correction, for Reformation of Manners, as necessary to be submitted to; all such, we say, as have both Leisure and Capacities for searching into the Nature and Tendency of them, and of discovering the Fitness and Reasonableness of some of them preferably to others, have a Right to be advis'd with before any such Motion, Proposal, &c. pass into Law, and to offer his Reasons for or against them, or any Part of them, as they shall happen to appear to him in all their several Circumstances and Consequences. And supposing him to have a Right to be consulted, he will for the same Reason have a Right (if Matters thus require it, or he be so minded) to assist in, or to make in Person one of the Law-making Number, or Assembly.

6. Further; if besides being vested with the executive Power of the Church (as we shall shew in the next Proposition that they must be) Church-Officers should assume to themselves a Power of making all Kinds of ecclesiastical Laws, and of imposing them upon the rest of the Body, without their Consent, and in some Instances, perhaps, against their Judgment and Sense of Things; such a Procedure

cedure, as all Men are fallible, and upon that Account liable to great Mistakes and Uncertainties in their Decisions of all kinds; such a Procedure, we say, under those attendant Circumstances, would be a monstrous Imposition upon the Understandings, and consequently upon the Consciences of Men, and in this View, contrary to their religious Rights, and therefore unwarantable, or such as ought not to be admitted. Because for the Mind to be oblig'd to pay a blind, implicit Obedience to the Dictates of others in Matters of Opinion and Belief, is the worst sort of Slavery a Man can possibly submit to.

7. In all Societies or Conventions of Men, whatever be the Nature and End, the proper Business or Concern of such a Society, every Degree of Liberty existing in such State necessarily terminates in some Part or Portion of the Legislative Power, and is ultimately resoluble into it. For to be bound by Laws, or Acts of Government, in the drawing up, and passing of which, Man's Consent not immediately nor mediately, neither in Person, nor by Deputy, is given, nor perhaps so much as enquired after, or ask'd for; to be bound, we say, by such Laws, is absolutely repugnant

to the Nature of a free Convention, and is, in the strict and proper Acceptation of the Word, Slavery. Consequently wherever exists the Right of private Judgment, and the Liberty of worshipping God in a Man's own Way, or according to his Persuasion or Sense of Things, there, of Course, exists a Right in the Individuals of that Body to a certain share of Authority, be it greater or less, in the drawing up of Laws relating to ecclesiastical Matters of all Kinds, and in all the various Ways in which they may be of Service to such religious Society, by adapting them to the religious Opinions, and Ways of thinking of the Members of it.

8. But it is to be observed, that this Right of being consulted, or of having one's Advice taken, can only hold, when any Alterations are going to be made, either in the common Formulary of Faith; or in the publick Professions, and Modes of Worship; or in Matters of Discipline, and Methods of Proceeding against Delinquents, &c. or in any other Case where Conscience may be justly and pertinently pleaded, either as to the Concerns of this, or another Life: But cannot be admitted in Matters of a merely indifferent Nature, which must, of Necessity, be left to  
the

the Wisdom and Discretion of those, who are vested with the executive Power in every Society.

9. It is proper to take Notice, that there be some of a quite different Opinion from this, maintaining, that the legislative Power of the Church is lodg'd solely and absolutely in her Officers, who, in their Way of thinking, have a Right to make Laws without the Laity's Concurrence, and to demand an implicate Obedience and Submission to them. To which we answer,

10. A Conformity of Action to the Will of his Maker, is the necessary and indispensable Duty of every reasonable Creature, so far, and up to the Degree in which it is in his Power to know such Will, and to practise it: And since Man cannot lie under different and contrary Obligations at one and the same Time, so, when either the Commands or Prohibitions of Men are contrary to the Commands or Prohibitions of God, the Sovereign and great Lord of the Universe; in this Case, and under such Conviction, the latter must be universally observed, in Preference to the former: Because the highest Authority will ever induce the strongest

strongest Obligation ; and for this plain Reason, that it is in the Power of such Being, to make those who are the proper Subjects of his Laws, and who wilfully obey, or disobey them, the most happy, or the most miserable. And if God is to be obey'd rather than Men, when the Injunctions of one are incompatible with those of the other ; then, in such Case, is every Man oblig'd to compare them together, so far as he is able to make such Comparison : And if he be oblig'd to compare the Doctrines, the Precepts, and Institutions of Men with those of God ; then has no single Man, or Number of Men, whether Laymen or Ecclesiasticks, a Right to impose any such Doctrines, Institutions, &c. upon others without their Knowledge ; much less can they have a Right to enforce them against Men's Belief and Persuasion. And if the Truth of the Matter lies here, then every Man, as a Religionist, has a Right to be advis'd with, in drawing up the Formulary of Faith, in fixing the *Credenda* and *Agenda* of Religion, &c. or, in other Words, that the legislative Power of the Church resides in the Clergy and Laity *conjunctim*.



11. Since the Deity's Favour follows such religious Services of ours, as are directed with an Eye to please him, and perform'd in such a Manner, as we judge most agreeable to him; so all Endeavours in *this*, or *that* Body of Men, to deprive a Person of the Liberty of that Manner of worshipping God, or to disturb him in it, by giving, some Way or other, an Interruption to it; or to make Laws, and to impose Terms of Communion, which such an one thinks sinful, and cannot join in, or submit to, but by going against Conscience; all such Attempts as those, we say, are notorious Infringements of the great Principle of religious Liberty, and contrary to *Corol. 4th, Page 81.*

12. The Case, in short, lies here; the Reason holds just the same in Men's Religious, as it does in their Civil Concerns; in adjusting Matters of Faith and Practice, suppos'd to relate to the Favour of God; in appointing the Terms of Communion, which are to be the Condition of Men's Admission into the Church; in framing Laws for the better and more equitable Administration of Ecclesiastical Affairs, and for the

more effectually compassing the Ends of every such particular Religious Society : In making those, and such like other Provisions, we say, there is the same Necessity for all the Members being consulted before any such Laws take Place, as there is, that their Consent should be given by those who represent them in a temporal Capacity, before any Bill, &c. be carry'd into Law which affects their Civil Rights and Privileges : For Religious Rights, or Rights of Conscience, are of as important a Nature, and ought to be preserv'd as sacred and inviolable as Civil ones ; and more so, if either of them admits of Precedence to the other.

13. But, as was before observ'd, Things so indifferent in their own Nature, that Reason cannot give a Preference of one to another ; and yet the Choice of one, or more of them out of many, being necessary to the Performance of certain religious Acts and Duties, and to Men's holding Communion with each other ; Things of this Kind, we say, fall properly within the Province of the Officers of the Church to determine, which shall be made Choice of for Use  
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and Practice, and which shall not. For, if the Governors, or supreme Officers, in any suppos'd Society, or Body of Men, were not invested with this discretionary Power, there would be a Defect in the Frame and Constitution of that Society; and such a material Defect it would be, as would necessarily prevent the Society's attaining the End for which it was instituted. Such a Power therefore as this, belongs of Course to the Governors of Society, or the Nature and Foundation of their Office vests it in them.

14. But tho' it is the proper Concern of every Man, according as he finds himself possessed both of Time and Abilities for it, to enquire into the Evidence of the Truth of that particular Religion which he professes; as also into the Nature of those Doctrines, Duties, &c. with the Grounds of their Obligation, propos'd to him by Ecclesiastical Officers, and enforc'd with proper Arguments and Considerations, as Matters of his Faith and Practice; and to see whether all, or any of them agree, or disagree with his Judgment upon them, when carefully and impartially made: Which Enquiry, if rightly begun, and regularly pursu'd,

that

that is, with a sincere and honest Desire of coming at the Truth, is sufficient, (tho' he be not altogether free from Error, for who dare pretend to such an absolute Exemption from it? is sufficient, we say, to render his religious Services acceptable to God, his Maker and Governor, who will minutely consider all the Advantages or Disadvantages each Man lies under from his particular Circumstances in Life. Yet it must be confess'd, that the Bulk of those in low Life, and of such as are wholly immers'd in Matter, are (if left to themselves without Instruction, or without a Conductor) capable but of small Improvements in the Use of their reflective Powers; and consequently, capable of making but slow Advances in religious Science. They cannot see far forwards into that Path in which they ought to walk; nor can they trace out the Rule of Action, and Lines of Duty, to any considerable Length amongst the almost infinite Variety of Occurrences, in which they may, some Way or other, be concern'd. They must, therefore, be sent to the School of Instruction, to be taught their Duty in all the several Branches of it; for, in Cases  
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where Men cannot guide themselves, it is fitting they should be guided by others. Persons therefore in those low, tho' unavoidable Circumstances, are but incompetent Judges in Matters of a religious Nature and Consideration; and consequently, incapable of deciding in Affairs of Intricacy and Importance.

15. Proposition 2d. *The executive Power of the Church is solely and absolutely vested in her Officers Hands.* Since every Combination of Men, whatever be the Nature and Design of their Combination, must have Laws to secure their Preservation and commodious manner of subsisting; some stated Methods of dispatching the proper Business of such Body or Society; as also Rules for adjusting Differences, and deciding such Disputes as may at any Times arise among the Members of it; so the Church, taken as a Society, or Collection of Persons united into a Body under a religious Consideration, must have such: But all Laws presuppose a Power of executing them impartially lodg'd somewhere, without doing which, they would serve in no more stead, nor be of any other significancy, than so many Cyphers. All the Virtue and good Effects  
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of Laws flowing from a just and equal Execution of them; and the Right of Executing the Laws of any Society, is, properly speaking, the Government of that Society. And the executive Power of the Church can be no where lodg'd but in Churchmen's Hands, because it is connected with, and therefore inseparable from their Office. The Reason is, as there are certain Duties arising from all Offices or Relations in Life to those who fill them, suited to the Nature, Design, Tendency, and Importance of them; so all such Offices and Relations necessarily imply a Power in the Officers to discharge those Duties; otherwise the End of their Institution could not be obtained. And therefore to maintain, as some do, that Church-Officers have no Power but what any private Man might lawfully and rightfully exercise, is the same in Effect, as to maintain, that the Church has no Offices but what lie open to all in common; the contrary to which hath, we presume, been already prov'd sufficiently above.

16. To illustrate this by an Instance taken from another Profession in Life. As in the Army, there must be Laws both for Discipline

pline and Correction of Manners, as also for maintaining Order and Regularity amongst the several Ranks and Subordinations of Officers; so who does not at first sight see the Necessity of the Right of executing those Laws being vested in the Officers of this Body in preference to any others? and that each shall be entrusted with such a Share of Power as the Nature of his Office plainly requires? Just the same Necessity is there, that the Administration of Church Affairs, or the Execution of ecclesiastical Laws, should be lodg'd in the Hands of ecclesiastical Officers. “ The same common unvariable Reason vesting the executive Power of every particular Society in the Hands of its Officers, preferably to all others not related in that peculiar Manner to such particular Society.”

17. *Coroll.* From this and the preceding Proposition it evidently appears, the Legislative Power of the Church resides in the Clergy and Laity conjointly; but the Executive solely in the former.

18. Before we proceed any further in our Enquiry into the Nature of those Powers belonging to the Church as a religious Society, it will be necessary to premise the following general Observation, which may, upon occasion, be of great Use, in removing such Objections, and in settling

settling some Doubts that will probably arise upon this Head.

19. Means must ever be conformable to, and productive of their respective Ends, otherwise Men's Pursuits after those Ends will be without Effect, and of no significancy. Consequently, given the End for which a Number of Men by mutual Concurrence associated themselves into a Body, and from thence may we discover what those Powers, arising to a Body so united, and what the Manner of the Exercise of them will be: Because those Powers being of a kind, suited in the Nature and Tendency of their Operation to the attaining this End, they cannot rise higher, or fall short of, but must be commensurate to, and limited by, such End. Finding out therefore the Reason and Design of a Church's Appointment, and this leads us to the Discovery of the Nature and Extent of Church-Authority. Now we have shewn above, that the End God had in view by appointing a Church, was the common Happiness of his Creatures, or rather, the Advancement of their Nature to greater Degrees of Perfection, which, in his Appointment of Things, can only be effected by a Pursuit of each other's Happiness, looking up to him in what they do, and proposing



his Acceptance as the End of their acting in this Manner; which will by degrees necessarily render them fitly dispos'd for the Reception and Enjoyment of his Favours. But the End why Men join in paying religious Service to him, is to procure his Regard and Approbation, or those Rewards which are always attendant upon it. Church Power therefore must be of such a Sort, as when exercis'd in a certain way or manner, tends to produce in the Subject such Dispositions, or Determinations of Will, as, when carry'd into Act, will intitle him to God's Acceptance and Approbation. This Acceptance or Approbation is best obtain'd, can indeed be only obtain'd, agreeably to a former Observation of ours, by our doing, or by our Intention to do, such Things as God hath enjoin'd, and avoiding those which he hath forbidden; and upon this account, that he hath enjoin'd the one, and forbid the other, and that we shall be happy or miserable, accordingly as we perform or neglect them. The Means Church-Officers therefore are entrusted with for the accomplishing this End, are the Motives of future Happiness and Misery, propos'd in such Lights, and enforc'd with such Considerations, as will, at the same time that they satisfy the Reason of Men's Minds,

dispose also the Will to a suitable Practice, or Compliance with them. And every Action merits that, for the attaining which it was first entered upon and taken in Hand; and therefore acting upon the Motives of future Happiness, or with a View to it, will give the Agent a Right to this Happiness. Whence we learn, that the Powers belonging to Church-Officers must be of a kind properly fitted, in the Tendency of their Operation, to work Conviction in the Understanding, and to encline the Will, and not such whose Exercise tends to force it; because the Will is of that Nature, as not to admit of the least Compulsion or Restraint *ab extra*, and therefore not to be influenc'd either as to Motion or Rest, to Action or Non-action, but only by internal Arguments and Considerations: In Truth, it can no otherwise be affected, without detracting from the Excellency, and destroying the Merit and Valuableness of its Operations. For in every Action, or in every Omission, it is the Design and Intention of the Mind, and that only, which renders the Person blameable or praise-worthy, and consequently the Subject of Rewards or Punishments. This therefore shews us the Nature of that Power which belongs to the Church, and which consequently her Officers can only justly and properly exercise. 20.

20. Proposition 3d. *The Right of appointing those who shall execute the Offices of Religion, belongs to the Governors of the Church.* That there should be a distinct Order of Men to officiate in Holy Things, has been largely shewn above; and the same Reason which makes it necessary for such a Sett of Men to be appropriated to this Sort of Business, requires also that they have the Qualifications proper for the Discharge of the Duties of it. For there is, was, and ever will be found, a great Difference amongst Men, both in respect of natural Capacity and Understanding to explain the Doctrines of Religion, and of moral Motives, Principles, or Disposition, to excite them to it. Men who have reflected seriously with themselves upon the Nature and End of those sacred Offices; and who by much Study and Application turn'd that particular way, have acquired a competent Knowledge of them, and who have fully considered what their Duty, as well as what their Dignity was, and what Care was requisite to perform the one, and to support the other; Persons of those Endowments, and fraught with such Accomplishments, are fittest to be admitted into those Offices. For nothing betrays and

ruins a good Cause so soon as weak Advocates and Defendants, when the Truth of it is doubted, and called into Question.

21, If all might take upon them the Office of Church-Men that were so dispos'd, there is no Improbability but that the Church might be filled with those whose Views were, not to promote the Interests of Religion in the *best possible Manner*, but who entered into it with Design to render its Influences, so far as it might be in their Power to do it, ineffectual for the End aim'd at by a Church's Appointment. And their Office in the Church, as likewise the Relation they stand in to the Members of it, afford them many Opportunities of bringing about their Purposes, and of gratifying their Wills; better Opportunities than others, not *so circumstanc'd* as they, can possibly have: Since it must be allow'd, that every Officer, of what Nature, Quality, Extent, &c. soever his Office be, has it more in his Power, if he be so minded, to do Good or Hurt to such Office, or, to speak more properly, to forward or oppose the particular Business or Design of that Office, in greater Degrees than another has. Upon which Account it becomes necessary, that the Church have previous Proof as well of the religious Character  
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and Behaviour, as of the natural Ability of those who are to attend her Ministrations: Besides, every Deviation in *Practice* from any Rule or Precept a Man teaches others to observe, is, consequentially, and in effect, a Denial of his believing the Truth and binding Force of such Rule or Precept; and its Influence or Efficacy upon the Conduct of others is found in Fact to weaken proportionably. And how should it possibly be otherwise? Can we believe that Man to be in earnest, or sincere in his Religion, who commits such Enormities as his Religion, and particularly his Relation to it, that is, which his Office in the Church, absolutely condemns? It is impossible. “ Church-Officers may, says an ingenious “ Writer, long enough commend Virtue, “ and declaim against Vice, and urge what “ they have to say, with Arguments drawn “ from the Rewards and Punishments of another World; but how should the People “ believe them, when they do not live as if “ they believed themselves?” None therefore ought to be admitted to serve in the Church, who wilfully acts in Contradiction to the known Principles of Religion, or disputes the Reality of its Existence, either in the way of Banter or Argument. Whence it is fitting,

that both the natural and religious Qualifications of those who offer themselves for the Ministry, be previously enquired into, and that such Persons should be afterwards either taken into, or refus'd the Church's Service, as they are found, upon Examination, to be fit or unfit to perform her Offices. The Question then is, who are to be Judges of the Qualifications of those who are Candidates for such Offices? The Answer, we presume, is, the Governors, or supreme Officers of the Church, themselves. Because the same Reason which vests the executive Power of the Church in their Hands, will give them a Right of choosing such Persons Members of their own Body, or into their Order, as they find best able to assist them in the Direction of this Power, and in the Management and Observance of those Duties that immediately lie within their Province; or, in other Words, this Power of creating her own Ministers is vested in the Governors of the Church *ratione Officii*, and has no other Foundation on which it rests, than the Nature of the Office itself, or what gave Rise to the Institution of it.

22. *Corol.* Hence we see, that every Church has a Right (the Exercise of which belongs to her Governors) of making and ordaining her own Officers; which Right is so essential to her Being, as a Church, that the great Principle of Self-Preservation will not allow her to resign it over to another on any Consideration whatsoever.

23. *N. B.* The Rite, Usage, or Ceremony, by which Persons were admitted into the Offices of Religion, or call'd to the Ministry of the Church, was term'd Ordination; which denoted a Person's Designation, or his Appointment by a proper Authority to such particular Office, or what gave him a legal Right to the Exercise of it. More than this it cannot well be suppos'd to imply.

24. Prop. 4. *That particular Form of Government in the Church ought to be chose, which in the Nature of its Operation seems best adapted to gain the End for which Men become Members of such religious Society.* For where there are different Ways leading to the same Place, it is certainly the most prudent to make Choice of that which will carry us the best and safest thither: In like Manner, where

where there are several Means tending to the same End, it is the Province of Reason to chuse that which is the least likely to miscarry. ----- 'Tis true, Forms of Government signify nothing, where the End is as well answered by one as another : But where there is a greater Aptitude in one certain Form to secure the Order and good Government of any Society than in another, Reason gives the Preference to the former ; since it is properly her Business to shew us the directest Way by which any Event may best be brought about, or End obtain'd.

25. An Agreement of one particular Form more than others, with the Genius and Temper of the major Part of the Members of any Society, constitute its greater Fitness and Expediency ; and therefore, a Change in the one, will of Course produce a Change in the other ; that is, that particular Form, which was once esteem'd best, and therefore most eligible, shall, under an Alteration of Circumstances, be thought not to be so ; but consequently, either fit to be laid aside, and so another appointed in its Room ; or otherwise to have some Addition made to it by way of Amendment.



26. *N. B.* By the Forms of Church-Government, we would be understood to mean the Manner in which Church-Power is to be exercis'd, or how, and by whom it is to operate; whether from a Confinement of it to one single Person, who is to rule a whole County or Diocese in *Ecclesiasticals*, as a Prince or a civil Governor does a Nation in *Temporals*; or it be diffus'd thro' the whole Body of Officers, to be shared in equal Portions by them all in common; or it be appropriated to a certain determinate Number chosen out of their own collective Body.

27. Prop. 5. *All Forms of Ecclesiastical Policy ought to be agreed on, and appointed by the whole Body of People which compose such religious Society.* This appears plainly from Proposition the first, and is a necessary Consequence from it.----- Besides, if Men at the first Institution of civil Societies had a common Right to institute such Forms of civil Government, as they judg'd would best secure their temporal Liberty and Property; so the same Reason holds, that the Members of religious Society, or the same Persons taken and consider'd in a religious Capacity, should

should have a Right to make Choice of such a Form of Government in the Church, as they apprehend will best answer the End of their Association. And if the People have a Right to appoint what Forms they shall choose to live under, it is manifest, that those Forms in different Nations will vary, according to the different Tempers, Inclinations, and Ways of thinking of the People of those Nations. And consequently, to expect one uniform, invariable Method of conducting Ecclesiastical Affairs, is as foolish and absurd, as to expect that all People should think, desire, and will alike: A greater Absurdity than which cannot well be maintain'd. Allowing Mankind, therefore, to be what in Fact we really find them to be; we mean, with regard to their different Ways of apprehending, judging, determining, &c. allowing this, we say, and we may reasonably draw this Conclusion, *viz.* that the People's Forms both of civil and ecclesiastical Policy will generally be alike. If a monarchical Form in *Civils* is found to be attended with less Distraction and Confusion, and so consequently to make most for  
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the Ease and Quiet of the State, then will likewise the same Kind of Form in *Ecclesiasticals* be thought to make most for the Peace and Unity of the Church. The same holds of any other Form. Hence, given the Nature and Genius of the civil Polity of any Nation, and we may in most Cases discover its ecclesiastical one; or reciprocally, given the Nature and Genius of the Form of ecclesiastical Policy, and we can gather the civil one of that Nation; since generally, and for the most part, there will be as near a Resemblance as possible betwixt them. And this, by the Way, is (with us at least) a convincing Proof, that the Form of Church-Government in the first Ages of Christianity was monarchical; or, that the Government of it was lodg'd in the Hands of him, who in every Church was styl'd its Bishop; in perfect Conformity to the Model of civil Government at that Time in Use among the *Romans*. For if we look into the Infant-State of the Christian Church under the *Roman* Emperors, we shall find its Policy plann'd in Imitation of their civil one. ----- For the better Administration of Justice, and the more speedy Determination of Causes big with Effects of different Weight

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and Moment to the *Roman* Nation, they, as a wise People, and possess'd of the most consummate Skill in the Arts of Policy, divided their Empire into a certain Number of Diocesefes, and each Diocefe into a certain Number of Provinces, and each Province contain'd a certain Number of Cities, over each of which was fet a civil Magistrate, vested with various Powers and Preeminences, suited to the Dignity of his Office, and the Importance of those Matters which fell under his Cognizance. In perfect Analogy to this was the Model of the outward Regimen of the Church drawn : The Bishop's Power in *re Ecclesiasticâ* of any City, Province, or Diocefe, was of the same Extent with that of the Civil Magistrate of such City, &c. in the Determination of civil Causes. As the civil Governor residing in the *Metropolis* in every Province had a Power deputed him over all the Governors within that Province ; so the Bishop of that *Metropolis* exercis'd Jurisdiction over all the other Bishops of the several Churches within such Province : His Power extending over the rest of the Bishops in ecclesiastical Matters, in the same Manner

as the civil Magistrate's did over the several subordinate Officers, or rather Governors, under his Jurisdiction; the same Sort of Resemblance holds betwixt the civil and religious Governor of a Diocese. And this, we presume, gave the first Rise to Metropolitans and Primates in the Christian Church.

28. The Analogy or Likeness betwixt one and the other, as drawn out by the learned Dr. *Cave* in his *Primitive Christianity*, is as follows: “ The whole Empire, *says he*, being divided into thirteen  
 “ Dioceses, and those containing about an  
 “ hundred and twenty Provinces, and every  
 “ Province several Cities; as in every City  
 “ there was a civil Magistrate for the Execution and Preservation of the Peace,  
 “ both in the City and adjacent Country;  
 “ so was there also a Bishop for spiritual  
 “ Order and Government, whose Jurisdiction was of like Extent and Latitude:  
 “ As in every Province there was a Proconsul, or Prefident, whose Seat was  
 “ usually at the *Metropolis*, whither all inferior Cities came for Judgment in Matters of Importance; so in the same City  
 “ there

“ there was an *Arch-Bishop*, or *Metropoli-*  
 “ *tan*, for Matters of ecclesiastical Concern-  
 “ ment: And lastly, as in every Diocefe  
 “ the Emperors had their *Vicarii* or *Lieu-*  
 “ *tenants*, who dwelt in the principal City  
 “ of the Diocefe, where all Imperial Edicts  
 “ were publish’d, and Causes, not deter-  
 “ minable elfewhere, decided; fo there were  
 “ in the fame City a *Primate*, to whom  
 “ the laft Determination of all Appeals  
 “ from all the Provinces, concerning any  
 “ Differences of the Clergy, and the fo-  
 “ vereign Care of all the Diocefe for fun-  
 “ dry Points of fpiritual Concernment, did  
 “ belong.”

29. Prop. 6. *None have a Right to ad-*  
*minister in holy Things, or to execute the*  
*Office of Religion, but thofe who have the*  
*Qualifications and Appointments mentioned in*  
*Prop. 3.* This is no other but a direct  
 Corollary from that Proposition; and the  
 very Nature of a Church, and the End of  
 its Appointment, furnishes us with an ir-  
 refragable Argument for the Truth of it.

30. But, notwithstanding the Proof arif-  
 ing immediately out of that Proposition,  
 be it further confider’d, that if in civil So-  
 ciety

ciety, private Men, or those who were vested with no Authority from the supreme Magistrate, should take upon themselves the Liberty of directing and governing in Affairs of a publick Nature; or should Subordinates go beyond the Limits set to their Jurisdiction, and concern themselves with the Management and Ordering of such Things, as were by proper Authority committed to the Care and Superintendency of their Superiors, much Disorder and Confusion would unavoidably arise in civil Government; and the Mischief done by this means to Society would be always greater or less accordingly, as such Practice became more or less general. In like manner, if private Persons, or those who had no Call or Commission from the Church, (in whom we have proved the Power of creating her own Officers is lodged) if such Persons, we say, should presume to officiate in religious Matters, and to invade the Province of Church-men, properly and regularly appointed; such an Invasion of the Rights of others would necessarily occasion the same Disturbance, and breed as much Confusion and Embarrassment in a religious Society, as the Intrusion into

civil Offices would produce in civil Society. For the Sake of outward Peace and Order, therefore, (not to mention other worse and more pernicious Effects, which might necessarily, tho' gradually, arise from thence) such Practices ought not to be tolerated in one or other Society, but be resent'd in Proportion to their malignant Tendency to each.

31. Prop. 7. *The Church has a Right of ejecting out of her Communion all such of her Members as refuse to conform to her Rites and Ceremonies; to her Usages and Customs; as also those whose irregular Lives give just Offence and Scandal to the Church, and interfere with the End of her Appointment.* Every Society, as a Society, must move, act, and be regulated by certain Customs and stated Methods of Proceeding, which in all Cases are allow'd to have the Force of Laws; because its outward Order and Regimen can only be secured by the Observance of those Rules made to preserve it. Whoever therefore of the Society refuses to conform to those Rules and Customs, does, *ipso facto*, break in upon, and disturb the Peace and Order of that Society; and consequent-

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ly ought to be treated as an Enemy to its Constitution: that is, he ought to be turned out of it.

32. A Number of Men associated into a Body upon a religious Account, and agreed amongst themselves about the several Modes, Ceremonies, and all other Circumstances necessary to the due Performance of publick Worship, have a common Right to the Use of such Modes, Ceremonies, &c. Consequently, whoever denies their binding Force, (after thus mutually agreed upon, and consented to) or disputes the Reasonableness of a Conformity to them, or disturbs others in the Use of them; invades the common Right of that Body of Religionists, and should be dealt with accordingly.

33. This Right of Expulsion is so necessary both to the Preservation and Well-being of all Societies, that, without the Exercise of it, every Society must soon be dissolved and come to nothing. We find it to be Fact, that all publick Bodies and Associations of Men, however form'd, and whatever be the Nature and End of their Convention, from the powerfulest and most opulent Societies down to the meanest Cor-

poration, acting by an Authority deriv'd from the Heads of them, have the Power of expelling disorderly Members; such who break the Laws, and disturb the Peace and Order of the Society to which they belong. And if this be an inherent Power, or essential Property of all Societies, and founded in the Nature of a Society as such, it must be inseparable from a religious Society; and the Exercise of it equally necessary to attain the End for which such Society was founded. Thus much with regard to the first Part of the Proposition.

34. But Excommunication is not only necessary, in respect of Non-Conformity to the Church's Rites and Ceremonies, to her Rules and Orders, but also in regard to Immorality and Wickedness. A Mixture of good and bad Men, known by the general Course of their Actions to be such, can no more compose an Harmony of Wills, and Union of Desires, (absolutely necessary to the due Performance of each Act of religious Worship) than a Number of Parts tending to, and drawing different Ways, can constitute one entire Body, or Whole. Besides, if Men be not unanimous in their Desires

When a common Petition is offer'd up to the Deity, what Reason is there to expect that their Requests should be granted? Be it also further consider'd, that it will necessarily be just Matter of Grief and Trouble to the Consciences and religious Ways of thinking of the one, to join and associate with the other; for a good Man cannot but be displeas'd with Vice and Wickedness, and consequently with the Causes of them; that is, with wicked Men. And the more pious one Part of the Society is, the more offended will it be at their regular Acts and Practices of the other; and consequently, the more desirous of having such bad Livers separated from having or holding any Communion with their Church. The Matter rests here; Men naturally love to associate with those they like, and to shun those they dislike: The Foundation of this Liking is a Suitableness or Correspondency of Disposition, (for an Agreement of Desires and Affections is, in some Degree, the same as an Agreement of Wills; and an Agreement of Wills is the Source of all social Pleasure and Delight.) The Foundation of Dislike is an Unsuitableness of Dis-

position, or discordant Affections: Consequently, one of a religious Frame or Cast of Mind, cannot join himself with, but must seek all Occasions to avoid, as much as may be, the Company of those of contrary and different Dispositions or Principles, with respect both to thinking, and acting, from him. And if private Persons have it in their Power, and consequently are at Liberty to chuse their own Company; that is, to admit those into it whom they like, and to reject whom they dislike; so must the Church likewise: that is, the same Persons combin'd into a Body from a religious Consideration, have the same Right to exercise such a Power in a publick, as they had before in a private Capacity.

35. Every Society being vested with a Right to the Exercise of such Powers, as are necessary for obtaining the End of its Appointment; the Members which compose such Society, will ever have a Right to eject whom and whatsoever opposes this End; because if such Opposition be not remov'd, the End cannot be come at. The Favour of God is the ultimate End of a Church being appointed; and the immediate End,

or

or that without which the ultimate End cannot be obtain'd, is the Practice of Piety and Virtue, under the Belief of a superior Being rewarding such a Conduct; which publick Worship, as hath been shewn, has a necessary Tendency to enforce, and upon which account it became a natural Duty of sensible, rational Beings. Whoever therefore promotes Vice and Impiety, by yielding to them himself, or by encouraging the Practice of them in others, opposes, as much as in him lies, the End for which the Church was founded; and, upon that account, ought to be remov'd from her Society. Whoever therefore by Word or Action, or by both, shews that he either disbelieves the Being of a God, or wilfully neglects to perform the Duties necessarily flowing from such a Belief, defeats the End, and disappoints the Design, as much as it is in his Power to defeat the one and disappoint the other, of all religious Associations; and, so doing, ought to be expell'd the Society, as not worthy to continue any longer a Member in it. Besides, since such Declarations and Practices will, in Effect, and by Degrees, necessarily destroy all Sense of God's Super-

intendence over human Affairs, they must be absolutely inconsistent with the very Being of a Church; because, to keep up this Sense in Men's Minds, and to extend its Influences as far as they can reach, and render them as beneficial as possible, was the chief and sole Design of God's causing such publick Assemblies to be at first instituted. But tho' this expulsive Faculty, or the Right of casting out of her Communion all disorderly, irregular-Members, be lodg'd *conjunctim* in the whole Society, and is the necessary Result of it as a Society, yet the Exer-tion of this Power is confin'd to the Officers of the Church. This is but a *Corollary* from Prop. 3.

36. It is to be observ'd, that before the Right of Excommunication in either of the above-mention'd Cases takes Place, or is put in Practice, the Offender ought to be made acquainted with the malignant Tendency of his Crime, and the pernicious Effects of it set before him in the most lively and affecting Colours; and all proper Means us'd to prevail with him to abhor and forsake it. But, if after such a just and genuine Representation of the Matter, and all the Advice

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vice and Admonition given for this Purpose, he still goes on in his old way, and seems obstinately bent so to do, it is then highly necessary that he be banish'd the Society, as a wilfully disobedient, untoward, and refractory Member, and one who gives not the least Hopes of Amendment and Reformation.

37. There are some (as *Tindal* in his Rights of the Christian Church) who say, that  
 “ Nothing can be more unaccountable, than  
 “ to hinder a Man from performing one  
 “ part of his Duty (especially, so great an  
 “ one as his publicly worshiping of God)  
 “ because he has fail'd in another : Or, if  
 “ he has offended God publicly, what can  
 “ be more absurd than to debar him from  
 “ as publicly desiring his Pardon ? ” And  
 further on : “ The greater Sinner one is, there  
 “ is the less Reason to debar him from hear-  
 “ ing such Sermons as are made up of Rea-  
 “ sons to persuade him to his Duty both to  
 “ God and Man. And therefore to exclude  
 “ Men from the Church, is a Violation of the  
 “ Rules of Charity,” To which we return  
 this Answer. 1<sup>st</sup>, That after a wicked Man  
 has been made acquainted with the necessary  
 Effects and Consequents of Sin in general,  
 and

and of his own darling Sin in particular ; after those Consequences have been set forth before him in the strongest and clearest Light, and the most powerful and best-adapted Motives have been made use of to prevail with him to forsake a Course of Life, which by Degrees, but inevitably, leads up to them : If, after all those Means us'd to change him, he is still the same Man, and sins as frequently, and, to all Appearance, as freely, as before, notwithstanding his going to Church, it is reasonable to conclude, that he goes not thither out of any Love to God, or from a Sense of Duty, (for then, and for the same Reason, he would avoid all such Things as are Matters of Offence and Displeasure to him) but rather as a Cloak to cover his Vices, and that he might not be thought so bad a Man as he really is: And when Iniquity wears the masque of Religion and Sanctity, and Men go to Church to take off all Suspicion, and to prevent an Enquiry being made into their Actions, how much Religion suffers, and what Mischief is by this Means done to the World, is better conceiv'd than express'd. *2dly,* The longer a Person continues in any known Sins, the greater Affection for, and the more confirm'd



firm'd and settled Habit of them he acquires; and the stronger Habit of them he acquires, the more difficult they are to be parted with, and consequently the less the Probability is, of actually parting from them, or of making a Divorce betwixt such a Man and his Sins, tho' he hear them both publickly declaim'd against, and in private is admonish'd to forsake them. But not to multiply Words, we have shewn above, that without a Power of expelling disorderly Members, the Church, as a Society, cannot subsist, nor the End of its Institution be obtain'd.

38. A Controversy hath been started, and, as is usual in such Cases, much said on both Sides, concerning the Consequences of Men's Exclusion from the Church; as whether their Salvation in another World, or their Interest in the Favour of God, is likely to be affected by it, or that they stand upon the same Terms with respect to God as if no such Sentence had been pass'd by the Church; that is, whether their Condition in *another* State of Being will be worse for their dying under the Sentence of Excommunication in *this*.

39. To give the Reader all the Satisfaction that we are able, in a Matter of this Nature,

we shall draw out, and lay before him, such Arguments as natural Light or Reason discovers; which may be of use, in shewing us on which side Probability lies, if not Certainty; and in Cases where Certainty cannot be had, we must be oblig'd to take Probability for our Guide, and to be directed by it.

40. Whatever Observances God enjoins, as necessary to carry on and promote his benevolent Purposes, to those are we strictly oblig'd to conform, if we would either obtain that Happiness, or avoid that Misery, which he has unalterably annex'd to all Acts of Obedience or Disobedience to his Appointments. One of those Institutions or Appointments, is, as appears from its natural Tendency, to co-operate with the Designs of the Creator, that Men associate themselves into a Body for the publick worshiping of him, that is, that they be Members of some Church or other, and duly and regularly perform the several Duties necessarily arising from such Membership. The being a Member therefore of some Church, and behaving in all Instances suitably to what that Character seems naturally to imply, is made the Condition, one of those Conditions at least, of Men's meriting the

the divine Favour ; and if so, then being out of the Church, or no Member of it, will, by the Terms, be the Means of losing that Favour, or rather of incurring his Displeasure. To be, or not to be, in the Church's Communion therefore, are two States, or Conditions of Life, vastly different from, and contrary to each other, as Men's Happiness both here and hereafter, in this Life and in the next, may be differently affected by it.

41. God instituted a Church for Men's better and further Improvement in Virtue, in this Life, as a necessary step to their Advancement to greater Degrees of Perfection and Happiness in the next ; and Church-Officers are those Means or Instruments which he thinks proper to make use of upon this Occasion ; they are to set before Men in the fullest Colours, and with all the various affecting Representations in which it is possible for such Persons to exhibit and set them forth in View, the necessary Dependence and Connection of Virtue with Happiness, and of Vice with Misery, and the Obligations they are under to pursue the one, and to avoid the other, with a Degree of Application proportion'd to the vast, momentous Concerns of them ; they are

are to give all possible Encouragement to Men's Progress in the ways of Virtue; and, by all the Means and Methods consistent with the Nature of Religion, to recall those who have err'd and stray'd from their Duty, into the Paths of it again. And if such Persons refuse to hear them, and will take no Notice either of their Instructions and Exhortations, or of their Admonitions and Rebukes, they wilfully reject the Means, God, in Condescension to their Necessities, has been graciously pleas'd to appoint for the bringing about his benevolent Purposes; which being intended by him out of pure Kindness and Good-will to them, the Abuse of them, or neglecting to pay any Regard or Attention to them, will necessarily render Sinners more odious in his Sight, and consequently properly-dispos'd Subjects for him to exercise his Displeasure upon. Just as Persons are more faulty, and less to be pitied, who after have been warn'd against any particular Crime, run both knowingly and wilfully into it—Whatever are the Advantages arising from Men's being admitted into the Church, the same Advantages will necessarily be withdrawn at the Time of their Exclusion from it.

This is self-evident, and needs no Proof. Consequently, if certain Benefits, such as the Divine Acceptance, Regard, &c. be annex'd to Men's being Members of a religious Society, those Benefits must cease with their Membership; and the Privation, or Want of them; must be proportionable Loss and Detriment to them.

42. The Case lies here: If a Creature, under the highest Obligation thro' every Period of its Existence to its Creator, can be said to merit any Thing at his Hands, or to have a Title to his Favour, this Merit or Title, whatever it be, can only arise from an Obedience paid to his Will. And his Will is, that every Creature made capable, by a proper use of those Powers belonging to it, both of knowing its Duty, and of doing it, should be Member of some religious Society, which he has appointed, for the better carrying on and promoting his Designs of Creation. But it has been shewn above, that there is no Possibility of such a Society's subsisting long together without a Power of expelling disorderly Persons, or such who habitually act contrary to the End or Intention of its Appointment: Consequently when Men by some  
 flagrant

flagrant Act of Immorality, or for a continued Series of Impieties, have not only given the Governors of the Church an Occasion, but laid them under a kind of Necessity of turning them out of her Communion, those Persons, by Means of such a wicked, perverse Conduct, have not only incurr'd the Divine Displeasure, upon Account of those Immoralities, considered in their Nature and Tendency as Matters of Offence and Indignation to him, but doubly so, as those Immoralities are the Cause, the sole moving Cause, of their being turn'd out of the Church, of which God design'd they should be Members by their acting in such a Manner as to give them a Right to it. For, as in this View, a double Offence is committed, God must be doubly displeas'd with it. And if such Persons do not afterwards repent; if they alter not their Conduct and Manner of Life; and shew by their Behaviour that they are ready to do whatever in them lies to have the Sentence of Excommunication taken off, by voluntarily submitting to such Censures as the Church has thought proper to make the Condition of their Readmission into her Society, God will most certainly assign them their Portion with  
other

other evil Doers, who shall be as miserable, additionally miserable, as his Favourites shall be happy. For whoever is in a State of Separation from the Church, is in a State of Enmity with God; and this shews us how Man's Condition with respect to God is affected by his Exclusion from the Church.

43. Tho' to prevent all Mistakes, and that we may not be misunderstood in the Matter under Consideration, we shall observe once for all, that the Favour or Displeasure of God in another World is no otherwise suppos'd to be interested in such a Censure or Declaration, than as the Person receives it regularly or irregularly, behaves agreeably or disagreeably to the Rules of that Society.

44. With regard to those who are of Opinion, that Men upon Conviction of their Duty so or so to act, do, in Consequence of that Conviction, change their Manner of Life; and conform more closely in their Practice for the future to the Will of God, there is no Necessity either of their being admitted at first Members of any Church, or (if thro' some Irregularity or other they be thrown out) re-admitted into her Communion again, in order to their Safety and Happiness both

in this Life and in the next, but that they stand as good a Chance for his Favour, and are equally Objects of his Regard and Acceptance, as them who join themselves in *this*, or *that*, or *any* Society indeed: For it is not the being a Member of *one* Church, or of *another* Church; but it is a Person's own Conduct and Way of Life which entitles him to God's Favour, and gives him a Right to a Reward from him: With regard to those, we say, who talk in this Strain, they may be pleas'd to consider, that whatever we can gather from the Nature and Tendencies of Things to be the Will of God, it must be our Duty to comply with, and carefully to observe and practice; and as we fall short in our Obedience thereunto, so far, and to that degree is our Obedience defective, and without doubt we shall be treated accordingly by him. A good Man, and in proportion to the Degree in which he possesseth that Quality, will religiously observe all God's Institutions; and will think he fails manifestly in his Duty, if he lives in the wilful and open Neglect of any of them: And therefore as Men are more or less pious and dutiful to God, so will their

Obser;



Observance of his Institutions be more or less uniform and perfect.

45. All that has been said above, proceeds upon Supposition that the Sentence of Excommunication is just, or agreeable to the Principles of Right and Equity, and the Truth and Validity of the foregoing Arguments depend absolutely upon this. For were the Case otherwise, that is, were Men to incur the Divine Displeasure merely upon the account of their being turn'd out of the Church, whether justly or not, then would Men's Salvation be extremely hazardous, as depending in this View of the Case, upon the capricious Will or Humour of a Number of Ecclesiastics, who, in such Circumstances, would have a Right to declare, and consequently to make Men out of the Favour of God, who were not declared and made so by God himself before; which is a palpable Absurdity. It is likewise to be observ'd further, that tho' the Right of Excommunication is to be exercis'd, or its Sentence pronounc'd, by ecclesiastical Officers, yet the Manner in which it is to be done, or the particular Crimes and Offences for which Persons are to be excommunicated, ought to be first

agreed on by the Clergy and Laity jointly, and consequently Churchmen are to act in this Affair according to the united Determination of them both ; and so not at Liberty to excommunicate whom, and for what they please.

46. Since the Design of Excommunication is, that all such tainted, unsound Members which naturally spread their Infection, and consequently tend to corrupt the Whole, and bring it into Disorder, and by Degrees to its Destruction, be prun'd and lopp'd off, that is, be turn'd out of the Church's Communion ; so, when by Means of the Severity of such a Procedure, the Delinquent is brought to a just and affecting Sense of his own Vileness, and of the Scandal he has created to the Church, and in Consequence of that Conviction, a Reformation is actually begun, and entered upon ; then, and in such Cases, that is, upon those Marks of Repentance and Amendment, the Sentence of Excommunication ought to be revers'd, or taken off, by Absolution, or some such Act of that or the like Kind ; the Reason for which the Person lay excommunicate having now ceas'd,  
and

and its good Effect, in some Measure been obtain'd.

47. Excommunication in respect of notorious Deviations from the Rules of Virtue and the Ties of Religion, seems to be (and really must be, if the Consequences of such Expulsion be thoroughly pursu'd) the severest Punishment, under capital ones, a Man can possibly submit to. For if the Person excommunicated, in Consequence of his Love and Attachment to Vice, should refuse to do or suffer that which was made the Condition of his being taken into the Church's Society again, he must either go over to some other religious Society (and the same Reason, that is, an irregular Life, which induc'd the Society of which he was first a Member to expel him, will hold with equal Force, and with the like Propriety, for this other Society expelling him also, and thus will he be perpetually thrown out of every Church, or rather, no Church will admit him into her Communion, till he alters his Conduct;) we say, he must either go over to some other Society, whose Form of Worship he thinks erroneous, and consequently must disapprove of, or if he refuses to join as a Member in any such other

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Society,

Society, it is the Interest, and from thence it arises to be the Duty, of the Civil Magistrate to banish him Civil Society; because, as hath been largely shewn above, there is no confiding in an Atheist; and there is no possible way of knowing whether a Man be an Atheist or not, but by his publicly professing his Belief of a God; [see Article 30. Section 2] and without mutual Trust and Confidence, or a proper Foundation for those to rest on, Civil Society cannot subsist.

48. When the Consequents of Excommunication are Fines, Imprisonments, or Loss of Goods and Estate of any sort, or in any degree; it is to be observ'd, that those Mulcts and temporal Punishments are impos'd and inflicted, not from a religious, but from a civil Consideration, or to serve civil, and not religious Purposes. For if civil Governors take Cognizance of those Cases, and provide against them by certain stated Methods of Punishment, not as being destructive of the Peace and Safety of civil Society, but as Offences and Matters of Displeasure to Almighty God, then are such Practices as those in civil Governors not to be justify'd, and they bottom upon a false, and if indulg'd too far, as too far

far it must be indulg'd, if indulg'd at all; such Practices, we say, bottom upon a most pernicious Principle. Besides, the Nature of Religion, as we have shewn above, is such as not to admit of civil Force or Restraint of any Kind, or in any Degree, in Matters relating to divine Favour or Displeasure.

49. Excommunication in respect of Non-conformity to certain Rites and Ceremonies, to Modes of Worship, or Professions of Faith, and the like, is highly conducive to the regular and orderly Administration of Church-Affairs, and to the Quiet, Peace of Mind, and Harmony of the several Members which compose such particular religious Society; and such an Exclusion, or, as it may sometimes happen, voluntary Separation, every Person, who cannot *sincerely* and *conscientiously* conform, will make freely and readily of himself, or willingly submit to, without being forc'd to it by the Governors or supreme Officers in the Church. For as every Man has an unalienable Right of worshiping God according to Conscience, so he cannot but be pleas'd with the Thoughts that he is left at Liberty of separating from that Church whose Mode of Worship he thinks less acceptable

to that which in his Opinion is more acceptable to the Deity.

50. Excommunication for Non-conformity ought not to affect Men in their temporal Concerns, or, in other Words, it ought not to be attended with the loss of Liberty, or of Property of any Sort, since all such Practices in any private Man, or in a publick Body of them, are against the unalienable Right of private Judgment, and consequently of worshipping God according to Conscience. And all Attempts actually made, or Doctrines broach'd and advanc'd in justification of such Practices, ought to be guarded against as slavish and tyrannical.

51. Prop. 8th. *The Church has a Right to require Subscription at her Officers Hands before she admits them into her Ministry.* It has been largely shewn above, that the principal Design of Church-Officers being appointed, was, not barely to convince their Fellow-Creatures by Arguments suited to their Powers of Apprehension, that is, to their Capacities of receiving them, not merely to convince them, we say, of the Reality of some first great Principle, who governs the World by certain fixt and stated Laws, whose

whose Delight is Virtue, and Vice his Abhorrence, and who will deal with every Man in *another* Life according as his Behaviour hath been in *this*; to teach them what Actions, and Ways of Acting are agreeable to him, and consequently made the Ground and Foundation of Divine Favour and Rewards; and what are otherwise, that is, disagreeable, and, as such, will subject the Agent to a different Treatment from his Maker; but at the same Time that they are fitted to convince Mankind of the Certainty of those Truths, it was intended also they should produce in their Minds a Practical Sense of them, without having which, a mere Speculative Perception is of no real Use or Significancy. And this they can no ways do (since Religion absolutely disallows all compulsive Methods) but by using those Arguments in such a Manner, and by placing them in such Lights, as must necessarily create Attention; Attention in some Degree proportion'd to the vast Importance of those Things, and fitted to incline Men's Wills to a Conformity with them. And as this is the Business, the proper Work and Business of the Ministry, it is evident that no one ought

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to be taken into it, who has not beforehand given his Assent, that is, subscrib'd to the Belief of a God, his Providence, a future State, and to all such Truths, as are either connected with, or may by necessary Consequence be deduc'd from *those*: For if the Church had not proper Security, previously to the admitting any into her Ministry, of their being under such a strong Persuasion or Belief of the Truth of the abovemention'd Positions, as would at all times produce a steady Adherence to them; those Persons, if once admitted into such Offices, might propagate quite contrary Doctrines, which consequently could have but a very bad Influence upon the Minds and Conversations of Men.

52. There are, and ever will be some, who are viciously inclin'd, and according to the Degree in which they are attach'd to such Vices, will they be endeavouring to get free from the Restraints of Religion: And the Reason is, because it is impossible that any Man should continue easy and unconcern'd in his evil Courses, who believes a governing Mind to be at the Head of the whole, and such a governing Mind as will make every Creature, one time or other, accountable for his Actions. But there is no other



other Method of getting loose from religious Restraints, but by rooting out of Men's Minds the Belief of a Deity's Existence; that is, by defacing the Impressions of it there, by Ways and Means fitted to deface it, till the *Vestigia* thereof are no longer discernible. Where then is the Improbability that Persons of this Complexion may not thrust themselves into the Ministry, for the Sake of Ease under vicious Indulgences and Gratifications; and to do as much Mischief as they can to the Cause of Religion, which their Office gives them a better Handle for doing than others not so circumstanc'd can possibly have? However, upon this Consideration, it is but reasonable that none be Officers in the Church but such as are strongly dispos'd to favour the Interests of Religion, and are properly qualify'd to defend, both by Argument and Learning, her Truths, against the Objections of Libertines and Infidels; that is, it is but fitting that they give sufficient Testimony both of their Abilities and Disposition to perform those important Services in her Favour.

53. It has been remark'd above, how necessary it is that Men's Opinions and Belief,

as touching the Being and Attributes of God, his Dominion over them, and their absolute Dependency upon him, &c. be drawn out into clear, intelligible Propositions; and a common Formulary of Worship be established for the Benefit and Assistance of the whole Society, as corresponding respectively to their several Circumstances. Now the very same Reason which makes it necessary that such a Formulary be appointed, makes it also necessary, that Candidates for Church-Offices should subscribe to such publick Formulary; or give some plain Testimony and Evidence of their Approbation of it, antecedently to their Appointment; because, as we have shewn in Prop. 3. such Officers have more Ways and Means in their Power of hurting the Cause of Religion, and of destroying its good Effects, than others, if they be so minded. “ Since the Clergy, (*to use the Words of a judicious Writer*) are entrusted with explaining, and instructing Men in the Truths of Religion, too much Care cannot be taken to prevent the ill Effects of their *Ignorance or Error.*” And a little further; “ The Church would have provided poorly for the Reputation of its  
 “ Ministers,

“ Ministers, and the Safety of the People, if  
 “ <sup>the</sup> ~~an~~ Enquiry were made, what religious Opi-  
 “ nions were maintain’d by the one, and  
 “ would probably be infus’d into the o-  
 “ ther.” See Dr. *Conybear’s* Sermon upon  
 the Case of Subscription to Articles of Re-  
 ligion consider’d.

54. In short; ’tis a common Practice in  
 all Societies, or Bodies of Men, for every  
 Person, before he is entrusted with any Of-  
 fice, to signify by some outward Act (sup-  
 pos’d and taken in those Cases to be al-  
 ways expressive of Men’s inward Sentiments  
 and Conceptions) his real Affection and At-  
 tachment to the Welfare and Interest of that  
 Society, and which likewise is to be con-  
 sider’d as a Mark or Indication of his Wil-  
 lingness to serve, and of his Faithfulness in  
 the Discharge of such Duties, as will neces-  
 sariiy arise to him from that particular Of-  
 fice into which he is to be admitted. And  
 surely no Reason can be given, why, pre-  
 viously to Men’s Admission into any civil  
 Office, they should be oblig’d to give some  
 outward Sign of their Fidelity, in regard to  
 the just and equal Execution of the Duties

of

of such Office, which will not equally hold for another sort of Men doing the same before they be admitted into the Offices of the Church.

55. *Coroll.* From this Proposition likewise appears the Necessity of a standing Ministry in the Church, to examine both into the natural and religious Abilities or Qualifications of those who offer themselves for Ordination; and to admit, or reject those, whose Rejection or Admission best conduces, in their Judgment, to the Good of the Church, and the Honour and Interests of Religion.

56. Subscription is of the same, if not of greater Necessity in a Church, founded on some extraordinary Communication of God's Will to Mankind, as it is in a Church formed by natural Notices, or in the mere Use of the Powers and Faculties of the Mind, which we shall take Notice of here, tho' it falls more properly in our Way when we come to treat of Revelation, and to demand a Place there. But, in order to have a clearer and more distinct Conception of this, it will be necessary to premise the following general Observation concerning the Nature, the Design, and End of Revelation.

57. The very Notion of a Revelation implies a Discovery of some Truths, before unknown to those to whom such Revelation was granted; and the reveal'd Truths must be of that Nature and Quality, as not easily to be trac'd out by Reason; for what Reason can readily find out of herself needs no Revelation to discover. And, as an infinitely good and wise Being could have no other End in giving his Creatures a Revelation, than a fuller and more explicit Declaration of his Will in all those Instances, than what could be gather'd from natural Light, the Knowledge of which had some Relation to their Happiness; so it is evident, that the Truths of reveal'd Religion must, some of them at least, be the Objects of Faith, and not of Reason; such as the human Capacity in her present Circumstances cannot admit, or take in: But tho' she cannot comprehend them in and by the Use of her natural Powers; yet it may be notwithstanding necessary that she believes them. For, upon Supposition of the Validity of the Voucher's Authority, a Man may safely, and without the Imputation of being guilty of too much Credulity, assent to any Proposition

sition whose Terms imply not a Contradiction: Because what is not against Reason, Reason may submit to, and embrace as true; but more especially ought she, if the Thing propos'd for our Assent hath the Completion of Prophecies, and the working of Miracles in its Favour. If a Man would rank into the Number of his Truths (Truths, which have confessedly some Way or other an Influence upon Practice) none but such whose Certainty he can discover, his Catalogue, we are afraid, would be both short and empty. The Modes or Circumstances in which most Things exist, are, generally speaking, wholly unknown to us, tho' they be what we are chiefly conversant about; much more so are their Essences, or inward Constitutions; nor can the most vigorous Exertion of our Faculties ever enable us to reach them in this our present State of Things. Whence it unavoidably happens, that we are oblig'd to take a great many Things upon Trust, and to build much upon the Testimonies of others. Tho' it must be own'd as Matter of Fact, that some Truths (and those not inconsiderable, either as to Number or Moment, have been brought

brought to Light in these Days, which the *Literati* of old, after all their Enquiries, had but a very incompetent Knowledge of, and were very much divided in Opinion about: And highly probable it is, or what from Analogy we may safely conclude, *viz.* that other Truths shall be known to later Philosophers, which are now hid from those of our Age. And it is not in the least to be doubted, but that it is in Consequence of some momentous Reasons, that the human Mind is so made, as to be always in a Capacity (if rightly taken Care of) of filling her Store-House with the Accession of new, unknown Truths. For who knows but that one Part (and that not the least and inconsiderable) of a Man's Happiness in another World, may arise from such fresh Discoveries, especially if he has a Bias that Way, and a Mind given to Contemplation. However, being fully assured *à posteriori*, or from Effects, that our God is good, we have proportionable Assurance, that whatever he demands our Assent to, must, some Way or other, tho' in what particular Way we know not, make for our Happiness: And that he commands us to believe it for no other

Reason, but because such a Belief is, in some Sense or other, necessary to this End, tho' as yet we are not able to see the Connection; and for what we know to the contrary, it may be for certain wise Reasons that it lies conceal'd from our Sight, and out of the Reach of our Discovery. This is what we wanted to premise.

57. There are certain Doctrines suppos'd to be contain'd in Scripture, the Belief of which some Men think necessary to Salvation, others think not; or, if necessary at all, yet not necessary in such Degree, as that the Want of Belief in that Degree shall affect their future Interest. Some judge *this* particular Form or Mode of Worship best; some judge *that*, and the like. And this Difference in Opinion has given Rise to different religious Societies. “ For, (*to use the*  
 “ *Words of an able Writer*) since it is evi-  
 “ dent in Fact, that the Scripture in many  
 “ Cases is capable of different Interpretati-  
 “ ons; and that Men of equal Probity and  
 “ Integrity, as far as we can judge, interpret  
 “ it differently; and since there is confes-  
 “ sedly no infallible Judge to whom they  
 “ can appeal to decide their Differences;  
 “ 'tis



“ ’tis plain, that no Man can have any  
 “ thing else to guide and determine him  
 “ to one Interpretation or Sense more than  
 “ another, but his own Understanding and  
 “ Judgment; and therefore, every Man’s  
 “ own Judgment, and consequently, the  
 “ joint Opinion of any Body or Party  
 “ of Men, must give them a Right to  
 “ make every thing necessary to Salvation  
 “ and Christian Communion that they think  
 “ to be so, or else no publick Opinion or  
 “ Judgment can give him any such Right  
 “ at all.” Now, whoever upon full, im-  
 partial Enquiry, or upon such Enquiry as  
 one in his Circumstances can properly make,  
 thinks *this* Church in the *Right*, and *that* in  
 the *Wrong*, ought to dissent from the latter, if  
 he be a Member of it, and join himself to  
 the former. For if a Man holds Commu-  
 nion with a Church, which he thinks to be  
 in an Error, as to Point of Doctrine, or Pro-  
 fessions of Faith, he acts against Conscience;  
 that is, he is guilty of Sin. From whence  
 we gather these Corollaries:

58. *Coroll.* 1. That no Church (agreeably  
 to what we observ’d before) has a Right to  
 impose her own Terms of Communion upon

others of a different Persuasion, and Manner of thinking from her; much less a Right to use Force to compel them to come over to her Society.

59. *Coroll. 2.* That the great Principle of Self-Preservation will not allow, cannot with Safety allow, any Church to admit into her Society such as think the holding Communion with her sinful, since (as we shall prove in another Place) every one will be for establishing what he judges to be right, and will use the Means in his Power, be they direct or indirect, lawful or unlawful, to compass this End.

60. *Coroll. 3.* Since every Man has a natural Right to worship his Maker and Preserver in the Way he thinks he best approves of; so consequently, no one can have a Right to molest or interrupt him in that his Way of Worship; otherwise there would be contrary Rights, which is an express Contradiction in Terms. And if Nature, or rather, its great Author, vests every Man with a Right of choosing his own Way or Mode of Worship, it is evident, that a Church, that is, a Number of Men joining in the  
same

same Form, must have the same Right which every private Man had; that is, they have a Right to admit none into the Ministry of their Church, but those who will subscribe, or by some such like significant Act as this, will give their Assent to the Observance of such Rites and Ceremonies, Formularies of Faith, or Articles of Religion, as she, after an impartial Enquiry made, and proper Information obtain'd, thinks necessary to the holding religious Communion with each other. And if the Church has such a Right as this, she ought to exercise it, because, as we took Notice, it tends to her own Safety and Preservation.

61. But it is to be observ'd, that since Entrance into, and Continuance in some religious Society or other, is the necessary, indispensable Duty of every rational, dependent Being; it is evident, that when once a Person is admitted a Member of any particular Church, he ought to hold Communion with her, and carefully and conscientiously perform all the Duties of his Membership, till such Time as, either by a Change of Sentiments impartially made and fix'd, or

by some Alteration in the Way of Worship, or in the Profession of Doctrines; the Terms of Communion appear to him to be sinful, or such as in his Conscience he cannot comply with; because the withdrawing from any Church, without Reasons of Conscience urging for it, tends in its natural Consequence to make Divisions in such Church, and consequently must disturb its Peace and Quiet; the doing of which cannot be without Sin.

From this last Proposition it appears, how groundless and contrary to Truth those Positions are, which represent Subscriptions as Fetters to restrain the free Use of Men's Reason and Understandings; and to lay a Bias upon the Will in Prejudice of its free Choice and Determination; because Subscriptions presuppose both Conviction and Choice, and are evidently founded thereon: And if upon later Enquiry the Person, after he has subscrib'd, comes to be of Opinion, that another Communion is preferable, with regard to Points of Doctrine or Discipline, to his own, he is at full Liberty, notwithstanding his Subscription, to withdraw from the one to the other: For Subscription can be of no further Use, Force, or Significancy, that

that is, can bind a Man no longer, than whilst the Thing to which he has subscrib'd appears to him to be true. In short, Subscriptions, in whatever odious Lights they be represented, are necessary Properties of a Church as a Society, and Consequences from it; therefore unavoidable.

62. Prop. 9. *The Officers of the Church have a Right to a Maintenance from the Laity.* That rational sensible Beings are oblig'd to worship in the best Manner they can that Being from whom they deriv'd their Natures, Powers, &c. is a Truth, which hath been demonstratèd above; and it is equally true, and what we presume hath been fully shewn above, that he cannot be worshippèd in such a Manner, or, in other Words, that Religion cannot have its due Weight and Influence with Mankind, without an Order of Men to officiate in religious Matters, and to attend the Service of the Church. But Persons in a manner wholly conversant in the Affairs of Religion are not at Liberty to attend worldly Business, or not to attend to it in a Degree sufficient to enable them to make any considerable Proficiency therein; nor *vice versâ*, can Men engag'd in

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Things

Things of a secular Nature, manage and administer the other as they ought to be, Whence it is, that their respective Spheres are so remote from each other, that one and the same Person cannot move properly in them both. And therefore; since those who have taken upon themselves the Office of Church-Men, have, by the Nature and End of their Profession, disqualify'd themselves for any Business or Employment but what is of an ecclesiastical Kind, or which hath some Sort of Tendency that Way: so Equity, and the Right of the Case requires, that they have a Maintenance allow'd them suitable to their Character and Condition in Life; that is, to the Office they serve. Be it also further observ'd, that as there would be no living, either in or out of Society, without the restraining Influence of Religion, as hath been fully shewn in the first Section; so in this View it is but fitting, that those who are Contributors to, ought to be Sharers in, the Good and Happiness of others.

63. Every Office in civil Society hath Allotments both of Honour and Profit annex'd to it, suitable to the Nature and Dignity of such Office, and to the Trouble and

and

and Care arising from a faithful Discharge of the Duties of it; and the same Reason, one would think, which requires a Provision should be made for civil Officers, must require also, that some sort of Provision should be made for ecclesiastical ones likewise.

64. The Necessity of a distinct Order of Men being set apart to serve in the Church, hath been largely made out above; and it is strictly demonstrable that Men, consider'd as Men, A is no more under Obligation to assist B, than B is to assist A; that is, one Man hath as much Right to the good Offices of others, as those others can have to his: Consequently, if Church-Officers assist the Laity in Ways and Means of furthering and promoting both their present and future Happiness, it is but reasonable that they requite this Assistance of theirs by such Methods as fall properly within their Reach; that is, it is necessary that they, in Return, contribute to the Happiness of Church-Men, by affording them a convenient Maintenance for Support.

65. Lastly; Man's Happiness, on the Whole, must arise from the Will of his Creator; therefore, if he would act rationally,

nally, or so as to be ultimately happy, he is oblig'd to direct all his Acts in perfect Subserviency to that Will, or in Conformity with it: But, as a comfortable Provision appears to be made by the Deity for all his Creatures, in having given them in Abundance Materials both of Food and Raiment, and in such Way as will best serve the Necessaries and Conveniencies of Life; it is highly becoming, and therefore exactly agreeable to the same infinite Wisdom and Goodness, not to leave those unprovided for, or destitute of a Maintenance, whose particular Attendance on his Service hath, in some measure, debarr'd them from all Employments of a secular Nature, by Means of which they might have got a good Livelihood and Subsistence; or, in other Words, it is his Will that they be provided for in this Way by the Laity; and consequently, the Laity are oblig'd to do it. The Truth is, in all Cases civil or religious, he that spends his Time and Labour in the Service of others, hath, from the Reason of Things, and if so, then from the Appointment of God, a Right to be supported, and taken Care of by them.



66. That the Officers of Religion therefore have a natural Right to a Maintenance from the Laity, is fairly deducible from Reason ; but the Modus in which it is to be made, or the Quota and exact Proportion of Temporal Goods, Effects, &c. that ought to be appropriated for their Use, actually lies out of its Province, and beyond the Power of its Determination, that is, it must depend on the Will of the Person or Persons so contributing.

67. *Corol.* We hence learn, how grossly those Men mistake, who affirm, that the Clergy's Claim to a certain share of the Goods and Estate of others, or their Right of Maintenance, hath no Foundation in Reason or Truth ; and that all such Demands, whenever made, are no other than arbitrary Exactions and unjust Impositions upon the Rights of Laymen.

68. Prop. 10. *Church-Officers have a Right to a share of Respect from the Laity, answering the Dignity of their Office and Employment.* There is necessarily due to every Office or Relation in Life, a certain Degree of Honour, Respect, or Reverence, suitable to the Nature of such Office or Relation ; otherwise the Office itself would fall into Contempt, and by Consequence, the Duties of it be neglected. The  
more

more excellent therefore the Office is, the greater share of Reverence is due to him who fills it. But the Dignity or Excellency of any Office, &c. civil or religious, as it arises from, so consequently is it proportion'd to, the Power and Majesty of the Being whose Officer such Person is, or to whom such Person stands related in that particular Manner. Thus, for Instance, the more honourable the Prince is, the greater Respect is always paid to any one who is intrusted with the Administration of his Affairs, or who holds any Commission from him. And this holds universally in common Life, from the Prince on the Throne, down to the lowest Magistrate acting by a delegated Authority under him. And if the Respect due to Officers of all Ranks and Denominations ought to be proportion'd to the Nature and Importance of their several Offices, then religious Officers, as being by the Nature and Design of their Appointment more immediately related to the Deity, and more properly styl'd his Servants than others can pretend to be, will have a Right to such a Proportion of Esteem and Reverence as will answer the high Character they have the

Honour

Honour to bear, or such as is accommodated, and properly fitted to the Dignity and real Excellency of the Being, in whose Service they are more particularly employ'd. " That  
 " the Ministers of Religion should be pecu-  
 " liarly *honoured* and regarded, seems to be  
 " accounted a Piece of natural Justice by the  
 " common Sentiments of Mankind ; the most  
 " barbarous and unpolish'd Nation that ever  
 " had a Value for any thing of Religion, have  
 " always paid a proportionable Regard to  
 " them, to whom the Care and Administra-  
 " tion of it did belong." *Cave's primitive Christianity.*

69. Prop. 11th. *For the better and more speedy Administration of ecclesiastical Matters, and in order to gain a true Knowledge of the Morals and Conduct, both of Clergy and Laity (without obtaining which, the Laws cannot be executed, nor Regularity in any Society maintain'd) it is necessary that the Governors of the Church, or some deputed by them, should hold Visitations at certain fixt Times and Places, when and where they may examine into the true State of the Church, and of such Things and Persons as belong unto her.*  
 Whilst Man continues possess'd of such a  
 large

large share of Appetites and Affections, some acting and drawing one way, and others another, and is surrounded on all Sides with proper Objects and Means of Gratification, the Case in Fact and Reason ever will be, that, in Consequence of such a Variety both of Solicitors and Respondents, “ Breach of Trust amongst all Orders of Men, or Men of all Professions, is not to be avoided.” And the Breach of Trust in all Instances whatever, must be introductive to much Evil, and the Parent of many bad, unhappy Consequences to all such as are any ways concern’d therein. This plainly shews, that there ought to be some appointed to inspect the Conduct of the Members of the Church, as well of Ecclesiasticks, as of Laymen; to take Cognizance of all such Things as have any Relation to the Church, or a Tendency to forward or oppose the Execution of her Offices in a more or less orderly and regular way; to hear Complaints; to redress Grievances; to reform Abuses and Corruptions, to inflict ecclesiastical Censures on Delinquents, &c. But the Governors of a religious Society (as all Governors of civil Society are found to have) must, *ratione Officij*, be vested with a  
Right

Right of taking Cognizance of such Matters, and of ordering whatever concerns the Uses and Exigences of their own Society, and of commissioning such of their Body as they judge best skill'd in this sort of Business, and consequently the best qualify'd to undertake the Care and Administration of it.

70. As in civil Society it is requisite that at certain returning Periods, Courts of Judicature of different Sorts and Degrees of Authority, according as they take Notice severally of Cases of different Weight and Moment to Society, be kept for the preserving of publick Peace and Order; the suppressing by proper stated Methods of Punishment, drawn out into open View for the Benefit of all the Members of that particular Body, all injurious Practices, or Violations of Duties, Obligations, &c. whether respecting private or publick Property; composing such Differences as may arise betwixt Man and Man; reforming Abuses which, in various ways, have crept into the State, and the like; so in a religious Society, there is equal Necessity of Care being taken to preserve Peace, Unity, and good Order among the Members of it; to observe such Rules, and Methods of Proceeding, &c. as

will prevent the Society from running into Confusion, and the End of its Appointment defeated. But there is no way of knowing, and consequently of putting a stop to such Things, as are of bad Effect to the Church, and which obstruct her Influences, but by Persons in Authority, who, after making proper Enquiry in Person, that is, visiting at such and such Times and Places, when and where they shall have a just and fair Account delivered in to them, from Testimonials impartially drawn up, and honestly sign'd, of every Thing which concerns the Church, or the Ministration of her Offices, we say, but by such Persons in Authority, who, after due Information of each Circumstance obtain'd, shall proceed and act according to the Rules and Methods prescrib'd by the Legislative Power of the Church, that is, such as will equally execute the Laws to whose Care the Administration of them is committed.

*N. B.* The Truth of this Proposition depends upon the religious Society being under a monarchical Form, or indeed under any other Form, excepting a democratical one.

70. Thus have we with all the Perspicuity that we could, explain'd the common Nature

of a Church, and shewn the End for which it was originally founded: And from this general Idea have we deduc'd in one uniform Method the several Powers, Rights, &c. belonging to her as a religious Society, all which, and none but which, she can legitimately use or exercise. The want of attending to which real Characters and Properties of a Church, hath been the sole Cause of all that Embarrassment and Confusion which from Age to Age have embroil'd this Subject in so many Perplexities, and led Men into such a Labyrinth of Errors, as they could never rightly extricate themselves out of again. It has been the usual way with most Writers, in their Disquisitions on the Nature, the Extent, and Obligation of Church-Government, to enumerate the several Powers the Church stood possess'd of at such and such Periods of Time; and what general Councils were held in this or that Prince's Reign, and for what Purpose, without ever enquiring whether the Church was rightfully possess'd, and consequently could rightfully exercise such Sorts of Power as those, or not; which was the main Point wanting to be settled and finally adjusted in the Subject we are treating of. The Enquiry,

'tis humbly conceiv'd, ought not to be, about the *Fact*, but the *Right*; not what Powers the Church enjoy'd at one or other Age of the World, but what Powers, as a religious Society, she was vested with, and which flow'd from the common Nature of a Church. Those which have been drawn out in the Order in which they stand above, and there demonstrated, are all that belong to her, and consequently all that she can hold or possess in her natural independent State; and if she exercises more, or other than those, they are either usurp'd Powers, and being so, must be founded in Injustice, or otherwise deriv'd from the civil Legislature of the Nation, to which she is answerable for the Use she puts them to. Since it hath been already shewn how much Religion disclaims the Exercise of temporal Power, and how abhorrent from its Nature all violent compulsive Methods of Proceeding are, from the Consideration of this its Nature, may it be clearly demonstrated, that no Ecclesiastick, nor consequently any Court acting under him, or by a Power deriv'd from him, can have a Right to hurt Men in *Temporals* under Pretence of benefiting them in *Spirituals*. But all Temporal  
Power



Power possess'd by the Church, if temporal she hath any, is, as to the Nature of its Tenure, no other than a Grant or Concession from the State, and the Church is subjected to certain Limitations in the Exercise of it, and for the use she makes of it strictly answerable. All that Churchmen, as the Officers of Religion can do, in Cases of Discipline for Correction of Offences, or Reformation of Manners, is to advise, to exhort, and entreat; or to remonstrate, to admonish, and rebuke: and if this prove ineffectual, then to excommunicate. And all more than, or beyond this, properly lies within the civil Magistrate's Province.

71. From what has been prov'd in this and the last Section, we may observe, that if there be a Deity, then do these Truths follow by necessary Consequence — That he must be worshiped publickly, as well as privately; and that certain Times, Places, and Persons be set apart for the more regular and orderly Performance of this Duty; and a Number of Men meeting together under these Circumstances is what we mean by a Church.— That this Church hath a Right of prescribing a publick Formulary of Faith to be profess'd

by each Religionist ; of appointing Methods of proceeding against Delinquents ; of making such Laws and Constitutions, such Rules and Ceremonies, as are necessary for the Government of her Members, and for conducting the Affairs of Religion in the best Manner possible, or so as to attain all those valuable Purposes, for which Men enter into such religious Associations ; and that this Power in the Church, which we stile its Legislative Power, resides both in Clergy and Laity ; but the Executive solely in the former.—A Right of creating her own Officers, the Exercise of which is limited to her Governors—A Right of appointing her own Form of Government —A Right of casting out of her Society all disorderly, immoral, and refractory Members — Of obliging her Ministers to subscribe before she admits them into her Ministry— Of subsisting those Officers upon the Contributions of the Laity-----Of holding Visitations for the Exercise of Church-Discipline. -----From whence it will follow, that Religion necessarily, and of itself, constitutes a Society in the strictest and most proper Acceptation of the Word.

72. From the Propositions laid down and demonstrated, in this Section, we draw the following Corollaries.

73. *Corol. 1.* Since every Being which becomes conscious, by a proper use of its Reason or reflective Powers, of its absolute Dependence upon the Deity, is oblig'd to make him a Tender of its best Respects and Service, and consequently oblig'd to be Member of some religious Society or other ; and since every Society, as a Society, must have Laws properly adapted to its Preservation and commodious Manner of subsisting, and for attaining the End or Ends of its Institution, it follows, that the Church will have a Right of ordaining such Laws and Canons as will bind all her Members, as well Clergy as Laity, in Matters which have a Tendency to, and Connection with, those Ends.

74. *Corol 2.* Since the particular Quota each Member of the Society shall contribute towards the Maintenance of its Officers is voluntary, that is, depends as to Measure and Degree on the Will of every such Member, it is evident, that Church-Officers have no Right to make Laws which shall bind Laymen in *Temporals*, or what particular Share of each

Property shall be appropriated for their Use and Service.

75. *Corol.* 3. Since Religion absolutely disclaims all use of temporal and coercive Power of every Sort, as inconsistent with its Nature, and destructive of the End of all such Sort of Associations, it follows, that all the Power of this Kind which such Officers do, or can rightfully exercise, is deriv'd to them from the civil Power, to be employ'd by them for civil Purposes, and in the Service of the State.

#### §. IV.

1. It hath been already shewn, how much religious Worship, when perform'd in a suitable and becoming Manner, tends to preserve in Men's Minds a lively and operative Sense of God and Providence; and did Men but constantly live in a firm Persuasion of their being actually under the Inspection and Government of an all-seeing Deity, and of those Rewards and Punishments which by his Appointment are to be distributed in some Period or other of Man's Existence, in exact Proportion to the Good or Ill, to the Quantity of Happiness or Misery, they have designedly

signedly introduced into the World, it seems impossible that their Acts should ever deviate from the Will of *this* their Creator, but be steadily directed in Subserviency to it: Such a Sense would influence a Man's Conduct thro' the whole of his Pursuits, and keep him constantly bias'd towards the Paths of Virtue. But the Misfortune is, such is our Relation to external Objects, and so great the Power which they have over us, that we neither have, nor can have, our main End constantly in View, nor will *future* Happiness and Misery have that Effect in some Cases, which *present* is seen to have upon Men's Minds. A confessedly greater Happiness, view'd at a Distance, and in Idea only, engages the Mind's Attention less, and produces in her weaker Desires, than a much smaller one, which is felt, or which is just at Hand, and within her reach: The Causes of Happiness or Misery being more or less affecting in Proportion to their Vicinity to, or Distance from us. And this is the Reason, one great Reason at least, that Motives of future Happiness and Misery are found insufficient to secure in many Cases an Obedience to the Rules of Virtue; but Deviations from them are frequent, and always

mischievous: And the Sense of those Evils gave the first Rise to the Institution of civil Government. For the wise benevolent Author of Nature, willing the Good and Happiness of all his Creatures, and, as the necessary Means to this End, requiring that every one do, according to his Ability, contribute his Quota, and use his Endeavours for the obtaining of it: Therefore, whenever an Inconsistency of Happiness, arising from the untoward, perverse Mixture of Men's Wills and Acts, some concurring with, others opposing, the Ends of their Creator; whenever an Inconsistency of Happiness, we say, subsists betwixt the several Parts of this Body, it is his Will, that the Security, the Ease, and Well-being of those who do not deviate, be in all Cases preferr'd to the Security, the Ease and Well-being of those who do deviate from the Law he has prescrib'd them, and with which his own Acts, as far as they relate to them, have a perfect Coincidence and Agreement. And consequently in all Instances, where the Lives, Liberties, and Properties of the *one* become incompatible with the Lives, Liberties, and Properties of the *other*, he subjects the latter to the Will of the former, or, he

gives those, if their Safety so require it, a Right to take them away. Which Right, when Men form themselves into civil Societies, they resign up to the civil Magistrate. But for the Reader's Satisfaction in a Matter of so great Moment, we choose to refer him to those Books in which the Nature and End of civil Society, and the respective Rights and Duties both of Prince and Subject are well explain'd and adjusted.

2. The Design of civil Government, therefore, is to secure Men in the quiet and peaceable Possession of all their temporal Rights, both natural and acquired, by punishing all Invaders of them, in a Degree suited to the Nature and Extent of such Invasion. But the great Design, and proper Business of Religion, is to obtain and secure for Mankind everlasting Happiness in another Life or State of Being, by engaging them (thro', or in consequence of, a Sense of their Dependency on God, requiring them so to act) to introduce the greatest possible Quantity of Happiness into this, that is, by the Promotion of all sorts of good Offices, and by abstaining from all Acts mutually hurtful and injurious. To prove and make out to them, in a way suitable

able to their Comprehensions, the necessary Connexion of Virtue with Happiness, and of Vice with Misery, in greater or less Degrees, accordingly as the Habits of Virtue or Vice Men have contracted, are stronger or weaker; and consequently, to shew them, that the only possible Way the Deity has mark'd out for Mankind to possess future Happiness, is (looking up to him, and paying a Regard to his Will in whatever they undertake) to act in Pursuit of present both private and publick conjointly, if those are are found consistent; when they are not, to make in all Cases the former subservient to the latter. Whence we see, that Religion takes in a larger Field of Duties, and hath more under its Care and Inspection, than civil Government can possibly pretend to. The proper and immediate Province of the latter being to suppress all Acts of Violence and Oppression; but reaches not, cannot by the very Nature of it reach to, the binding upon Men Acts of Beneficence, of mutual Love and Good-Will, which, equally with the other, it is the proper Concern; and from that Consideration it arises to be the Duty of Religion, to enforce upon Mankind,



by such Motives and Considerations of Things, as are accommodated to the Nature of free Agency, or such as will render the Conduct founded thereon meritorious in the Eye of the Deity. The Motives or Principles by which Religion works for attaining its End are divine Favour, or Displeasure; or, more properly, future Happiness and Misery, necessarily consequent upon such Favour and Displeasure. But civil Government pursues its End by present Punishments suited to the Nature of Men's Opposition to publick Safety, and their Violation of the Rule of Right.

3. A Church, therefore, was instituted on purpose for to make Men good and virtuous; strict Observers of natural Justice and Equity; and to engage them, by all the various Methods in the Nature of Things fitted to engage them, to a careful and conscientious Discharge of the several Duties they stand in to each other, as well those of imperfect, as those of perfect Obligation. Government was appointed for punishing all obstinate Invaders of Men's natural Rights; and for cutting off all such disorderly and mischievous Members as break thro' the  
Rules

Rules and Ties of Society, and would throw the Whole into Confusion. Religion is to stifle the Seeds of Vice in the Womb; to root out, if possible, all evil Habits; and to give a Check to, and prevent all irregular Desires from being carry'd into Act; Civil Government, to punish them when thus broken out, by Penalties suitable to their malignant Nature and Quality.

4. Men's various Intercourses with each other, occasion'd by their Situation in Life, and their Relation likewise to the Supreme Being, who causes it to be their Duty to act conformably to their mutual Dependency on each other; this Sense, we say, of their Dependency, or, rather, the Sense of the Violation of those Duties resulting from such Dependency, having oblig'd them to form themselves into civil Society, as they had before done into a religious one; it will be necessary, in the next Place, to consider the Relation the two Societies stand in to each other. And here we shall proceed in the same Manner as we did before, *viz.* by way of Proposition and Corollary.

5. Our first Proposition then is, *That the Church must be independent on the State.*

It

It has been prov'd in the last Section, that Religion composeth a Society. Now a Society that borrows none of her Rights, Powers, &c. from another Society, must be independent on that other Society for the Exercise of them: For what A has not from B, may A use, and dispose of, without B's Consent; or B has no Right to meddle with it, much less a Right to molest A in the Enjoyment of it. But the Powers belonging to the Church, as a religious Society, are none of them deriv'd from the State. And if not, then consequently the Church must be independent on the State for the Exercise of them: And if independent on the State for what she is, and for the Use and Exercise of those Powers she possesseth, she must therefore be absolutely independent in all other respects on it.

6. That the Church has none of her Powers from the State, is evident from hence:

7. *1<sup>st</sup>*, Because she existed long before civil Government had a Being, and consequently could receive none of them from it. For human Laws being no other than Enforcements of the Laws of Nature, that

is,

is, of the Laws of God, by temporal Sanctions: so they can only take place when the Motives of future Happiness and Misery, (the Sanctions God is pleas'd to make use of to oblige Men to the Observance of his Laws) which Religion teaches, operate too weakly to keep Men in the Paths of strict Obedience to them; that is, when the Influences of religious Worship are found ineffectual for obtaining the End aim'd at by the Institution of a Church. And therefore the Church, in this View, must be *prior* in Order of Time, as well as Conception, to the Being of civil Government.

8. *2d.* The Powers, describ'd in the last Section as belonging to the Church, are there demonstrated to belong to her, as to a Body associated under such and such peculiar Circumstances; or they are such as are of the Essence of a Church, or what constitutes her one. For it is there shewn, that wherever a Church exists, there, of Necessity, will be those Powers belonging to her, otherwise she could be no Church; which is a Circumstance or Condition utterly inconsistent with all delegated Power whatsoever.

9. 3d. The Powers exercis'd by the Church are such as by the Nature of them cannot belong to the State; and therefore such as the civil Power could not confer: it being unquestionably true, that no Man, or Body of Men, can give to another what they are not possessed of themselves.

N. B. When we say, Religion necessarily, and of itself composes a Society distinct from, and independent on the civil, our Meaning is, and such we would have the Reader always carry in his Mind, when we speak of the Church's Independency on the State, or the State's Independency on the Church, that Mankind, as Religionists, have nothing to do with Mankind as Civilists; or, that the same Men, considered in different Capacities and Relations, or in Pursuit of different Ends, shall have distinct and different Powers, Rights, &c. distinct and different Duties; as also laid under different Obligations and Engagements, in respect to each other, and to themselves.

10. And from the Church's *Independency* follows, by way of Corollary, her *Supremacy*. For that which is absolutely independent on another, either as to Being itself, or the  
Man-

Manner of it; for the Rights it possesses, or for the Use it makes of them, cannot in any respect be subjected to the Power of that other. Since all Power, in whatsoever Hands lodg'd, and for whatever Purposes intended, necessarily implies Obedience; and consequently Dependency, proportion'd to the Nature and Extent of such Power. Consequently, what is independent cannot be subjected to the Obedience, nor therefore to the Jurisdiction of another, nor limited in its own; that is, it must be supreme.

II. Freedom likewise follows Independence, and is a necessary Consequence from it: because what is independent, cannot admit *ab extra* of any Restraint from Action, or of any Compulsion to it; and what will not admit either of Restraint or Compulsion, must determine, move, and act freely. Consequently, the two Societies being independent, can never in the legitimate and rightful Administration of their respective Powers, be subject to any Limitation, each from the other. Be it also further observ'd, that Freedom in a religious Society is so necessary, that without the Exercise of it such Society can never attain the End of its Institution.

12. After the same Manner may we prove the State's Supremacy; its Freedom and Independence on the Church.

13. Prop. 2. *The Ends of a civil and religious Society, and the proper Means of attaining them; that is, Men's Pursuits after those Ends; and the respective Duties Obligations, &c. arising to a Man both in his civil and religious Capacity; those Ends and Means, those Duties and Obligations, we say, do not interfere with each other, but are perfectly consistent.* A Creature, in the Design and Intention of its Maker, form'd to subsist in two different States of Being, and by a proper Use and Improvement of its Faculties and Powers of Action, to acquire for each State a Happiness proportion'd to its Capacities of Enjoyment; a Creature, we say, so circumstanc'd, must direct all its Movements and Pursuits to the Attainment of those two grand Ends; or, more properly, to the same End in two different Periods of Existence. The Means, in Fact, of possessing the Happiness of this present Life, is civil Society, form'd upon those Principles on which all civil Politics ought to be founded. Civil Society standing up-

on those Foundations attains its End, partly by enforcing a strict and universal Observance of the Rule of Right, and by punishing all Violations of it, without any Regard had to, or making any Distinction of Persons; partly by annexing suitable Encouragements to all Improvements of Labour and Industry, and by making the best possible Provision for the Wants and Exigences of all its Members, in that almost infinite Variety of Cases in which they may have Occasion for them. Man's Interest in that other and future State is chiefly consulted, and best promoted, by a careful Discharge, from the Motives of future Happiness, of all the Duties arising to a Creature in his Circumstances; or, in other Words, the Means of future Happiness is the Practice of universal Benevolence, which, according to the different Prospects we view it under, or as using various Means for compassing the same End, is apt to assume the Name of different moral Virtues, tho' they be but so many Emanations from the same Fountain, diversify'd indeed according to the several Channels thro' which they flow, and which may be consider'd as different Modifications



fications of one and the same indivisible Principle, invariably pursuing, tho' by different Ways, the same grand Point which it has ever in View; the Means of future Happiness is, we say, the Practice of Benevolence in a degree commensurate to Man's Sphere of acting, with a View had to the divine Acceptance therein; that is, in Expectation of the divine Favour and Approbation attending such a Conduct. From whence follow, in the Nature of Corollaries, the following Truths, which prove the Proposition.

14. *Coroll.* 1. That Man's Pursuit of present Happiness is not only consistent with, but, if rightly directed, and proceeding upon proper Principles, promotive of his future and more lasting Interest in that other State of Being, into which he enters at his Departure out of this; and consequently the Means of possessing *present*, will ever be compatible with the Means of possessing *future* Happiness.

*Coroll.* 2. That the more Good a Man does in the World, the more useful Member of Society he is; and the more useful

Member he is, the more he co-operates with his Maker's Will, and consequently the more religious he is. His Religion, as to the Value, Worth, or Meritoriousness of it, varying according to the Degrees of Happiness he designedly introduces into the World, always supposing him to act with a View to the Divine Acceptance and Favour.

15. *Corol.* 3d. That no sorts of Opinions, tho' zealously urged, and strenuously insisted upon, by some indiscreet, bigotted Churchmen, as necessary to be professed, which have Tendencies to disturb the Peace and Quiet of civil Society, can be any Parts of Religion, or enjoin'd by it as of Importance to be believed; that is, can be no Truths of Religion, or else Truths of no Moment; for all Truths derive their Importance from their Usefulness, that is, from their Connection with Man's present and future Happiness, the Means of which, as we just now observ'd, can never cross or obstruct each other. From whence we draw the following momentous Observation.

16. That Churchmen can have no Right to impose any Opinions, Doctrines, &c. either as Terms of Communion, as Matters  
of

of Faith and Practice, &c. which are any ways injurious to the Interests of civil Society ; nor, on the other hand, can the civil Magistrate *rightfully* restrain Men in the Exercise of any necessary, religious Duty, upon a civil Account, or enforce any Doctrines, Observances, &c. detrimental to Religion, under a Pretence of benefiting civil Society by the Profession of them : Since the true legitimate Interests of both have a perfect Coincidence with each other. And consequently, nothing can be *really* beneficial to civil Society, which is *really* incommodious to Religion, nor *vice versa*.

*N. B.* By civil Society we always mean a Government standing upon just, legitimate Foundations, that is, one form'd upon the natural Rights of Mankind, or upon those great Principles from whence such Rights are deduc'd.

17. Hence appears the Absurdity of all such Arguments as would conclude for the Church's Dependency on the State from the clashing of two independent Powers in one and the same Body of Individuals. Since the proper, rightful Exercise of those two Powers can never injuriously affect each

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other.

other. For our Doctrine of two independent Societies, made up of the same Men, combin'd together for different Purposes, and in Prosecution of different Views, does not introduce an *Empire* within an *Empire*, (in the Sense of the Author of the Rights of the Christian Church) which, from the clashing of their respective Powers, must necessarily have ended in the Dependency of one upon the other, which, in all Cases, would be of that of the weaker upon the stronger. For the two Societies being so essentially distinct in their Ends and Means, in their Natures and Powers, that in the proper Choice and Pursuit of the one; and the legitimate Exercise and Administration of the other, they cannot possibly ever interfere, or obstruct each other's Operations.

18. And this shews the Weakness as well as Falseness of that Assertion of the abovemention'd Author, tho' laid down, as usual, with much seeming Positiveness and dogmatical Assurance; *viz.* "nor will the Distinction of Ecclesiastical and Civil, at all mend the Matter, since two such Sovereigns must necessarily clash, and destroy the Society, by confounding each other's Power." *The Rights*

*Rights of the Christian Church.* And, to speak the Truth, whoever reads with any Attention this Author's inimitable Performance, will readily own, that his Argumentation in every part of the Book in which he endeavours to shew the Absurdity of an *Imperium in Imperio*, constantly proceeds upon the Supposition, that the Governors of each Society do universally deviate from the just and lawful Exercise of those Powers arising to them, from the Nature and End of those distinct Societies over which they preside. Let the Powers respectively belonging to the Officers of each Society be but rightly executed, and they cannot ever possibly clash, nor consequently can any Confusion arise to one or other Society from them. That the Administrations of those Powers do sometimes not fall within the proper Limits prescrib'd them, but oftentimes exceed, or go beyond them, and in such Cases is the Parent of much Disorder in the World, is the Effect, not of any natural Repugnancy or Inconsistence in the Exercise of those Powers, either with regard to each other and among themselves, or to the Attainment of their respective Ends; but is owing to the Imperfection of human Nature, and is one

Instance, among many others, how liable Power, wherever lodg'd, is to be abus'd, and from that Consideration how necessary it is, in all Delegations of it to any Body of Men, to guard against those Abuses of it to which it is most prone, by all such Means as are compatible with the End for which it is transferr'd. How such Abuse comes about, we shall now endeavour to give an Account.

19. Had but those two Societies kept themselves within their own Boundaries, and neither of them at any Time mov'd out of its proper Element, their Administration could not possibly have injuriously affected each other; but a good Harmony and Agreement would always have subsisted betwixt the Members of them; tho' unhappily for them both, the Case in Fact was found to be otherwise; the State sometimes went beyond the Limits set to its Jurisdiction, and made Encroachments upon the Church's Rights; at other Times the Church did the same with regard to the State, to the infinite Damage and Detriment of them both.

20. How Evil first came into the World is a Question no ways material to be decided here; that it is now in the World, and is the Author  
of

of all the Confusion and Disorder reigning among Mankind, is too plain to admit of any Dispute. We need not go far for Instances to teach us, how that some Men, whether it be in Consequence of an untoward Biass or Propension of Nature at first, or, which is the more probable of the two, by virtue of ill-grounded, irregular Habits, are so strongly attach'd to Vice, that they greedily close with every Temptation that happens to lie in the way, and to solicit their Choice. And, agreeably to a former Observation of ours, it is naturally impossible that Vice should ever sit easy upon a Person, who lives in the Belief, and under the Persuasion of the Being of an animadverting Deity, who will be sure to vindicate the Justice and Reasonableness, as well as the Honour and Dignity of his Laws, in another World, by punishing *there*, all such as wilfully transgress and break in upon them *here*. It is the Dread of future Punishments therefore that makes vicious Men reason against the divine Being, that they may without Check, and free from all Restraints from Conscience, indulge themselves in their beloved Vices. “ It is notorious, says an Author “ we have somewhere read, that all Degrees “ of Infidelity and Atheism arise from pro-  
“ portionable

“portionable Degrees of Vice.” The vicious Man’s first Care therefore will be to erase out of his own Mind, as also to extinguish in the Minds of others, so far as he is able to do it, such a Sense of a Deity’s Animadversion. For the greater Number he brings over to his own Opinion, the more he will hug himself with his own Security, since ’tis generally presum’d that a Multitude cannot well be in an Error. The means to effect this, must be, either to prove the Non-existence of such a Being, or to withdraw others from such Places and Persons as by their Situation and Office naturally tend to remind them of him. All Attempts made the former way will ever be found impracticable : The Evidences for a Deity are so clear and conspicuous, and withal so strong and cogent, that they must necessarily force Assent from all reasonable Men ; especially from such as have attended to them with that Application of Thought which the Subject necessarily requires. And every Argument in favour of Atheism, if pursu’d thro’ all its Habitues and Dependences, will be found to end in a Demonstration of the contrary Truth, that is, of the Being of some first great Principle,



ciple, itself uncaus'd, and the Cause of Life and Motion to all other Beings. Such therefore will have recourse to the *last*, as the most *successful* Method. And in fact we see, that the Clergy of all Churches, from the Time there was a Church in Being, have constantly been represented by the vicious part of Mankind (ever uneasy under the Restraints of Religion) as the worst of Enemies to Mankind; Encroachers upon Men's Rights and Properties; and endeavouring to deprive them the Liberty of the use of such Things as God and Nature plainly design'd for them; that Religion was at first the Trick of Statesmen, contriv'd on purpose to keep silly Men in Awe, and by the Torments of *another* Life to frighten them into the Practice of their Duty in *this*, in all those Cases where human Laws could not reach with their Penalties, and consequently could take no sort of Possession of their Minds, with regard either to Action or Forbearance. Whoever reads the History of Mankind with Seriousness and Attention, will find this to be the Case in Fact. It is no irrational Conclusion therefore that we would make (for it is a Conclusion drawn from Observation and Experience,) that those whose

Vices

Vices have made them quarrel with Religion as irreconcilable with their Practice, have constantly made use of all the Means in their Power to make it fit so loose upon them, as that they might shake it off with Ease and Pleasure as Occasions should require. And we find the most common Method with them has been to weaken the Authority, by blackening the Character of those who are appointed to defend it. It being both agreeable to Reason, and confirm'd by Fact, that whatever tended to the Disgrace and Infamy of such an Order of Men, in the same Degree tended to the Ruin of Religion. Without such Persons therefore as there can be no Religion, or else Religion without Effect; and without Religion, no Government, or civil Society, and consequently no Security either with regard to Life, Liberty, or Property, as hath been largely shewn in the Beginning of this Treatise: So, upon political Considerations, or as a Matter of a civil Nature or Concern, it is the Business of the civil Magistrate to guard against all such Practices in the Members of that Society over which he is appointed to preside,

21. Hence

21. Hence therefore arises the Necessity of the Aid of the civil Power to protect the Church against those Attacks to which she is expos'd *from without* ; to punish all Attempts for depreciating the Character, and consequently for destroying the Influence and Authority of the Clergy ; and the depriving them of their Rights, Dues, &c. of all Kinds : For it is notorious, that nothing brings Men sooner into Contempt, than Poverty and Meanness of Circumstance, tho' unavoidable on their Part ; and as those will necessarily bring the Clergy into Contempt, so a Contempt of the Clergy as necessarily draws on a Contempt of Religion, whose Credit universally rises or falls, flourishes or decays, according to the Esteem or Disesteem those are in who are appointed to defend and protect it.

22. In Religion all Things are not equally clear and satisfactory ; especially to Understandings of different Sizes, and which have enjoy'd different Means of Culture and Improvement. Some of its Doctrines, Institutions, &c. are so agreeable to the Reason of Men's Minds, and may be express'd in such plain, direct, and positive Terms, as not to  
 admit

admit of two distinct Meanings : Others are not so, but consequently capable of different Explanations, according to the different Lights in which they appear to different Interpreters. Hence that Difference which has ever shewn itself in Men's Opinions as to religious Matters. And this Difference in Opinion gave Rise to different religious Societies, that is, to different Churches : And this was the Source of all those Broils and Disorders which have plagued the Christian World from time to time upon the Score of Religion. For Fact is a standing Evidence of this, “ that every Church thinking herself the true  
 “ one, will necessarily endeavour to impose  
 “ her Mode of Worship upon all those who  
 “ separate from her ; and tho' Reason and  
 “ Argument are the only justifiable Weapons  
 “ in this Cause, and she can properly only  
 “ explain and persuade in Matters of a re-  
 “ ligious Consideration, yet when those fail,  
 “ she is but too apt to have recourse to rougher  
 “ Means to compel them to come over to  
 “ her Communion.

23. The Reason of which Conduct in Men we take to be this. As Man knows his Happiness or Misery, on the whole, must depend

depend on the Will of his Creator, so, as a reasonable Creature, he will endeavour to secure to himself the one, and to avoid the other, by doing and omitting all such Things as Reason and Revelation shew to be agreeable and disagreeable to him. His Title therefore both with regard to the Happiness of this Life and the next, he imagines to be in a great Measure owing to a right way of worshipping the Deity in this. Every Dissent then from this his way of Worship will necessarily create him present Uneasiness, as it gives him room to suspect that probably he may be in the wrong, and consequently by that Means in a Possibility of losing the divine Favour and Acceptance. And therefore for his own sake, and in order to give Quiet and Satisfaction to his own Mind, he will either go over to some other Church whose Mode of Worship he thinks erroneous, and in whose publick Offices and Ministrations he cannot join with her other Members, but by going against Conscience; or, which will generally be the Case, he will be for using all the Means in his Power to bring over others to his own Persuasion. For, agreeably to a former Observation of ours, the more he has of his own Opinion, the further he

thinks

thinks himself remov'd from the Boundaries of Error, and consequently the safer he judges himself to be, since Numbers are usually thought to have Truth on their side. If it should be ask'd, as probably it will, does not every Man's Reason tell him that if he worships God in the way his Conscience approves of, his Services shall be accepted by him? We answer, All this may be very true, but still nothing to the Purpose: For there is a wide Difference betwixt what *ought to be*, and what *is in Fact*. Did Men but always behave to others, as they desire others should behave to them in the like Cases, as it is their Duty to do, there would have been no occasion for civil Conventions of any Sort. But Fact was as much otherwise in one Case, as it was in the other. It is, and generally has been, the usual way of most Men to think after the following Manner with themselves; That whoever after a careful Examination of the several Doctrines, Precepts and Institutions of that Religion which he professes, and by the Explanation of one part of it with another, concludes, upon probable Grounds of Evidence as he takes it, himself to be in the right, will necessarily (that is, from

the Make of the human Mind he cannot help concluding otherwise, *viz.* that if all others did but make the same free and impartial use of their Understandings, they would) be of the same Mind, and in the same Sentiments with him. And therefore their Difference from him in this respect must be either owing to a careless Enquiry, or to Prejudice, to Education, or the Influence of a Party : Because Reason being uniform and consistent, they imagine this Conclusion is true, and must follow, “ that it cannot enjoin  
 “ two different Modes of Worship.” Thus do the generality of Mankind think and argue in Matters of this Nature ; and it is confessed, there seems at first sight to be some *Appearance* of Truth in what they say ; But the *real* Truth is, that Beings of limited Capacities, as all created ones must be, cannot take in the whole of the divine Perfections ; nor are they able, after all their Enquiries, to fix with any Certainty upon one particular Form or Mode, as *simply* best, and in *itself* most acceptable to the supreme Intelligence. And if we be equally sincere in our Professions of Religion, tho’ we differ in some few Modes and Circumstances of them,

it is infallibly true, that we shall be equally regarded and favour'd by him. But this the Bulk of Mankind cannot see, nor will they in any Manner attend to it, tho' set before them in ever so clear a Light, and in the most favourable Situation in which it is possible to be plac'd, being wholly prejudic'd in favour of their own Scheme of Worship, and possess'd with the pleasing Thoughts that they do God a most acceptable Service by enforcing it upon others. Whence we conclude, that this imposing Zeal or Spirit is either founded on a View to give Peace and Quiet to Men's own Consciences, or to secure others (as they imagine) from the Severity and Displeasure of an offended Deity. But more of this hereafter.

24. To the Representation just now given above, we may add, that as Man is a passionate Admirer of himself, and doatingly fond of his own Inventions, so a Difference in Sentiment from him will necessarily cause him some Anxiety, some Disturbance of Mind, as it is in a certain Sense an Affront to his Understanding, in the making a right use of which, his chief Excellency as a reasonable Creature, and one design'd for Contemplation,



templation, 'is imagin'd to consist: To preserve which Character in its full Force and Lustre, as it is his prime Care, so will it be the main Object of his Desires and Pursuits. In Cases therefore where he is not willing that his Judgment should be suspected or call'd into Question, he will try all possible Methods to bring all such, as differ from him, over to his own Opinion.

25. A common Power therefore is as necessary to protect one religious Society from the Injuries (generally carried on by compulsive Force, to the infinite Detriment of the civil Peace and Happiness of Mankind, and all upon a religious Account) it is subjected to from another religious Society, as from the Attacks made against it by those of its own Body, sometimes indeed under a Pretence of doing service to civil Society by such a Procedure.

26. On the other Hand, Ecclesiasticks are but Men: Power is as liable to be abus'd, and made to serve equally as bad Purposes in their Hands, as in other People's. What should hinder therefore, or where is the Improbability, but that a Sett of Churchmen may form themselves into Cabals, and grow

factious ; may thwart the Designs of the civil Magistrate, and concert Measures with Design to unsettle publick Affairs, and overturn the State, by the introducing of a general Confusion ? Their *Oratios*, and publick *Harrangues*, give them frequent Opportunities of doing Mischief by exciting to Rebellion, especially if the Genius and Disposition of the People be turn'd that particular way. And amongst the Clergy there will be ever found some Persons, who, ignorant of the true Nature, Origin, and Extent of Ecclesiastical Authority, are for raising it above, and exercising it over, the Civil ; and who would make the supreme Magistrate but a sort of an Executioner of the Decrees of the Church. The constant, invariable Practice of the Church of *Rome* is a plain Demonstration of the Truth of what has been now said. And it is needless to produce Instances, when no one, who has the least Acquaintance with the History of former Ages, can possibly be ignorant, how that it has been the common Custom with the Priests of that Church, constantly to claim a Superiority of Jurisdiction, in every respect, over the State ; to assume a Power of making Laws independent-

ly on the Laity, contrary to Prop. the 1<sup>st</sup>, Sect. the 3<sup>d</sup>; which, as we hope, clearly establishes the Truth of that important Doctrine, of every Member of the Church having a Right to be consulted and advis'd with in the making of ecclesiastical Laws, and whatever concerns Men in their religious Capacities. For it is Matter of Fact, that tho' the Legislative Power of the Church resides both in Clergy and Laity, yet Church-Laws were for the most part made by Church-Officers, exclusively of the Laity, who in drawing them up, always paid a principal Regard to their own Interests, and improv'd every favourable Juncture of carrying their religious Claims to a Height, in many Instances, absolutely destructive to the temporal Liberty and Property of Man. And in Cases of Disobedience (for such Cases sometimes would happen) in which the more religious Liberty was trampled under Foot, the more it struggled to raise and recover itself; in Cases of Disobedience, we say, they have thunder'd out their *Anathemas*, *Excommunications*, &c. against the Laity, on purpose to let the World see that they would make the State truckle to the Church, to the great Scandal of

Religion, and the infinite Disservice of Mankind in all their Concerns.

The fatal Effects of the abusive Exercise of the respective Powers belonging to each Society made, we see, an Objective Remedy necessary; but those Mischiefs could be no other ways remedied than by entering into some sort of Agreement and Composition among themselves. From their having distinct Ends, and consequently distinct Means and Pursuits, distinct Powers, Rights, &c. we have demonstrated, that in the proper Direction of the former, and in the legitimate Exercise of the latter, their Administrations could never have hurt or injured each other, But that in the wrong Choice of the one, and the abusive Exercise of the other, their Administrations might, and actually did (and for their fatal Propensity to this Abuse we need only appeal to the common History of Nations) highly prejudice one another. Hence therefore the Necessity of entering into League and Covenant with each other, for the better Maintenance and Security of their respective Powers, Rights, &c.—The Church indeed, as being in her natural State, without the use either of Force or Restraint,  
most

most expos'd to Attacks both from without and within, will, of Course, apply to the civil Power for affording her its Protection in a degree suited to the Occasions she shall have for it ; which, in return, must have such of the Church's Rights resign'd up to the State, as best conduces to the bringing about this salutary End. And that the State is in a particular Manner oblig'd to take the Church into its Protection, is demonstrable from hence, that neither the Being, nor the Safety of civil Government, nor, 2dly, the Happiness of its Members, can be preserv'd without the restraining Principle of Religion.

27. For having shewn at large in the Beginning of the first Section, that no Government can subsist but by the Influences of Religion, and that Religion cannot have those good Effects or Influences without a Church ; therefore the Preservation and Safety of the Church must be the civil Magistrate's first and principal Concern.

28. And since the deeper Sense of Religion the Members of civil Society live under, the more secure from Violence and Oppression, and consequently the happier they will be, and therefore the better will the Ends of

civil Government be obtain'd ; so it is the Interest, and, in that View, it must be the Duty of the civil Magistrate, to defend the Church, and to give all proper Encouragement to her Officers for the doing of their Duty, by protecting them in all their various Rights, Powers, &c. “ It is Religion, the  
 “ binding Force of Religion alone, which  
 “ knits the several Parts of the Community  
 “ together, and secures both King and Peo-  
 “ ple in the Obedience of the one, and in the  
 “ Protection of the other.” It may not be improper to observe here, that the same Reason which induc'd Mankind at first to form themselves into civil Societies, induc'd also the Church and State to enter into Treaty and Alliance with each other, *viz.* the pernicious Consequences which flow'd from the Abuse of their respective Powers, in their natural, independent Capacity ; and consequently that the Sense of mutual Evils or Grievances, reciprocally done and suffer'd to and by each other, gave Birth to this famous Convention betwixt Church and State.

29. Prop. 3. *This Convention betwixt the two Societies is founded upon the Principles of Liberty or Freedom ; or, in other Words,*  
*The*

*The State has no manner of Right to exercise Power of any Kind over the Church without her Consent.* If A be free and independent on B, B hath no Right to exercise any Dominion over him ; for to be subject to the Will of another in any given Degree, is so far, and to such Degree, to be dependent on that other, and controulable by him. Consequently, nothing but A's Consent can give B a just Right of Dominion over him. And therefore as the two Societies (we have prov'd them to be so) are absolutely free and independent in every respect on each other, neither of them can have a Right to exercise Power over, or to act for, or to move in the Sphere of the other, previously to that other's Consent and Allowance.

30. *Corol.* Since the natural State of the two Societies with respect to each other is a State of Freedom, of Independence, and Equality ; and since neither of them can have a Right to assume a Power of making Laws, and of imposing them upon the other without that other's Consent, (for as much as to be subjected to Laws necessarily includes a Subjection to the Power that made them ;) so, the civil Magistrate has no Right to impose  
Rites

Rites and Ceremonies, publick Forms and Modes of Worship, to prescribe Fasts or Festivals, in short, no Right to exercise the least Power over the Church antecedently to the Convention betwixt them. And hence, by the way, appears the true Source of all political Power, *viz.* the Consent of the Governed. And consequently all Assumptions of Power, in a manner different from this, are direct Encroachments upon the Rights of Mankind, and, under that Notion, not to be justify'd.

31. Prop. 4th. *The Church, for the better attaining the End of this Convention, is oblig'd to give up her Independence, and consequently her Supremacy, to the State.* We have already shewn, that the prime fundamental Motive of the Church's proposing Terms of Union with the State, was, Protection against all Kinds and Degrees of Force and Violence, from whatever Quarter the Attack might be made against her ; and if she would have this Protection afforded her in a Manner suitable to her Wants and Necessities of all Sorts, the Church must give the State a Right to use the necessary Means for compassing this End. But no one can hold, keep, nor consequently



frequently use, that which is parted with, and given up to another. Here then at the Time of the Convention an Alienation of Powers is made, and from the Moment that the State takes the Church into its Protection does she promise to pay an Obedience to it, that is, she is subject to it. If the State had not a Right to subject the Church to an Obedience to the Exercise of those Powers arising to it from the Nature of this Convention, the End of such Convention cannot be obtain'd. Besides, Protection, in the very Notion of it, implies a Power in the Person protecting over the Person so protected. And wherever Power is lodged, there a suitable Obedience and Submission is due.

32. What those Rights are which the Church resigns up to the State, the Abuse of which in her natural, independent Capacity, to the State's Detriment, was the great Motive to the State's accepting the Proposal of an Union, is the next thing which claims our Consideration.

33. Previous to the enumerating of which it will be necessary to premise the following general Observation, *viz.* that what is essential to the Being of any thing, or without which  
such

such thing could either not be at all, or not in the Manner in which it is, cannot be taken away without the immediate Destruction of the Being, or of the Mode of Being, of that thing to which it is thus essential. What is not so, may be parted with, or resign'd up to another, so far forth, and in such way or manner, as is consistent with the End for which it is transferr'd. And in all Alienations of Power for a certain End or Ends, there are some certain Conditions necessary to be observ'd in the Person or Persons to whom the Transfer is made. The former Rights are stil'd unalienable; the latter alienable; and of the first sort of Rights in the Church are Excommunication and Ordination. Because without the free Exercise of those two Powers, the Church could never preserve herself a regular and well-order'd Society. Excommunication and the Power of creating her own Officers (the Exercise of which is appropriated to her Governors) the Church can never be suppos'd therefore to have given up to the State. Nor has the civil Power any sort of Pretence to molest the Church in the Exercise of those Rights which are not, nor is it requir'd by the Design and End

of

of the Convention that they should be, resign'd over to the State — The Rights which the Church, by the Grounds and Reasons of the Convention is oblig'd to part with to the State, are these following.

34. First, the Rights of appointing such Ordinances as are to be Matters of Faith and Practice, and of making those Laws, Institutions, &c. which shall from time to time become necessary to be observ'd by the several Members which compose the two Societies so united ; and of enjoining such Rites and Ceremonies, such Habits, Customs and Usages as are peculiar to the Ministrations of the Offices of Religion ; or, in other Words, the Church gives up her Legislative Authority to the State. For it being found by Experience, that Church-Officers would never admit the Laity, notwithstanding their unalienable Right to act in concert with them upon such Occasions, to a share with them in framing those Laws which were to be the distinct Measures of each Man's Actions in such Society ; therefore if this Right of making ecclesiastical Laws remained with her Officers after the Union, and only the protecting them in the Administration of those Laws, as also in the  
Exe-

Execution of all other Parts of their Office, belong'd to the State; then the supreme Magistrate would be in no better Condition or Post than that of the Church's Servant, and the civil Power but an Executioner of her Will; which would subject the State to the Church, instead of rendering the Church dependent on the State.

35. One great Motive which induced the State to accept the Church's Offer of an Accommodation, must be, that she should resign up her Legislative Power to the State, as being the principal Source from whence flow'd all those Evils and Mischiefs which affected civil Society upon a religious Account, as we hinted before, and which, if Occasion required, might be easily shewn. And if the abusive Exercise of this Right was so injurious to the State, then, from the Nature and Design of this Convention, the Church must be suppos'd to have given it up to the civil Power.

36. And, *2dly*, which is a Consequence of the other, she resigns up the Right of convening her Officers, for the drawing up, in Conjunction with her Lay-Members, such Forms of Prayers and Thanksgiving; the  
agreeing

agreeing upon certain Modes of Worship, and such a Formulary of Faith; and the appointing such Fast and Festivals, as particular Junctures may render both seasonable and necessary. This Right she must have transferr'd over to the State with the foregoing, the same Reasons holding for giving up one, as they do for giving up the other.

37. But, in Justice to Truth, we must observe, that tho', after the Convention, all Laws relating to the Administration of Church Affairs do pass thro' the supreme Magistrate's Hands; are confirm'd by, and receive their binding Force and Obligation from thence; yet it is but reasonable, that Church-Officers should have a principal Hand in drawing them up, and in bringing them into some Form or Method, and afterwards to lay them before, and to commit them to the Perusal and Consideration of, the civil Legislature, who are to enact them into Law, provided they find them not to interfere with the temporal Rights of the Community, and to be agreeable to their own religious Notions. It is but reasonable, we say, that the Clergy should have a principal hand in drawing up Propositions relating to Matters of ecclesiastical

ecclesiastical Concernment, as best knowing what makes most for, or against the Influence and Efficacy of Religion in general, and for the Order, Government and Discipline, so necessary to be observed by the Members of that particular Church of which they have the Care and Management; because every one, by the great Law of Equity, must, *cæteris paribus*, be presumed to be a better Judge in general of what concerns his own Office, and the Duties of it, than any one who is a Stranger, or belongs not to it. However, if they be not admitted to a Share in the forming Propositions touching Church-Affairs, and which ought to be adapted for the executing her Offices in a more orderly Manner; they, notwithstanding, must have an *unalienable* Right to be consulted, before any thing which relates to them, or to their Ministrations, be carry'd into Law. In a free Country, every Body of Men, whatever be the proper Concern or Business of their Association, have a Right to petition their Representatives, and to give them Instructions, in Cases where their own Interests are supposed to be more immediately concern'd: Much more, one would think, ought the Officers  
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of the Church, who are intrusted with explaining the Doctrines, and enforcing the Duties of Religion, to be advis'd with, before any Law be made, which less or more affects the Church, her Institutions, Offices, and Appendages of all Kinds. The Church therefore, when she resign'd up her legislative Power to the State, must be suppos'd to have reserv'd to herself a Right of being advis'd with in the making of all sorts of ecclesiastical Laws, whether relating to Matters of Faith or Practice; and consequently, that the Exercise of this Power by the civil Magistrate is not *arbitrary* and *unconditional*, but subjecte to this, or some such like Restriction, as all deputed Power ought, and in the Reason of Things must be suppos'd to be.

38. *Coroll.* Hence appears the Absurdity of those who contend for the Church's Independence and Supremacy; and consequently, for her Power of making Laws separately from the State's Allowance and Ratification. Since the two Societies can no more subsist but in Union with each other, than Mankind can subsist themselves out of civil Government.

39. The Right of exacting of the Laity what is necessary for the Maintenance of her Officers, the Church gives up to the State, when she enter'd into this Convention with it. The Reasons for it are these :

40. That if after the Convention, the Disputes relating to the Clergy's Right of Maintenance were not decided, and finally accommodated by the same common Power which adjusted those respecting the civil Rights of Mankind; those Powers, or to speak more properly, the Exercise of them, would, as before the Convention, generally interfere; which, as it would in many Cases occasion a general Struggle, and so be the Parent of much Disorder and Confusion, and consequently be of great Detriment both to Church and State, ought to be prevented. The Peace and Quiet of both Bodies therefore require, that this Right be transferr'd over to the State.

41. Tho' the Clergy, as we have shewn in *Prop.* the 9th, *Sect* the 3d, have a natural, unquestionable Right to a Maintenance; yet before the Convention this Maintenance was not fix'd, but voluntary; that is, tho' the Laity were under strict Obligation to

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contribute to the Maintenance of ecclesiastical Officers, yet the Measure or Degree in which they were thus to contribute was purely Matter of Choice to them, and absolutely within their own Power. To break this Dependency therefore, (attended, as we shall immediately shew, with very bad Effects, sometimes to one, sometimes to the other Society) betwixt Clergy and Laity, it is necessary, that what before the Convention was a free and voluntary, be, from the Commencement of it, changed into a settled determinate Provision. For thro' the Covetousness and Insatiableness of some of her Officers, the Church would sometimes engross too great a Share of the National Wealth into her Hands. It is usual for Ecclesiasticks, strongly attach'd to the Interests of this World, and acted by a Spirit of earthly Grandeur and Ambition, to harangue the Multitude after the following Manner, which was always sure to take with a credulous and bigotted People: That since Mankind depends absolutely upon God, both for their Existence, and the Means of it, (whatever they enjoy, and every thing they possess, being the pure Ef-

fect of his Goodness and Bounty to them) and since Gratitude is a Duty .enjoin'd them by their Creator, and consequently a natural Duty; therefore, if Men would be grateful for every thing they have from him, they ought to pay him Tribute out of every thing they possess; but having, in their present Circumstances, no other Way of doing this but by setting aside some definite Part of every thing they hold and enjoy for the Clergy's Use; therefore, &c. By which Means the Clergy have in certain Countries artfully drain'd the Nation's Wealth, and in some measure starv'd the major Part of the Laity. — At other times, by the Selfishness and Avarice of the Laity, the Church would not be able to subsist her Ministers in a manner suitable to the Dignity of their Office, or to a Degree adequate to the Labours of their Function. For in an irreligious, self-contracted Age, as the Clergy had no Right to the Use of compulsory Means to oblige the Laity to maintain them in a Way which their Circumstances and Relation to Society seem to make an equitable Demand of; so, in this View, it would often happen that they would be obliged to suit their Doc-

trine and Manner of Preaching, to the Genius, the Inclinations, and the particular Ways of thinking and acting of their Audience, for the Sake, and in Hopes of tasting of their Charity and Benevolence. The wicked Man must not be told of his evil Practices, tho' *privately*; nor must the general, prevailing Vice be publicly preach'd against, for Fear, in either Case, of giving Offence. And thus both the Cause of God and Religion must be prostituted; and by this undue Compliance, the End of all religious Institutions entirely defeated. And a Person, in these Difficulties, and under such perplexing Circumstances, must be obliged to speak and act against his Sense and Judgment of Things, which is the worst sort of Slavery a Man can possibly experience. To suppose, that if those Persons were but sincere in their Religion, their Attachments to its Interests would supersede all the Motives that led to its Disparagement, or which tended to destroy its Influence; such a Supposition, we say, has no Foundation in Reason or Fact: For, whilst a Man lives here, he has the Calls of Appetites, that is, of Hunger and Thirst, returning at their appointed

Periods, to satisfy; and a Body to subsist; and therefore must ever and anon be in want of some or others of this World's Goods. Ecclesiasticks are but Men, and, under that Consideration, as liable to miscarry as others, when strong Temptations lie in their Way.

42. From either of these Cases therefore (and these Cases would frequently happen) much Inconveniency and Detriment must necessarily in Fact arise to the Whole. And there seems no other Way of preventing those Evils, but by the State's settling a certain Proportion of *outward* Goods, Effects, &c. on the Officers of the Church, which, at the same time that it gives them a Right to such a determinate Share, restrains them from engrossing more. And if the civil Power hath a Right to settle the Clergy's Claims for a Maintenance in such and such given Proportions, then is it fitting that all Disputes relating thereunto be decided, and finally determin'd by the Laws of civil Society.

43. We may observe here, that as all delegated Power is necessarily answerable to the Person deputing it for the Manner in  
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which it is exercis'd: so whatever is given to be distributed in a certain Way or Manner, which is not distributed in that particular Way or Manner, the Person or Persons from whom such Appointments came, whether we consider them as acting in a private or a publick Capacity, have a Right to interpose their Authority, and see that they be us'd and dispos'd of agreeably to the original Design of their Foundations. From whence it will follow, that the Legislature having set over Part of the national Property for the Maintenance of the Clergy, in Consideration of their being the Officers of Religion, and for the Services they do in that View to the State; and having intrusted a Number of Men with the Power of disposing of it in such a manner as best suits the Qualifications and Necessities (for both, as shall be shewn in another Place, must be taken under Consideration) of each Ecclesiastick, it is manifest, that, if by the Abuse of this delegated Power in the Patron, or thro' the insatiable Avarice of some Churchmen, one single Officer should engross such a Share of the Church's Revenues, as would satisfy two or three; it is manifest, we say,

upon account of those great Inequalities in the Disposition or Acceptance of those Benefices, that the civil Power hath a Right to intervene, and see that Church-Preferments be deliver'd out in a more equitable Way, or, according to the original Intent of their Appointment. This shews the Right of the supreme Power in Society to limit the respective Shares of Church-Officers; to restrain Pluralities, and the like; because, having settled on the Church a Maintenance for her Officers, it will ever have a Right to settle it in such a Manner as best agrees with the Occasions of its Appropriation.

44. And in this View, to descend to a Particular which concerns ourselves, may the Conduct of the Legislature be justify'd at the Time of the *Reformation*, in taking from the Church that Part of her Revenue which her Officers had acquir'd to the manifest Detriment of the national Wealth, and consequently, to the Diminution of its Power, which, as it arises from, so will it be in Proportion to the other; that is, the Weight and Influence of a Nation will be universally as the Riches of its Members, the one being seen in Fact to produce the other. For  
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ecclesiastical Benefices after the Convention, that is, under an Establishment, being Lay-Donations, or Favours and Concessions from the State, in either Case to be held under certain Conditions, which are directly express'd; or else necessarily imply'd in the Nature of the Grant; whenever the Officers of the Church, by the Means abovemention'd, engross such a Share of them, as is inconsistent with those Conditions, or Violations of them; or when they accumulate more than what it was, or could in Reason be thought to be, in the Intention of the Legislature, that they should; in those Cases, the supreme Power residing in Society will have a Right to reassume them into its own Hands, and to dispose of them either to those who seem to have the justest and best founded Claims to them; or else in such a Manner as will best promote the Interest of the Government, by affording a seasonable Supply to its necessitous Occasions.

45. Another Right which the Church gives up to the State, is the Power of admitting Ecclesiasticks to the Exercise of their Office. For, as it is a natural and essential  
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Right of the Church, not to take into her Ministry any other, but such as after due Examination made by her Governors, appear properly qualify'd to discharge the Offices of Church-Men; so likewise, all civil Politicks vested with the necessary Powers of Self-Defence and Preservation, have a Right to restrain every Man, or every Body of Men, from the Exercise of any Office, be it civil or ecclesiastical, which gives them an Opportunity of injuring civil Society more or less: for all Offices, of what Nature or Quality soever, and for whatever End or Ends constituted, having a certain Share of Power annex'd to them, which, if abus'd, must necessarily be attended in Fact with proportionable Inconveniencies; and how prone all Kinds and Degrees of Power are to such Abuse by reason of the Imperfection of human Nature, is seen, confess'd, and much lamented by every wise and good Man. And if such be the Hazard to which civil Society is subject, it is but sitting that Candidates for all sorts of Offices, before their Admission into them, do give proper Security to the civil Magistrate of their Affection to the Government, and of their Attach-



Attachments to its Interests ; that is, they ought to derive their Authority for the executing of their Office from the supreme Magistrate, and be accountable to him for their Behaviour in it, so far, and up to the Degree in which it may concern the Good and Safety of civil Society. Let us but consider the Thing with some small Attention. Ecclesiasticks are but Men, finite in their Natures and Powers, and fallible in their Dispositions or Determinations to Action, as others are ; and therefore it is no Wonder, if they sometimes do amiss, or if they be wanting in the Performance of the Duties of their Function. From which View arises the Possibility of Ecclesiasticks falling off from all Sense of their Obligations to the Services of the State. And if we consider further, that among the Clergy there will be always found some, agreeably to a former Observation of ours, who will be for raising (and what is the more surprizing, even under an Establishment) ecclesiastical Authority above, and for exercising it over the civil ; this Possibility of injuring the State rises up to a Probability. Whence the Necessity of making Church-Officers dependent

pendent on the civil Power for the Exercise of their Office, so far as the Exercise of such Office can be suppos'd to have any Reference to, or be the Cause of any Hurt or Detriment to civil Society. Whence, by the Bye, appears both the Validity and Justice of Lay-Deprivations, in Cases where the Preservation and Happiness of civil Society cannot be secured without.

46. *N. B.* By the Church's resigning over her Rights to the supreme Magistrate, and by her resigning them up to the State, or to the Legislature, we would be always understood to mean one and the same Thing; *viz.* the supreme Power residing in every Society, wheresoever and in whatsoever Hands lodg'd, whether in a single Man's, or in a Number of them; which ever varies according to the different Constitutions of civil Polities in different Nations and Kingdoms.

47. *Prop. 5th.* *If the State be obliged to defend the Church, she in Return is obliged to employ all her Interest in the Service of the State.* This, in Truth, is one of the chief fundamental Motives of the State's taking the Church into its Protection; and without  
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having which in View, it could not be suppos'd to have enter'd into this Convention with her. Besides, there is the same Reason that the Church should direct all her Offices (so far as they are capable of being directed that Way, without prejudicing her own Interests,) and to apply all her Influence to civil Purposes, as that the State should protect the Church against all such Injuries as might *externally* or *internally* affect her. And if the Reason is the same, so will be the Right; that is, they have each a Right to the Aid and Assistance of the other, so far as it is in their Power to afford it for one another.

48. Such as are Sharers in, ought in Reason to be Contributors to, the common Felicity; otherwise Gratitude, which Religion teaches, and enjoins as a necessary Duty of rational, dependent Beings, would be neglected: And surely Reason loudly proclaims, that it is the Duty of those who teach others to be grateful, to be so themselves in as high, if not in higher Degrees.

49. That the Church should assist the State in the Promotion of civil Happiness, is a Duty arising to Church-Officers from  
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the very Design and End of their Institution. The End every Religionist has in View in each Act of religious Worship, is, the Favour of God: The Favour of God can only be obtain'd and secured by a Conformity of Action to his Will, in all those Cases to which he has required an Obedience should be paid; and what this Will is, hath been largely shewn above. This Conformity religious Worship tends in its national Consequence to oblige Men to, and from that Consideration became a natural Duty, as hath been likewise largely shewn above: consequently, it is the Business and proper Employment of Church-men, antecedently to this Convention betwixt the two Societies, to engage Men in the Pursuits of publick Happiness; and if their Concern and Duty before the Convention, then after the Convention they must be under an additional Obligation to it, as is manifest from what has been already said.

50. By the Church's assisting the State, we would be understood to mean her Officers praying publickly for the Person of the supreme Magistrate, as also for the Persons  
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of those who act by Authority derived from him; that Success may wait upon their Undertakings, and Integrity constantly attend the Execution of their Offices, whether they be such as relate to the Safety, the Honour, and Dignity of the Crown, or to the greater Ease and Advantage of the Subject; to contribute cheerfully, in all the various Ways in which they have it in their Power to contribute, to the Support of the Government; and not to distress those immediately employ'd under the supreme Magistrate, by filling the People's Heads with vain Jealousies and idle Suspicions, that Schemes are carrying on to the Destruction both of civil and religious Liberty, when no such Thing is either attempted, or so much as intended: but, on the contrary, to exhort, and persuade those committed to their Care to obey those that are set over them. In short, to use all the Influence and Credit, which, as Officers and Ministers of Religion, they have with the People, for making them loyal and faithful Subjects, and benevolently disposed to the Whole.

61. Prop. 6. *The State ought to employ the Power it gains by the Convention for the Church's Safety.* Because this was the Motive which induced the Church to make Proposals for entering into Treaty with the State, and with her other Powers, to resign up her Independence, and consequently her Supremacy to it : Therefore, if the State would act agreeably to the fundamental Motive of the Church's entering into a Convention with it, it ought to use the Power it acquires by the Convention for the Church's Security. The Truth is, the State has no Right to exercise this Power to any other Purpose, or for the Attainment of any other End. For having no Power in *Ecclesiasticals* but what it receives from the Church, and the Church having given no Powers up to it, but such whose Transfer was necessary to afford her Protection in the Degree in which she should have Occasion for it, or such whose Abuse was of Prejudice to civil Society : so, under this Consideration of receiving them to be us'd in the Church's Cause, and for her Protection, the State cannot but conceive itself to be laid under the most pressing Obligation *thus* to employ this acquir'd Power;

Power ; and it cannot, without Violation of the common Rules of Justice, apply it in Distinction from, much less in Opposition to, this End.

52. All Power given conditionally, as this is, reverts into the Principals Hands, when the Conditions with which it was given are not perform'd ; because the Presumption of the Performance of those Conditions was the Reason of its being transferr'd : Consequently, if the civil Magistrate uses that Power which the Governors of the Church, as Guardians and Protectors of the Interests of Religion are vested with, and which at the Time of the Convention they gave up to him, when, we say, the civil Magistrate uses this Power, contrary to the Conditions, and beyond the Restrictions, with which it was transferr'd ; or, in other Words, when instead of employing it for the Good and Safety, he uses it to the Hurt and Detriment of the Church, he forfeits his Trust, and the Church, upon such a Breach of Stipulations, has a Right to re-assume the Powers she possess'd in her natural, independent Capacity--From the two foregoing Propositions we deduce the following Corollary:

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53. *Corol.* Since the End of the Convention betwixt the two Societies was, with one, Protection against all the Evils which she in her natural independent Capacity was subjected to; and with the other, all the Assistance the Church could possibly give the supreme Magistrate in return for his taking her under his immediate Care and Protection; so, if either Party fails in the Performance of its respective Part of the Contract, the other, if so minded, has a Right to dissolve the Union, and go back into its first, original State, or rather, the Convention by this Means necessarily becomes dissolv'd of itself.

54. *Prop. 7th.* *The civil Magistrate has no Right to impose by outward Force his own Scheme of religious Worship upon such as think it erroneous.* The civil Magistrate, as civil Magistrate, had no Right to interpose in religious Matters antecedently to the Convention; consequently he can have no Right after the Convention but what he derives from it, that is, but what he receives from the Church. But having already prov'd, that every Man, as a Religionist, is to worship God in the best Manner he can; and since no one can worship him in this Manner who worships him not  
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according to Conscience, so no one particular Church can have a Right to impose by violent Means its own Terms of Communion upon another. See Corol. 4<sup>th</sup>, Art. 13<sup>th</sup>, Sect. 2<sup>d</sup>. And if the Church hath no such Right as this, she cannot possibly give the State any such; since no one can give another what he hath not himself; and consequently the civil Magistrate hath not, nor is it possible that he should have, a Right to propagate his Religion by Force or Violence. “As no single Men, “ says a good Writer, have a natural Right “ to inflict Grievances on others, for not “ consenting to an insincere Profession, or “ unacceptable Worship; so neither can the “ collective Rights of supreme Magistrates, “ as deriv’d from such Men, inflict such “ Censures.” *Rymer’s general Representation*, &c.

55. It is proper to take Notice, that tho’ the civil Magistrate has no Right to oblige Men to be of this or that Profession with respect to publick Forms or Modes of Worship, yet has he a Right to make them profess themselves Members of some religious Society or other; that is, he has a Right to oblige them to make open Profession of their

Belief of the Being of a God, his Providence, and a future State of Rewards and Punishments. Because the Belief of those three great important Truths is, as we have shewn, the very Cement of Society, and what gives regular Life and Motion to the several Parts of it. But this Sense would soon lose all its Influence, if certain Times, Places, and Persons, were not set apart to keep it up fresh and active in Men's Minds: Consequently a careless Inattention to, and Neglect of those, would affect the Vitals of Society; and if the Non-observance of them was total, absolutely destroy the very Being of it, agreeably to what hath been prov'd above. But it is the Duty of the civil Magistrate, as Guardian and Protector of civil Liberty and Property, to prevent this; that is, he has a Right to oblige all his Subjects to join themselves to Communion with some Church or other, or else to banish them from civil Society, as we have already shewn at large: Not indeed because the civil Magistrate is entrusted with such a Power as this from the Church, which, in reality, never had any such herself; but because such an affecting Sense of God and Providence is as necessary to the Support, as to the Well-being of civil Society, (See Art. 39th, Sect. 1st.)

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and therefore arising to him from the Nature and End of his Office.

56. To this it probably will be objected; that Force may oblige to outward Profession and Conformity, but still such Profession and Conformity can be no presumptive Proof of inward Persuasion or Conviction, but consequently tends only to make Men insincere, and Hypocrites in their several Professions in Religion. To which we answer, that, as civil Society cannot subsist but by the Influences of Religion, and as there is no possible Proof of Men's living under such a Sense of Religion but by publicly professing their Belief of the Existence of a first Cause; so, as this is the only Security civil Governors can have in a Case of this Nature, they have a Right to demand it, and ought to be content with it. It is further observable, that by constantly attending the Service of the Church, by a frequent Repetition of religious Acts, religious Habits will of Course be acquir'd, which, tho' perhaps irregularly founded as to the Concerns of another World, and Men's Interest in the Favour of God, will yet fully answer all the Purposes of civil Government in this. And more than this the civil Magistrate has no Occasion for, nor any Concern with,

57. And let it also be considered, that as to the Man himself, his Condition in respect to the Favour of God is not one jot the worse, by his going, in Compliance with the civil Power, to Church, or by his joining himself to any religious Assembly, whether appointed, or only tolerated by publick Authority. For, supposing him to believe that there is no God, and consequently no State after this, yet he cannot plead Conscience for his not going to Church, that is, it cannot appear to him to be sinful to resort thither, let the Means of his going to that Place be compulsive, or voluntary; because Conscience necessarily, and in the very Notion of it, both as to its End and Office, supposes a certain Relation to some suppos'd or real Law of God, and consequently has nothing to do with Actions or Omissions of any Kind, when no Persuasion of a superior governing Principle has taken hold of a Man's Mind. And supposing him to believe that there is a God, he must, in virtue of that Belief, acknowledge that he ought to be address'd and apply'd to in a publick Manner: And therefore granting he may possibly imagine that in going to Church in Consequence of a civil Command,

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he forfeits some Conveniency, or quits the Enjoyment of some Pleasure, he is either in Possession or in Pursuit of; yet there are no possible Grounds for urging Conscience as the Reason of his not frequenting such Assemblies, but that on the contrary he must at all Times confess it to be his Duty to join in them. And therefore his going thither merely in Pursuance of the civil Magistrate's Order, tho' it may detract from the Merit of such Action, or, more properly, destroy it, yet it cannot make his going thither a Sin.---If it is further urg'd, that it is sinful in him to go to Church, not out of Conviction of Conscience, but in Subjection to civil Authority, because he cannot but be sensible that it is his Duty to resort to publick Worship whether there be any Order from the supreme Magistrate or not for that Purpose: We answer, that it is equally sinful in him not to associate with his Fellow-Creatures and Subjects for publickly professing their Belief in the Being of a God and Providence, tho' the Magistrate was silent as to this Point, and left Men at full Liberty with regard to the Performance or Non-performance of this Duty; because he cannot but know, if he knows any thing of

a God, that he is indispensibly oblig'd to make those publick Professions, whether the civil Power commands it or not. It appears therefore, that no Man's future Interest, or Salvation in another World, is any ways or in any Degree impeded by his joining in Church-Communion with others purely upon a civil Account, and in Obedience to the Injunctions of publick Authority. And therefore this Objection, plac'd in what Light forever, is of no Force against the civil Magistrate's Right in this Particular.

58. Prop. 8th. *The Governors of the Church in Union with the State, with us the Bishops, have the same common Right, grounded upon the same common invariable Principles of Reason, with the Representatives of the People, to a Seat in the Legislature, viz. to watch over the Church's Rights and Interests, in the same manner as the other are appointed to be Guards and Fences of the civil Liberties and Properties of the Nation.* We took Notice above, that among all Sorts and Ranks of Men, there will ever be some, whose Vices are of such a Nature, and in such Degrees of Strength and Influence, as will necessarily engage them to throw off the Restraints of Religion,

ligion, by attempting, in all the various Ways and Means within their Reach to attempt it, the Ruin and Destruction of a Church, the great Preservative of a Sense of Religion in Men's Minds. And since Church-Governors are, by the very Nature and Design of their Office, in a more peculiar Manner the Protectors of Religion than others can be suppos'd to be; so, from this Consideration, conjointly with that arising from the Danger to which the Church is subjected from the envenom'd Attacks of Irreligion and Infidelity, it is both necessary and fitting, that they be permitted to sit with the great Council of the Nation, as Guards against all Encroachments upon the Church's Rights, her Powers, and Privileges of all Kinds. ----- And be it further considered, that those who have no Love for Religion, cannot be suppos'd to be much in Temper and Disposition to shew any great Regard or Favour to the Ministers of the Church, but rather to use all their Efforts to harass and distress them, by dispossessing them of their Powers, their Emoluments, Means of Subsistence, and such other Rights as they hold after the Convention, and in Consequence of it; because they know, that a  
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poor Clergy would soon grow contemptible, and their Doctrines lose all their Credit and Influence with the People ; and consequently that thus to impoverish Church-Officers would be the most effectual way (as appears by what has been said in Art.20.) to get rid of the Church, which properly falls in with their Desire of having none. Another Reason, and that a material one, for the Governors of the Church holding a Place in the Legislature, is, that tho' should the supreme Power residing there receive Propositions relating to ecclesiastical Matters from the Clergy themselves, and drawn up by them, yet is it in the Choice of that Power, whether they shall become binding, or not, upon the Members of the two Societies, now united. It is but reasonable therefore, that the Church should have some of her Officers sitting there, to explain the Nature and Tendency of those Propositions, to forward their Passage thro' the several Forms necessary to be gone over upon such Occasions, and to urge the particular Seasonableness of having them enacted into Law at the present juncture. Just in the same manner as it is necessary, that the Law, the Army, the Navy, and the most considerable Branches

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of the trading Part of the Nation, should have some of the Members of their respective Bodies composing Part of the Legislature, in order to give a helping Hand thro' the House, to all such Motions, Bills, &c. as respect their several Interests.

59. Since the Design of our Enquiry is to find out Truth, if it can be come at, so we had rather incur the Censure of being tedious, than omit any thing which tends to discover it. This therefore obliges us to offer one or two Arguments more in support of the Proposition before us.

60. Into whatsoever Hands Power is committed, it is liable to be abus'd, either in greater or less Degrees: Whosoever therefore is entrusted with it, ought to be subjected to certain Conditions in the Exercise of it, and be strictly accountable for the Purposes to which it is made subservient. Thus, for Instance, when Men entered into civil Compact with the supreme Magistrate, and he accepted the Tender of their Obedience and Subjection in Order to protect them in their Powers, Rights, &c. they found it necessary notwithstanding to put a Check upon him, by restraining him in the Exercise of this delegated  
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Power, the better to prevent his injuring them in their Persons and Properties, tho' it was those, and those only, he was bound to defend. They thought it further necessary likewise to their Safety, (imagining that one Degree of Power would naturally aspire after a greater, and that after a greater still, and so on, till a Person thinks all others accountable to him, and himself not responsible to any;) they thought it necessary, we say, to have some out of their own Body compose Part of the Legislature, that they might use their Vote and Influence with others, for the hindering any Bill being carry'd into Law, which in its Execution any ways tended to their Detriment: By which wise Contrivance and Policy, as Fact and Experience happily shew, private Property was more effectually secured; Laws for the Decision of Disputes more impartially drawn up, with respect to the several Cases falling under their Cognizance; publick Justice more equally administered, &c. and thus the great Interest of the Whole render'd more sacred and inviolable. And if the Members of civil Society thought it expedient, that some chose out of their own collective Body should have

have a Place in the Legislature, with a View to watch over their civil Interests; is it not as reasonable that the Church should, after the Convention, have some of her Officers sitting there also, in order to watch over the Church's Interests? Undoubtedly; and if the Reason be the same, so is the Right; that is, the one have as much Right to sit, and act there, as the other: since all Right either is, or ought to be founded upon Reason.—Whence we see, that the Clergy have the same common Right with the Laity, to have their Representatives (and those Members of their own Body) in the Legislature, to act, and manage their Concerns for them.

61. Much Good also must necessarily arise from such a mix'd Number of Church-Officers and Laymen being plac'd in the Legislature. For every thinking, considerate Man, must be concern'd both for his future and his present Happiness: The former he is conscious must arise from his doing the Will of his Creator, or by paying him such Services, and in such a Manner, as he judges most acceptable to him: The latter, from Protection against all Encroachments that  
are,

are, or shall be made upon his temporal Liberty and Property : consequently, he must be pleas'd with such Laws and Acts of State, as tend to secure to him the full and easy Possession of all those Rights belonging to him both in his civil and religious Capacity ; on making a right Use of which, his Interest in the Favour of God, both with regard to this Life, and the next, absolutely depends. But the best way to secure those Rights, is to have a Number of the Heads of each Society sitting in the civil Legislature, and deliberating there what is fittest to be done, and to make Provisions accordingly : since it cannot be suppos'd that they would voluntarily suffer any thing to be carry'd into Law, which either actually breaks in upon, or but threatens their respective Interests. By which means Men's religious and civil Concerns will be more firmly secur'd and establish'd. And as this is a Case of considerable Advantage to Mankind, it shews the Necessity both of Churchmen and Laymen having a Seat there.— And as it cannot but be a great Satisfaction to the People to see both Church and State concur in enacting the same Laws, which

are to be the Measure of each Man's Actions in Society; so, such a happy Concurrence creates a more particular Regard and Attention to those Laws, and adds a kind of Reverence to their Sanctions: for nothing can be suppos'd to be of better Effect, or attended with more friendly and beneficial Consequences, than such a perfect Amity and Agreement betwixt the governing Part of the two Societies. When Religion and civil Government, or Church and State, go Hand in Hand, and each performs its respective Duty to the other, nothing is wanting to compleat Men's mutual Happiness in each Society. And this we take to be a full and proper Answer to those who raise the following Objection, *viz.* That if Bishops sit in Parliament upon the Church's Account only, they have no Right either to forward or oppose any Bill's passing but what relates to ecclesiastical Matters, and concerns the proper Offices of Church-men. Besides, Bishops consider'd in their Lay-Capacity, or with regard to their temporal Honours and Possessions, which they hold by Virtue of the Convention, have the same Relation to Society as Laymen have; and with

with them are equally oblig'd to contribute out of their Estates to its Support and Maintenance. And if they have civil as well as religious Rights to take care of, their Consent, either as to the repealing old Laws, or the making new ones, is as necessary, one would think, as the others; if not necessary in the *same* Degree, yet surely necessary in *some* Degree. Not that Bishops sit in Parliament in Consequence of their temporal Honours and Emoluments, as Lay-Lords do; but they sit there as Representatives of the Church, as Guards and Watchmen, to prevent the Power arising to the State in Church-Affairs from the Convention, from being exercis'd to her Hurt and Detriment.

62. From what has been said above in Proof of this Proposition, we may take Notice, that the Bishops Right to a Seat in Parliament lasts so long as the Convention does, and no longer. For considering that Imperfection and Fallibility are the necessary and inseparable Adjuncts of human Nature, so from hence arises the Possibility of Deviations from the Rules of Justice in the Execution of all Offices during every Period

riod of Men's Continuance in them. And if so, then in all Alienations of Power there is the same Necessity one time as well as another, for some seasonable Check to be provided, in order to restrain the abusive Exercise of that delegated Power; and to prevent it from being employ'd contrary to, or against the End for which it was given. And this shews the Bishops Right to a Seat in the Legislature, so long as the Convention betwixt the Church and State subsists: but when the Convention is at an End, the Reason, and consequently the Right of their sitting there, ceases at the same time. For at the Dissolution of the Establishment the Church recovers back her Independance, and with it the free Exercise of all those Powers she enjoy'd in her natural Capacity. But we have shewn, that the Reason of the Bishops having a Seat in the Legislature, was to hinder that Power, which the State acquires by the Convention, from being apply'd to the Hurt, and against the Interests of the Church: consequently, when this Power is no longer lodg'd in the supreme Magistrate's Hands, but returns again to the

Church, the Reason, and with it the Right of their sitting there, expires.

63. Prop. 9. *The Governors of the Church retain their Right of holding Visitations after the Convention, for the better Execution of Church-Discipline, -and to see that Ecclesiastical Matters of all Kinds be rightly administered.* That they had this Power before the Convention, has been prov'd in Prop. 11. of the last Section: And that they have a Right to exercise it after the Convention, is abundantly manifest from hence; that as the Exercise of such a sort of Power has been shewn necessary in the *Proposition* before refer'd to; so the Clergy have a Right to the Exercise of it preferably to any other Sett of Men; and for this plain Reason, because vested in them antecedently to the Convention. For, as the State hath no Right to demand a Resignation of any other Powers but those whose abusive Exercise was destructive to the Peace and Safety of civil Society, in Conjunction with those other Powers, whose Resignation was necessary for the State's giving the Church the Protection she wanted: so the Church was under no Necessity,

cessity,



cessity, and consequently could not in Justice resign more. And it deserves our further Observation in this Place, that in all Delegations of Power for a certain End, such Powers are always understood to be resign'd up only to such a Degree, as best consists with the End for which they were transferred, and no further. This therefore shews, that the Church cannot be restrain'd in the Exercise of any of her Powers, but in Cases where the Exercise of them beyond a certain Degree, makes for the Detriment of the State, and is incompatible with that Protection which the Church expects from it, and which by the End of the Convention she has a Right to demand of it.

64. The Reader here will understand, that by the Power mentioned in the Proposition, is meant such an one as was design'd should be exercis'd in our Visitations, for the Reformation of those Abuses and Corruptions which have taken Root and grown up in the Church; a Power to enquire into the Faith, the Life, and Morals both of Clergy and Laity; and in short, into every thing that concerns the Church, and Execution of

her Offices; and not merely a Power for Ecclesiasticks to raise Money for their own private Use, and to their own Emolument; which, if apply'd to that Purpose, and to that Purpose only, the only useful End of holding Visitations is then destroy'd.

65. Prop. 10. *The State enters into this Compact with that Church (if there be more Churches than one) which hath the Majority of its Members in her Communion.* The two great fundamental Motives of the State's accepting the Church's Offer of an Accommodation were, 1<sup>st</sup>, Security against such Injuries, as the Church in her natural, independent Capacity might occasion to civil Society; and 2<sup>dly</sup>, That the Church should employ all her Influence in its Service. But as the largest religious Society is capable of doing the most Mischiefe, so is it likewise capable of doing the most Good to the State: since, *cæteris paribus*, the greater Number, if so dispos'd, will ever have it in their Power to do more Good or Harm to Society than a less; because when the Dispositions and other Circumstances are equal, the Advantages or Disadvantages will always be in Proportion to Men's Abilities, and those

those Abilities are generally in Proportion to their Numbers. With this Church, therefore, the Convention must be suppos'd to be made.

66. And thus the Case with us in *England* will always be in Fact; that is, the largest religious Society will be erected into an Establishment. For, to use the Words of a very judicious Writer, “ In our Constitution a considerable Share of the Legislature is lodg'd with Persons elected by the Populace. Now is it not natural to expect, that each should vote for Persons of their own Religion, or Favourers of it? And if the Majority of the People should be of one Religion, the Majority of those sent by them would be of that Religion too. With that Majority the whole Power and Interest of that Branch of the Legislature would be effectually lodg'd; and we may be sure they would use it for the Advancement and Encouragement of their own Religion. Sir *William Temple* tells us, That wherever the Generality of a Nation are of a Belief, it is by the Force of Concurrence introduc'd into the Government, and becomes the establish'd

“ Religion of the Country.” Dr. Rogers’s Vindication of the civil Establishment of Religion.

67. Prop. II. *That Part of the national Property which the State settled on the Church ought to be appropriated to the Officers of the Church in Union with it.* The Necessity, as well as Seasonableness of which Appropriation in a Matter of this Nature, arises from hence; that since where a Multiplicity of Claims is, there, of course, will be a Contrariety of Interests; and where a Contrariety of Interests is, there Jarrs, Wranglings, and Contentions, (always destructive of the Peace and Quiet of civil Society) are unavoidable. Those therefore, as it is the great End of his Office, so will it be the Duty of the civil Magistrate to prevent. But there appear no other possible Means of preventing this, than by limiting Church-Benefices to one particular Sett of Church-men, in Distinction from all others. And that the Church in Union with the State should have those publick Allotments in Preference to any other Church, is a necessary Consequence from the State’s entering into a Convention with her. Nor indeed would it be consistent  
with

with the Safety of the State to intrust them with the Officers of any other Church, because the Accession of those Emoluments might render such Church in her natural, independent Capacity, an Over-match for the civil Power, and subject his Interests to the Will of her Governors. This further appears likewise from the State's entering into Convention with that Church which has the Majority in her Communion; because, in all Divisions it is strictly demonstrative, that the Ease and more commodious way of subsisting of the *greater, cæteris paribus*, should be universally prefer'd to the Ease and more commodious way of subsisting of the *lesser* Number.

68. Hence we learn, that when for the greater Conveniency of performing publick Worship, distinct Congregations or Parishes were mark'd out, and settled by common Consent, we learn from hence, we say, that in a mix'd Number, where one Part of the Parish are Members of the establish'd Church, the others not so; to prevent the Confusion which otherwise must have unavoidably arisen from the clashing of their respective Claims, it is necessary to the Peace and Quiet

of civil Society, that the publick Allotments be limited to one particular Sett of Church-men; and if to one Sett of Church-men, then, for the Reasons before given, the Officers of the Church in Convention with the State, ought to have them in their Favour. To suppose, as some perhaps may be of such an Opinion, that each religious Sect should only maintain their own Officers, would, in the present State of Things, be absolutely impracticable. For there is no Improbability in the Case, but that one Officer, for the sake of getting Part of the other's Officers Dues and Right of Maintenance to himself, would endeavour, by all kinds of Means, whether justifiable or not justifiable, to draw Part of that other's Congregation from him: whence would ensue endless Contentions, Animosities, and Heart-Burnings betwixt them; sometimes throw the State into strong Convulsions, and be the Source of infinite Damage to it. And therefore this Collision of Interests, such a Mixture of dissenting Interests, increas'd and heighten'd by dissenting religious Principles, in one and the same Parish, ought not to be tolerated by the civil Magistrate, because

because such a Toleration would be productive of one continued Scene of Broils and Quarrels, to prevent which was one of the great Ends of civil Society. — Hence appears the Falseness of that Assertion of the Author of *The Rights of the Christian Church*, “ It is not reasonable that Revenues should be annex’d to one Opinion more than another, when all are equally lawful.” And it is his Maxim, “ That no free-born Subject ought to pay for maintaining Speculations he does not believe.”

69. *Coroll.* We learn from hence, that ecclesiastical Benefices, or Emoluments, were appropriated to the Officers of one particular Church, not upon the account of its Mode of Worship, or Scheme of Religion being the true one, but to prevent Confusion and Disorder (necessarily consequent upon an Interfering of Claims in respect of one and the same Thing) in civil Society ; that is, in Consideration of publick Utility, and not of Truth : and consequently, that the Reason of excluding the Ministers of Dissenting Congregations from having any share of that Revenue set apart by the State for Church-Officers, is, not because they are Members of an erroneous

neous Church, or Teachers of a different Religion, but for the sake of publick Peace and Quiet.

We are sensible it is the Opinion of some, that when the Church apply'd to the State to take her into its Protection, and in consequence of that, a certain Share of the national Property was settled upon her Officers ; that this Settlement was made, not upon the Footing of Truth, but of publick Utility. For supposing the Legislature going to establish one System of Religion out of more openly professed, would they not fix upon that which they themselves were Favourites of? and would not the Reason which they assign'd for it be this, *viz.* Because that Church appeared to them to be the right one? To which we answer in the following Manner :

70. *1<sup>st</sup>*, That the Enquiry is not about what in Fact were the Motives upon which the State parted with a certain share of the national Property for the Use of Churchmen, but what in *Reason* those Principles ought to be, or what could be *legitimately* in their Intention, or so as to justify the Assignment ; that is, as we observ'd in another



other Place, the Enquiry is not concerning the *Fact*, but the *Right*. The Case is equally the same in regard to civil Society. When we enquire into the mutual Rights, and reciprocal Duties of Prince and People, we deduce the Prince's Right to govern from the Consent of the People; and argue from that ever after as an allow'd Principle, tho' in *Fact* such Consent was never originally obtain'd; or, in Truth, so much as ask'd for: and consequently, no civil Polity throughout the World, perhaps, was ever erected upon that Foundation; tho' that, and that only, can confer a just Title, or give a Right to govern.—The Motive inducing the State to take the Church into its Protection, and to make an Assignment of Part of its Property for the Clergy's Use, was, the Avoidance of those Evils which necessarily flow'd from the abusive Administration of her Government. This was of prime Consideration; and when this was found necessary to be done, the State found it agreeable to the Principles, and religious Ways of thinking of its Members, to grant those Privileges to that Church which they held Communion with; which ever will be,

as it ever ought to be, that Church which has the Majority of the Members of the State in its Communion.

71. The answering the above Question leads us also to consider, what Advantages this Church gains by the Convention more than any other Church existing in the State. And nothing more does she gain than any other by the Convention; but Security of those temporal Emoluments, and outward Accommodations, which at the Time of the Convention were transferr'd over to her; Security, we say, of those, against all the Claims and Attempts made upon her by such as would dispossess her of them. For the same Protection, and in as great a Degree, which the establish'd Church has against other Churches disturbing her Members in their Way of Worship, have all those other Churches likewise against the establish'd Church disturbing their Members: which is granted them in the Toleration the State allows them for the free Exercise of their Religion. And this Toleration every State, in point of *natural Justice*, and for the sake of giving Ease to *scrupulous Consciences*, ought to indulge its dissenting Brethren

thren with. All Churches therefore existing in the State have a Right to the same Protection in *this respect*, one as well as another, from it. The next Question is, In what View were those temporal Possessions and Accommodations annex'd to the Church? Was it done to serve civil Purposes, or Truth? For an Answer to which, we need only refer the Reader to what has been already said. Where he will find that those Allotments were set aside, or appropriated for the Use of the Church in Convention with the State, for the sake of avoiding publick Disorder and Confusion, unavoidably consequent upon a Diversity of Claims in respect of one and the same Thing. For, by *Prop. 9, Sect. 3*, it appeared, that the Clergy had a Right to a Maintenance from the Laity; and that both the Manner and Degree in which they were to contribute to *this* Maintenance was absolutely in their Choice. Upon account of the bad Consequences arising from the Dependency of the Clergy on the Laity in this respect, we have shewn in Article 10th of this Section, the absolute Necessity of breaking it, which can only be done by the State's making a fix'd and standing Provision

sion for the Uses of Church-men. And in the foregoing Proposition we have prov'd, that this Part of the national Property, which the State, in consequence of the Convention, settled upon the Church, ought to be limited to the Officers of this Church in Alliance with it; and the Reasons there given are of a civil Nature, and proceed upon civil Principles, as may be seen by turning back to the Proposition.

72. The Truth of the Case lies here; tho' the two Societies be compos'd of the same Number of Individuals, yet when the same Men are consider'd in different Capacities, they will be found to have distinct and different Views in forming this Convention. If we consider them in their civil Capacity, their End in establishing Religion was, to prevent the bad Effects arising to their civil Rights from the abusive Exercise of the Church's Power in her natural State, or to enable her to apply her Influences in a more beneficial Manner for the Uses of civil Government. If we consider the same Men in their religious Capacity, their End in applying for an Establishment was, Protection against all Encroachments  
upon

upon their religious Rights, or Rights of Conscience. Consequently, the End the Church had in View in seeking after this Convention was, Truth; the End the State had in View was, publick Utility.

73. Prop. 12th. *The State at the Time of, or after the Convention, ought to give the Church proper Security against such other religious Societies which do, or may exist in it, by excluding from civil Offices all those who are not of her Communion; or there ought to be a Test-Act for discriminating Men's religious Sentiments, and for discovering their Affection for the Church in Union with the State, previous to their Admission into the Administration.* To proceed distinctly in the Proof of this Proposition, it is expedient that we lay down the following Positions, which, in the Nature of Axioms, carry their own Evidence along with them; and which will, in a great Degree, confirm the Truth of the Proposition, or at least clear the Way to the Proof of it.

74. 1st, When the Deity has not by any particular express Revelation of himself declared the Mode or Manner in which he would have religious Service or Homage paid

paid him, all his Creatures, capable of doing him Service, have a Right to agree on a Form or Manner betwixt themselves.

*2dly*, When he has either himself set out a Form of Worship, or given such Intimations of his Will, that, by a proper Application of the Powers of Thought or Understanding, such Form may be collected from the Notices he has given, his Creatures ought to acquiesce in it, when thus discover'd.

Every Man has a Right to worship God in such a Way as he judges most agreeable to him; because for one to do what he thinks to be wrong, or to act against Conscience, and our inward Sense of Things, is a Sin.

75. Men considered as Men, the Peace, Quiet, and Satisfaction of Mind of the greater Number of them, ought to take Place of the Peace and Tranquillity of the less. From which flow, by way of Corollary, these Truths. That in choosing a Formulary of Worship, when Mankind have no other Guide to go by than their own Reason, they are obliged to make use of it, and to take up with such an one as Reason shews to be most worthy of the Deity.

For

for what Men are any ways concerned in to know, and which Revelation does not disclose to them, that they are obliged to have Recourse to Reason to find out; and what is the proper Business of Reason, that every Man has a Right to exercise his Reason about; because Reason being the Gift of God to every Man, every Man ought to be guided by its Determinations, when he uses it in the best Manner he can: nay, he cannot avoid being determin'd by it; because what Reason discovers to be true, or to have the Likeness and Appearance of Truth, that a Man's Conscience obliges him to pursue and adhere to; and there is no going against Conscience without sinning.

76. In a Christian Country, where the Laws of Christ are profess'd to be submitted to, the Confessions of Faith and Mode of Worship must be such, as after due Examination, appear to be either expressly prescrib'd by, or to be most agreeable to the Will of Christ, the Founder of that Dispensation.

Since every one is at Liberty to follow his own Judgment in the great Affair of Religion (as by Art. 74, it appears that every

one is, and is fully prov'd in several Parts of this Treatise) the supreme Magistrate must have an equal Right with any one in the Community to have the civil Establishment of Religion in his Favour. And if he have the same common Right with any other, then has he, from the great Principle of natural Equity, a Right, with the Majority on his Side, to have his own Religion advanc'd into an Establishment; since, in all Divisions, the Ease and Quiet of the greater Number ought to be preferr'd to the less.

77. It is proper to take Notice here, that the Plan of Communion ought to be as comprehensive as possible, without giving Offence to the Consciences, and religious Ways of thinking of the rest of the Members. Because nothing in Fact is found to contribute more to the Establishment of Harmony and Agreement amongst Mankind than Unanimity, or Concurrence in Sentiment and Opinion. But to come to the Proof of the Proposition.

78. That the largest religious Society is to be the establish'd Church, is prov'd in Prop. 10th of this Section, and necessarily follows from the Nature and End of that



Convention the two Societies have entered into. And that none ought to be admitted into civil Offices but those that are Members of this Church, appears plainly from hence, that if a Door was open for all Persons to enter *promiscuously*, and without any Distinction to be had to their religious Principles, into the supreme Direction and Management of publick Affairs, nothing hinders but that the Administration, by the Cunning and Intrigue of some, might, in a great measure, be fill'd with those of Dissenting Principles, who, prompted with Zeal for the Advancement of their own Scheme of Religion, will be for laying hold on every Opportunity of raising it upon the Ruin of the establish'd Church. And the more Power they have, the more desirous they will be of doing this; that is, their Desires and Endeavours will rise proportionably to their Situation and Power in the Government; which is plain would be a breaking in upon the Rights (and, which is much to be considered, Rights of the tenderest Nature, and most important Concern) and consequently, upon the Peace and Quiet of the Majority; contrary to Art. 73.

79. Again ; we have shewn that the great fundamental Motive of the Church's applying to the State for entering into Terms of Agreement with her, was Protection against all such Attacks as she was expos'd to from other religious Societies existing in it; consequently the State, by the Reasons on which this Convention was founded, must be supposed to have laid itself under the highest Obligation to provide for the Church's Safety in this Particular : And if so, the Church will have a Right to have this Protection granted her ; because wherever there is an Obligation to pay on the one hand, there will ever be a proportionable Right to demand on the other : But there is no way of affording this Protection in that effectual Manner, which will serve the Church's Necessities, except by preventing all Persons whatever from having any share in the Administration of civil Affairs, but such who are Members of the Church in Union with the State ; and therefore to be supposed under strong Attachments to her Interests : consequently the State is obliged to protect the Church this Way ; that is, to give her a Test-Law, which shall suffer

none to fill civil Offices but such, who previously to their Admission into them, shall give Proof of their *Conformity*, by performing some Rite or Ceremony belonging to her, or by subscribing to her Articles, or Formulary of Faith, as the Terms of Communion.

80. To say, as some of late have done, that pulling down the Fences of our present Establishment (at least widening the Bottom of it) would be enlarging the civil Magistrate's Circle of Friends, and be a strengthening both to his own, and the establish'd Church's Interests, is contrary both to Reason and Fact. To prove it contrary to Fact we need only have Recourse to the Account given us of former Times, whose History will abundantly convince us, what sort of Principles those Men were of, who now so loudly exclaim against all Church-Establishments, as notorious and flagrant Impositions upon Men's natural Rights; what Sort of Principles, we say, those Men were of, when in Power, and had a large share of the Reins of Government in their Hands. Experience, the best Authority in the World to consult upon such an Occasion, will ever be a standing Monument, how common it hath always been for each

religious Sect, in its Turn, to be striving to raise itself, and to distress others, especially if any ways favoured by those in the Administration. And upon Enquiry it will be also found contrary to Reason. For every one who is under full Conviction in his own Mind of the Truth and Reality of his own Scheme of Religion, and of the superior Acceptableness of his Mode of Worship, will be zealous of imposing it upon others, and proportionably so, as his Power of doing it is greater or less. And Men's Advancement in publick Life will always afford them many Opportunities of bringing about their Designs. And it is morally impossible, that any contemplative Person, or one who pays the least Regard to the Use and Improvement of his intellectual Powers, should embrace Error as such, or willingly suffer others to continue in it. The Truths every one thinks he has discovered concerning God and Religion, are generally thought by him of such Importance to the Honour of the one, and to the Interests of the other, that he cannot be indifferent in enforcing the Belief and Observance of them upon others. This is human Nature ; and thus it hath been at all times, and thus it ever will be.

be. To pretend that this is what Men ought not to do, and if they advise with Reason, it will enjoin the contrary, may be true; but yet argues but little Knowledge of our Make and Constitution; since it cannot be, that the Mind should either acquiesce herself in an Error, or approve of it in others. And therefore whilst Men are endow'd with a Power and Capacity of distinguishing Right from Wrong, Truth from Falshood, Probability from Improbability, and all the various intermediate Degrees of Conviction lying betwixt the lowest Degree of Probability and that next under Certainty; whilst Man, we say, is possess'd of such a Faculty (in the proper Exercise of which the chief Excellency of a rational Creature is suppos'd to consist) he will strive to establish by all possible Means what he perceives to be true, especially Truths of such vast Importance as those on which the Favour of God, and consequently his own Happiness, is imagin'd to depend. And therefore for the State not to restrain such Practices in Non-conformists, is expressly contrary to the End the Church had in View in making this Convention with it, whose prime fundamental Motive was Protection of *all Kinds*

against all such Things and Persons as might in any Shape, or in any Degree, injuriously affect her.

81. To what has been said above we beg leave to add the following Words of a very able and judicious Prelate, whose eminent Services in Defence of the civil and religious Rights of Mankind, must justly endear him to all true Lovers of Liberty. “ It is an easy Mat-  
 “ ter, says he, to answer to all this, that those  
 “ Inconveniencies and civil Consequences  
 “ ought not to happen ; that it is the Duty  
 “ of Men to bear with one another’s Differ-  
 “ ences in religious Worship, and the like.  
 “ But alas ! this is not the Question ; but  
 “ whether it be not likely thus to be. In  
 “ Theory it signifieth but little what a Man  
 “ saith. He may make what *ecclesiastical*  
 “ *Utopias* he pleaseth, and indulge his own  
 “ peculiar Genius and Judgment to the ut-  
 “ most. But in all Proposals and Schemes  
 “ which we draw up in order to be reduc’d  
 “ to Practice, we must suppose the World  
 “ what *it is*, not what it *ought* to be ; the same  
 “ Ignorance, the same Superstition, the same  
 “ Zeal, the same Resentments, the same  
 “ Bigottry, the same every Thing which we  
 “ have

“ have found hitherto amongst Christians.  
 “ And we must propose (like good Physicians)  
 “ not merely what is good in itself, but what  
 “ is so with respect to the Prejudice, Tem-  
 “ pers and Constitutions, we know, and are  
 “ sure to be amongst us.” See a Reply to the  
*Introduction to the 2d Part of Mr. Calamy’s*  
*Defence of moderate Non-conformity*, by Mr.  
 Hoadley. And if with this Desire (we had al-  
 most call’d it a natural one) which every Church  
 has of advancing itself above others, or of bring-  
 ing others into her Communion, we take into  
 Consideration the temporal Advantages granted  
 in Favour of the Church in Alliance with the  
 State, the Desire becomes greatly inflam’d,  
 and the Opposition made to the establish’d  
 Church grows more fierce and formidable, as  
 coming from all Quarters, and in all Shapes;  
 and consequently her Danger is proportionably  
 increas’d. For, before the Convention, the  
 Dispute or Contest lay indifferently betwixt  
*this* or *that* Church; whereas after the Con-  
 vention, the establish’d Church is oblig’d to  
 withstand and make Head against the united  
 Attack of all others existing in the State; each  
 drawing their several Forces against her as  
 against a common Enemy from all Sides.

Thus,

Thus, we see, the Church is in greater Danger after than before the Convention ; and if the Danger is greater, so ought the Security to be, that is, the Security the State promises to the Church at the Time of the Convention ought to be proportion'd to the Danger she has subjected herself to by the Convention. But we have shewn, that no Security, adequate to the Danger, can be found out, excepting the Test-Act. And in nothing does the Wisdom of the *British* Parliament better appear than in contriving and passing that Act, which so long as the Majority of the Members of the State joins in the publick Worship of the establish'd Church, ought to be in Force, and to remain a Bar against the Admission of Non-conformists into Offices of publick Trust and Moment : And every Attempt in any Body of Men to repeal it, would be offering an Hardship to the Members of the establish'd Church, and be a notorious Infringment of the Principle of Right. If indeed the Scale should ever turn, and the Majority concur in the contrary Belief or Persuasion, they would, upon our Principles, have a Right to its Repeal, and to have the Establishment on their Side.

§2. There



82. There still remains another strong, irrefragable Argument for the State's excluding Non-conformists from civil Offices, drawn from the Principles of Self-Preservation. For tho' different Men may have different Sentiments in respect to Religion, yet they all agree in this, that each believing his own Mode of Worship best, will be for raising it on the Ruins of the rest; the Consequence of which is, that an equal Admission of all Sectaries indifferently into the Administration, would occasion an equal Struggle among them for Power, in order to establish their own favourite Scheme of Religion; and what would be the Consequence of such a confus'd, tumultuous Procedure? So pernicious and afflictive, that it is even terrible but to mention it, it being demonstrative, " That when the Parts or Members  
 " of any Body operate contrary to each  
 " other's Interests, and consequently against the  
 " Interest of the Whole, that *that Whole*  
 " must be in the most miserable and distracted  
 " Situation. " Thus we see, that the State is under the strongest Necessity of requiring some Criterion, as well in Consideration of its own Safety and Interest, as by the Obligation it has laid itself under at the Time of the Conven-  
 tion

tion being ratify'd, to afford the Church the most effectual Means of Security.

83. A great deal of Noise has been rais'd, and many Objections made against the Justice and Equity of a Test; but the most material one, and what is chiefly insisted upon, is, that it is a Violation of Men's natural Rights. To which we answer, that if all the Members of civil Society have a Right to serve the supreme Magistrate in Offices of Power and Dignity, then if he refuses to admit them into such Offices, he deprives them of their Right; and consequently, as he could never satisfy such a Number of Claims as would be continually made upon him for them, he must be continually guilty of Injustice: Such are the Consequences which attend this Doctrine. So we are sensible their Reply to this will be, that Men's Capacity for serving the State in civil Offices is taken from them by the Test-Act, which is manifestly unjust; since all equally good Subjects ought equally to share the supreme Magistrate's Favours; and that Men's Election into those Offices ought to be regulated by the Consideration of their Abilities and Dispositions to promote the Interests of the State, and not on the Consideration of  
their

their Affection to the Interests of the establish'd Church. In Return to which we observe that as Religion is of such absolute Necessity to the very Being of civil Government, as Church and State cannot subsist separately but in Union with each other, the State, in Consequence of the Union, is oblig'd to protect the Church; and as this Protection is best given, can no other way be effectually given, but by excluding from the Administration such as are not Members of the establish'd Church: so, from this View of the Case, the Church derives a Right to their Exclusion; and if a Right to their Exclusion, it is evident they can have no Right to those Offices or Employments; or indeed any Right at all to act in a publick Capacity; and therefore no Rights can be violated; otherwise there would be contrary Rights, (which is impossible) or something must be allow'd to be more binding than publick Happiness; on which, strictly speaking, all Right is founded, and from whence it has its Beginning.—The Argument rests (and we are content to leave it there) upon this fundamental Maxim, *viz.* that every Society is vested

vested with the necessary Powers of Self-Defence and Preservation; and a Right to use the Means connected with the End for which such Society was appointed: and upon this, as upon an uncontroverted Principle, do all Bodies politick act in the Provisions which they make for the Safety and Happiness of their Members. And this we take to be a satisfactory, tho' but short Answer, to all other Objections of what Kind soever, or whatever Form they may appear in, which are brought against the Lawfulness and binding Force of a Test-Law: since no private Right can be distinct from, much less opposite to, or inconsistent with the publick Good.

84. There is an Objection of another Nature still behind, which is, that a Test-Law lays Men under great Temptations to be Hypocrites, by causing them both to speak and act against Conscience. But this Objection, in whatever Light we place it, can have no Concern with the sincere and honest Man; a Man of Uprightness and Integrity will not be persuaded, by whatever Motive and Consideration one can set before him, to depart in any Instance from the  
known

known Rules of his Duty, or what he is under full Conviction to be such. And Men of this Complexion will, we presume, be allow'd to be the only proper Persons to be admitted into civil Offices and Employments. This Objection, therefore, if there be any Weight in it, can only affect Men of bad Lives and Principles; Men who will run any Lengths in Religion, advance to the very Boundaries (or pass over them, if Occasion requires) of Infidelity and Atheism, in order to gratify a darling Passion, to satisfy their ambitious Views, or to carry on a secular Interest. But sure we are, that Men, who will not serve their God faithfully, will not serve their Prince conscientiously, or out of Principle; it being demonstrative, that whoever sacrifices his Conscience in any one Instance, will most assuredly sacrifice it in any other, when by so doing his leading Views and Designs can any ways be furthered and promoted. This Objection, therefore, is of no Force or Significancy, if levell'd against those who ought to be employ'd in the publick Administration, that is, against Men of sound Religion and Conscience; because they are Proof against all Temptations of this Kind. 85. If

85. If indeed human Affairs were always adjusted by the Rules of Equity, and every one did to others as he would desire to be done by in like Cases; then it will be own'd, that excluding Non-Conformists of any Denomination from their Share in civil Offices, upon the score of some Differences in the Modes and Circumstances of religious Worship, might with Reason be term'd an Hardship, if not an Injustice. But such moral Perfection, or good Agreement of Actions, is not to be expected in the present State of Things. And therefore, to argue from the Justice and Reasonableness of the Thing, if human Acts were constantly directed by a Principle of Right, to the Justice and Reasonableness of it, when those Acts are directed in another Manner; that is, whilst some act in Conformity with, others in Deviations from this Principle, is most notoriously weak and inconclusive; it is founded upon a wrong Bottom, as it supposes us to be in a perfect, at the same time that we know ourselves by Fact and Experience to be in an imperfect State. And the same kind of Reasoning, if directed that Way, will hold full as strong again the

Institution of civil Government, as it does against the natural Justice and Validity of a Test-Law. And the same Complaints and Arraignments of Equity brought against one, are with equal Truth and equal Propriety applicable to the other. If there had been no breaking in upon the religious Rights of others, nor any Attempts made upon them, there would have been no Occasion for a Test-Act: In like manner, if Men had been strict Observers of natural Justice, made no Encroachments upon the Rights and Properties of others, there would have been no Necessity for Men entering into civil Society; and consequently no Necessity of subjecting themselves to such a Load of Taxes, and other Inconveniences, unavoidably necessary in such a State for the Support of civil Government. But as it is not possible that this should, so neither can the other ever be suppos'd to be the Case with Mankind. And therefore it highly concerns them to guard against the Mischiefs they are subjected to in both Capacities; in one Case, by forming themselves into a Body Politick for the better Security of their temporal Liberty and Property; in the other, by incapacitating those

who are not in the Interests of the established Church from holding Places, 'or filling Offices of Honour and Profit under the Government ; that is, by giving the Church in Union with the State a Test-Law.

86. “ As to that Argument us'd for repealing the Test, that it will unite all the  
 “ *Protestants* against the common Enemy, I  
 “ wonder, says a very judicious Writer, by what  
 “ Figure those Gentlemen speak, who are  
 “ pleas'd to advance it. Suppose, in order  
 “ to increase the Friendship betwixt you  
 “ and me, a Law should pass, that I should  
 “ have half your Estate ; do you think that  
 “ would much advance the Union betwixt  
 “ us? Or, suppose I share my Fortune equally  
 “ betwixt my own Children and a  
 “ Stranger, whom I take into my Protection ;  
 “ will that be a Method to unite them?  
 “ 'Tis an odd way of uniting Parties, to  
 “ deprive a Majority of Part of their ancient  
 “ Right, by conferring it on a *Faction*  
 “ who had never any Right at all ; and  
 “ therefore cannot be said to suffer any  
 “ Loss or Injury, if it be refus'd them.”

*See a Letter concerning the Sacramental Test, from a Member of the House of Commons in*

Ire-



Ireland to a Member of the House of Commons in England, writ in the Year 1708.

87. If our Scheme of Church-Government, as drawn out and demonstrated in the two foregoing Sections, be just, how absurd must it be in the Church of *Rome*, or indeed in any Church, whether of *this* or *that* particular Denomination, to aim at worldly Grandeur, Power, Riches, &c. to the manifest Detriment of the national Wealth, and consequently of the private Property of Laymen? To the Prejudice of the legal Exercise of the civil Magistrate's Right, and the Subversion of the Kingdom under his Care and Government; the absolving his Subjects from their Oaths of Fidelity or Allegiance to him; and the disposing of his Crown and Dignity to another. Because the common Nature of a Church forbids her the Exercise of temporal Power of any sort, or after any manner; nor can the Church of *Rome*, any more than any other particular Church, subsist, but in Union with the State; and therefore must have resign'd up her Independence, and by Consequence her Supremacy to it.

88. From what has been said we learn, that the civil Magistrate's Title of supreme Head of the Church, or Defender of the Faith, is perfectly consistent with the Nature of Religion, as it constitutes a politick Body, or a Society pursuing the End of its Institution by various Powers, Degrees of Subordination in the Members, and by different Acts or Methods of Government: Because the Church, as a Society, being vested with such a Power herself, may make a Transfer of it to whom she pleaseth, upon Condition she can find her Benefit in it. For, if we do but consider it, the Reason why such and such Powers are vested in certain Things and Persons, is, because the Use of them is necessary for the Defence and Safety of such Things and Persons: consequently, when by resigning over those Powers to others, this End, *viz.* their Safety and Preservation, can be better secured than by keeping them themselves (and the very Reason that vests them with them, obliges them to make a Surrender of them upon those Terms) to resign them over to others in such Degrees as best suits their End in doing it. And if so, the Church may dispose of her

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her Powers, Rights, &c. in such manner as best conduces to her own Interests.

89. We shall close this Section with an Observation upon the different Sentiments of different Men, with regard to ecclesiastical Policy. One Sett of Writers upon the Subject of Church-Government, with much Obstinacy and Warmth of Temper, have contended for the Church's Independence, and consequently her Supremacy, even under an Establishment; and that she ought not, that she cannot indeed, without having much Injustice done her, be subjected to Bounds and Limits from the State in the Exercise of her Powers. Another Sett have as strenuously insisted, that the Church is a mere Creature of the State, and derives all her Powers from it; which consequently will be revokable at its Pleasure, and dependent on its Will, both as to the Extent and the Manner of Exercise of them. Both, as we have prov'd, are equally wrong in their Opinions, and consequently in their Maintenance of them; and, which is worse, their Tenets are equally mischievous, sometimes to one, and sometimes to the other Society, and most commonly to both. This

Section began with explaining the general Nature of civil and religious Society ; and from the proper Nature of each we have shewn, that they are essentially distinct. From whence we go on to prove the natural Independency of the one upon the other : and from their Independence we deduce the Freedom and Supremacy of each ; and from their having distinct Ends and Pursuits, we prov'd, that in the legitimate Administration of their respective Powers, their Governments could not possibly have injuriously affected one another ; but that in the abusive Exercise of those Powers their Administration might, and actually did (and for the fatal Propensity in each to this Abuse, we need only appeal to the History of Mankind) highly prejudice one another. From whence arose the Necessity of some sort of Composition and Agreement being entered into betwixt them. Here we took Notice what the fundamental Motive of the Church's seeking an Union with the State was, and what the Reason of the State's accepting such an Offer or Proposal ; what Rights, Powers, &c. she in Consequence of the Convention resign'd over to the civil Power, with the

Reserves she made in her own Favour, and what Advantages and Concessions she had in Return from the State. And now we should have ended this Section, but that some, we doubt not, will be ready to ask, Is not our Notion of a Church merely chimerical, and such as never existed in *Fact*? We shall answer this Question with another, Was there ever a State of Nature, or a Body of Men existing without some Rules of Order and Government? We believe it will be answer'd in the Negative. But this hinders not, but that in explaining the Nature and End of civil Government, and in adjusting the reciprocal Duties, Rights, &c. of Prince and People, we argue from the Supposition of such a State, and have Recourse to Men's natural Rights, as the proper Foundation on which to erect and establish their civil ones. In like manner, tho' there be, perhaps, no particular Church in Being exactly similar and alike in its Characters and Properties to what we have here describ'd (because, as we before observ'd, Church and State can no more subsist but in Union with each other, than Mankind can subsist out of civil Society) yet the nearer any Church approaches

in her natural State, if in any such State she ever existed, the more perfect we dare pronounce her to be. And consequently, in fixing the Conditions on which this Convention is founded; in enumerating and describing the several Grants and Concessions each in Consequence of the Convention makes in Favour of the other; in determining how far each acquires a Right to meddle in the Province of the other, we must refer to the general Nature of a Church, and argue from it. One considerable Advantage arising to Mankind from having the common Nature of a Church, and the End of its Institution thus explain'd, is, that knowing what Powers, Rights, &c. belong to Church-Officers, and what not, it is their Interest, and from thence it becomes their Duty, to protect those Officers in the Exercise of the one, and to restrain them in the Use or Exercise of the other.

#### §. V.

I. Having treated largely in the last Section of the Nature and End of the Convention betwixt Church and State, and of the Motives leading on to it, it comes now properly in our Way to say a Word or two  
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concerning ecclesiastical Courts, and for what End they were first erected. For finding out the Design of their Foundation, will present us with a View both of the Origin of those Courts, and also with the Nature and Extent of those Powers which belong to them ; and from whence they take their Rise.

2. Some Things affect Society in *one* Degree, some in *another* ; those Things *immediately*, others *remotely*. Every Action cognizable by human and divine Laws, and which renders the Agent a proper Subject of Rewards and Punishments, is founded upon some Cause or Motive exciting to it : Consequently, evil Actions must be owing to evil Causes ; that is, to bad Desires and Affections : the suppressing those, therefore, or the abating their Force and Vigour in such Degrees as to take off, and to deaden the Solicitations of external Objects, is putting a Stop to, or preventing the Evil consequent upon the Gratification of them ; and therefore must be Matter of much Good and Advantage to Society ; and, under that Notion, the proper Object of its Pursuits. To give some Instances how the State may be incommoded by such Actions or Omissions which

which have not a direct and immediate, but a remote and consequential Aspect or Influence upon it.

3. Such is the Carelessness, the Inactivity, and Supineness of the Generality of Mankind in Matters of Religion (the Interests of this World oftentimes superseding all Considerations relating to another) that were there no Places set apart to worship God in, they would soon worship him no-where; if no Times, they would seldom do it at all. Whence arises the Necessity of certain Times and Places (as we shew before) being appropriated for the Performance of this Duty; the Neglect or Non-Observance of which would, as it is found in Fact so to do, weaken, and in Time destroy all Sense of an animadverting Deity: but, without such a Sense, preserv'd in its proper Height and Vigour, by means adapted to preserve it in such Height and Vigour, civil Government, as we have likewise shewn, cannot subsist. Whence arises the civil Magistrate's Right, and from thence too his Obligation, to suppress all those Attempts, and to supply such Deficiencies, as tend, by Degrees, to wear out of Men's Minds that Sense of God, and of an over-  
ruling



ruling Providence, which alone is the great Preservative of Justice, Faithfulness, and of every other publick Duty, or Tie upon Mankind. For, as Guardian of the civil Happiness of his People, it is his Duty to see that all the Members of Society do, at certain Times fix'd and stated by general Consent and Authority, go to Church, or to some religious Assembly, there to give publick Testimony of their Belief of the Being of a God, and of all such Duties as are immediately and necessarily connected with that Belief. And the Consideration of this gave the first Rise to the State's making a Law, or issuing out its Proclamation for securing the strict Observance of the Sabbath (or the Day appointed and set aside to religious Uses) by annexing temporal Penalties to the Breach of it, that is, by punishing all those who, without Distinction of Time or Place, pursue their worldly Business on that Day; or who spend it in Gaming and Drunkenness, in Sports or Pastimes, or in Acts of Lewdness and Debauchery, to the great Increase of Vice and Immorality (the natural Consequents, the Consequents in Fact of Impiety) and therefore

to the manifest Prejudice and Detriment of civil Society.

4. Whatever takes away, or in any considerable Degree lessens that Awe and Reverence of a Deity, so necessary to maintain the Obligations of Oaths (the great Bonds or Ligaments of all civil Polities) sacred and inviolable, and to keep up in Men's Minds a just and affecting Sense of their own Littleness, and of the Power and Majesty of that Being on whom they depend absolutely, both for their Existence, and the Means of it; and consequently of their indispensable Duty to abstain from all Practices which are any ways disagreeable to him, must, as it destroys all the wholesome and beneficial Effects of Religion to civil Society, be destructive of its Safety and Happiness; and consequently, in that View, necessary to be restrain'd by the civil Magistrate. For it deserves to be consider'd, that this Awe and Reverence of a Deity makes Men much more careful to observe all those Duties, positive or negative, on the Commission or Omission of which their mutual Happiness so much depends, than all the Punishments of the civil Magistrate taken together

together can do, or in Fact have done. But this bad Effect *common Swearing*, or, in the Scripture-Phrase, *taking the Name of the Lord in vain*, always has ; that is, it tends by necessary Consequence, in Proportion to the Habit it is grown into, to destroy and extinguish all Awe and Veneration for a Deity in Men's Minds. Upon this Consideration, it behoves the supreme Power in every Nation to annex suitable Penalties to such Practices as those, as knowing that whatever affects, and in whatever Degree, civil Society, is in the same Degree punishable by the Governors of civil Society : and further, if the Laws of civil Society were not to put a Check or Restraint upon common Swearing, such a Custom would in Time, and by Degrees, necessarily introduce Perjury ; and Perjury will as necessarily lead to the utter Extirpation of all Courts of civil Judicature, without which no civil Government could have a Being ; that is, no Justice could be administered, nor Differences about Property be determin'd.

5. If Fornication was allow'd, or, if every Man had to do with as many Women, and every Woman with as many Men,

as each pleas'd; in Consequence of such a confus'd Combination of Causes, A would not have it in his Power to distinguish his Children from those of B, or C, or D; that is, if they had all to do with one and the same Woman, the Fruit of such Intercourse, whose it was, could not be ascertain'd; it would indeed be impossible that it should. But no Man could be induc'd to take Care and Pains, and to subject himself to Troubles and Fatigues, in making a Provision for those whom he believes not to be his own, but to belong to another. Such a general Neglect therefore in the Nurture and Cultivation of Children would shortly destroy the Strength and Power of a Nation, which will always be in a compound *Ratio* of the Number of its Inhabitants, and the Riches they are in Possession of: And if we add to this the Anxieties and Vexations such a free unbounded Commerce in the Way of Coition betwixt the two Sexes will necessarily create to the Relations of the *Parties concern'd*, the Necessity of putting a Stop to such Practices increases proportionably; that is, all proper Means must be us'd to prevent, if possible, the concupiscible Affections from breaking

out into Act; and so to avert the malignant Influences they are big with, from happening to the Members of civil Society.

6. Since Man's Happiness lies so much in the Disposal, and consequently must in a great measure arise from the good Offices of others; and as nothing is so strong an Inducement to them for to afford us those good Offices, as the Esteem they have for us; and as this Esteem is chiefly acquir'd by our good Name and Character in Life; so a good Name is found to be a Means of that which is itself a Means of Happiness: consequently, the acquiring or losing a good Name, is the same as acquiring or losing Happiness, in the same Degree in which such Happiness is suppos'd to be dependent on the Acts and Influence of others. Therefore, as Defamation and Detraction tend to destroy the good Name, and with it to lessen the Credit and Interest of the Person or Persons so defam'd; as it breeds Disturbances, foments Divisions, causes Broils, &c. among Neighbours: so it properly falls within the civil Magistrate's Province to deter from Acts or Practices so injurious to the Peace and Quiet of his Subjects.

7. Further; that Wills ought to be prov'd, and testamentary Causes brought to a Hearing, and adjudg'd, for the Determination of particular Claims; Licenses granted for the Performance of such and such particular Acts; Letters of Administration taken out for the more equitable Distribution of the Goods or Effects of those who die intestate, and the like; that there be certain Provisions, we say, made by Law for these Things, is evident from hence, that the Want of them, or the Neglect of having Recourse to them upon such Occasions, would be productive of great Disputes and Contentions among Mankind, and therefore to be guarded against accordingly.

8. These, with many other such Things, affecting civil Society variously, and in different Degrees, it falls naturally under the Care of the Legislature to provide Remedies for the Prevention of: Not that the Restraints put upon them by human Laws were occasion'd by their being Offences against God, but were owing to the bad Effects they were the Causes of to civil Society. What has been said therefore shews, we think, the Expediency of the Legislature erect-

erecting Courts, with a temporal Jurisdiction, or coercive Power, for the taking Cognizance of such Things as have any Relation to the Interests of Society. But into whose Hands the Presidency of those Courts shall be committed, is the next Thing that demands our Consideration.

9. The Reason that Ecclesiasticks ought to be intrusted with this Jurisdiction, preferably to any other Sett of Men, seems to be this: That it is the main Concern, as it is the principal Part of their Office, to teach Men to avoid all manner of Communication with Vice and Wickedness, as destructive to the Happiness of God's Creatures, and inconsistent with that Progression which he intended the human Nature should be continually making to greater Degrees of Perfection; and therefore, under both these Notions of it, disagreeable to his Will: And to shew them at the same Time, as proper to work upon Men's Minds, and to incline their Wills to a Detestation of it, that the necessary Consequences of Vice in this Life shall be Misery in the next, more or less, in Proportion to the Degree in which they are influenc'd by Habits arising from the frequent

Practice of it : To let them know, that if the Custom and common Usage of the World have made a Difference betwixt Actions, that is, have annex'd Praise to some, and Infamy to others ; and that if every vicious Action becomes by human Appointment an unavoidable Step to Misery, they may be assured a much greater Difference will be made hereafter by that Being, who will be sure to vindicate the Honour, and to maintain the Interests of Religion and Virtue in another State of Being, by dealing with them there according as their Behaviour hath been here ; and that their present Punishments are but Foretastes of future great ones, and which, tho' distant, are not the less certain for being so. And having thus made the Offender truly sensible of the Nature and Tendency of his particular Crime, and of the Consequences which will necessarily, if not repented of, attend it in another World ; that is, having fitted him for the Reception of the Punishment he is to undergo, and acquainted him with the Reasons why it was appointed to be administered, they are thought the fittest Persons to inflict it themselves. For, from whose Hand can it come so properly,



perly, as from those who have duly season'd and prepar'd the Subject for it? The Reasonableness of the Thing therefore seems to vest the Jurisdiction of those Courts in their Hands, and to give them a sort of Right to the Exercise of it. To this it probably will be objected, that if our Reasoning be just, it will equally hold for the Clergy's inflicting all Kinds and Degrees of Punishment under capital ones, since it is properly their Province to dissuade from all Kinds and Degrees of Vice; and so the Execution of the Bulk of human Laws would rest wholly upon them. The Case in Truth lies here: it is at all Times, and upon all Occasions, the Duty, and proper Work of the Clergy, to persuade to Virtue, and to dissuade from Vice, and to shew the Tendency of the one, if practis'd upon a right Principle, to procure divine Favour; and of the other, to incur divine Displeasure. All more than this lies out of their Element; it being for the Good of Mankind in their civil Concerns, that all such unruly Wills and Affections as tend to disturb their Peace and Quiet be suppress'd; that Disputes arising about the Disposition of Effects in testamen-

tary Matters be prevented, and the like, it is expedient that certain Provisions be made by Law for taking Notice of those and such other Things which fall not properly within the Limits of the civil Judicature; or, to speak more pertinently, which fall not within the Jurisdiction of the Courts of Justice, as at present circumstanc'd, and relating to Matters of greater Importance and Consideration. And tho' it be Matter of Choice in the Legislature, who shall have the Management of those Courts, since the Power exercis'd by them is from a civil, and not from a religious Consideration; yet, for the Reasons before given, the Clergy seem to have a Right preferably to any other sett of Men.

10. This indeed is undoubtedly true, that the Legislature may make such Alterations, either in the Powers of those Courts, or in the Manner of the Exercise of them, as particular Junctures shall require; or they may take the Government of them, if they abuse it, from one Body of Men, be they Ecclesiasticks, or be they Laymen, and give it to others, with such Restrictions and Limitations as shall be thought necessary. For all delegated Power is ever suppos'd to be answerable

able to the Person or Persons deputing it for the Exercise thereof; and when the Conditions, with which it was given, are not performed, the Trust is violated, and the Power reverts again into the Principal's Hands. .

11. The Nature of those Powers exercis'd by Ecclesiastical Courts (if History was silent as to their Foundations) shew that they are to be apply'd, that they can only justly be apply'd, to civil Uses. For it hath been prov'd above, that the general Nature of Religion is such, as not to admit of the Exercise of temporal Power, in any Degree. And therefore a Power of this Kind, and to be apply'd to such Ends, is unfitly apply'd. From whence it appears,

11. *1<sup>st</sup>*, That those Courts must be of the State's own erecting.

12. *2<sup>dly</sup>*, That when the State entrusted them with a temporal Jurisdiction, or coercive Power, it must be supposed that this Power was intended to be employ'd in the Service of civil Society, and in its Service only: and the Exercise of it for other Ends cannot be justify'd.

13. *3<sup>dly</sup>*, That they are call'd Ecclesiastical Courts, not so much because the Powers belonging to them are of an ecclesiastical Nature, or to be exercis'd for ecclesiastical Ends,

or deriv'd from an ecclesiastical Fountain ; but because the Right to the Exercife of them is limited to ecclesiastical Persons. And in no other Sense can they be juſtly call'd ecclesiastical.

14. “ The Ecclesiastical Courts, ſays *Bishop Burnet* in his History of the Reformation, were the Conceſſions of Princes, in which, Trials concerning Marriages, Wills, and Tithes depended; ſo the holding thoſe Courts in the King's Name was no Invaſion of the Spiritual Function, ſince all that concern'd Orders was to be done ſtill in the Biſhop's Name; only Excommunication was ſtill left as the Censure of thoſe Courts, which being a Spiritual Censure ought to have been reſerved to the Biſhop, to be proceeded in by him with the Aſſiſtance of his Clergy, This fatal Error then committed, has not yet met with an effectual Regulation.

15. There is one thing ſtill remaining which deſerves to be conſidered, whiſt we are upon the Subject of Ecclesiastical Courts, and that is Penance, which we ſhall take Notice of, as it is in ſome Senſe a Punishment of an ecclesiastical Nature, it being directed

to

to an ecclesiastical End, of which the following Account may be given. When Men by great Enormities, and frequent Violations of the moral Laws of God, have given such Offences to religious, well-inclin'd Persons, that they cannot join in outward Communion with them without going against Conscience, and offering Violence to the Principles they have imbib'd, it is then necessary, for the Sake of giving Ease to *those*, that such as live in the wilful and open Neglect of the Duties of Religion, be not permitted to come to Church, till such time as they become truly sorrowful for the Crimes and Offences they have committed, and express a suitable Abhorrence and Detestation of them, by doing, or submitting to, such Acts, or Penalties, as the Church in her Wisdom shall have thought proper to enjoin in Cases of this Nature. And this Act of the Offender ought to be voluntary (for the Presumption of the Reality of his Sorrow is the Cause, the true Cause, of his Readmission into the Church) proceeding from a just and affecting Sense of his own Baseness, and the Offence he has given the Church by such immoral Practices. Nor is it unreasonable, or what

can be thought any Hardship, that Persons who have made such frequent and great Deviations from the Rules of Virtue, or have been guilty of some flagrant Impiety, should choose to submit to such Censures from the Church, rather than be excluded the Benefit of her Communion. It is a Maxim which all Societies inviolably observe, that Offences of all sorts, and in all Degrees, which are committed in them, shall subject the Offenders to certain Penalties before they be allow'd to enjoy the Benefits of such Societies again. Most reasonable then it is, that the same Maxim shall be observ'd in a religious, as is observ'd in every other Society. Upon which Account of Penance, as here given, we may make the two following Remarks.

16. 1<sup>st</sup>, That Penance was enjoin'd, not as a Punishment that was judg'd agreeable to the Will of God, or what he required, but it was appointed by Men for wiping off in certain Cases the Scandal the Church had contracted by the Immorality of some of her Members, or in other Words, it was enjoin'd in Order to avoid giving Offence; and is an Usage founded in the general Nature of a Church, as a Society.

17. 2<sup>dly</sup>,

17. *2dly*, That all Commutations are unjust: For,

18. *1st*, Commutations in this Case imply a Change of Punishments, or it is a substituting one Punishment in the Room of another. The Design of Penance, as we have shewn, is to express Men's Sorrow for the Scandal they have occasion'd, by voluntarily submitting to such Censures as the Church has judg'd necessary to be inflicted, and consequently is always a sure Sign of a Reformation and Amendment *within*, that is, of a penitent Disposition: But Commutations imply only a Sense of the Shame or Disgrace attendant on the doing of Penance, which the Offender would avoid by buying it off at a certain Price. And if so, Commutations cannot be expressive, or any significant Indications, of a real Sorrow or Remorse of Mind; and therefore no Marks, no presumptive Evidence of a real and sincere Repentance.

19. *2dly*, Commutations cannot possibly answer the End for which Penance was enjoin'd, that is, they have no Tendency, either to the Reformation of Manners in general, or to the Amendment of the Offender in particular, or

to

to the removing (which is the principal thing aim'd at by enjoining Penance) the Scandal, ever brought upon the Church by some kind or other of Irregularity in the Conduct of any of her Members. And if Commutations cannot answer this End, they cannot be justly demanded, nor consequently justly taken. But not to multiply Words: Penance, as we before observ'd, ought to be voluntary, which Commutations cannot be; every one being willing to buy off the Shame at as small a Price as he can. We are indeed ready to acknowledge, that the best way to appease an offended Deity, and to be taken into Favour again, is to extend our Acts of Charity and Beneficence (performing them in a sincere Obedience to his Will, and with a view to avert his Displeasure occasion'd by an Offence given) to as many Objects as our present Circumstances will give us leave to do: But such Acts must flow from the Will, and not be extorted from us, See Sect. 2. Corol. 2. Art. 11.

PART





## P A R T II.

## §. I.

**B**EFORE we begin to make any Enquiry either into the Necessity of Revelation in general, or into the peculiar Nature, Design, and Tendency of those Truths, communicated, at different Times, to the Founders of the Jewish Nation in the first Ages of the World; previous, we say, to any such Enquiry, we shall take Notice of one or two Particulars, the Certainty, or, at least, high Probability of which, we shall endeavour to make out, *viz.* that if ever the Deity, for Reasons becoming his infinite Perfections, and in Compliance with the Wants and Necessities of his Creatures, should take upon himself to reveal his Will in some other manner than what can be gathered from natural Notices, and to set up a Church, Reasons *à priori* may then be assign'd, why he will choose

choose himself those who shall officiate in it, and likewise set apart a certain Portion of Time for his Creatures performing this great Duty of Worship to him in. To begin with the first.

2. Since such as minister in *holy* Things, and whose proper Business it is to enforce an Obedience to the Laws of God upon the Motives of his Favour or Displeasure, are *strictly* and *properly* his own Officers, and more immediately related to him by the Nature of their Function than others can pretend to be; and since it is fittest for every Master to appoint his own Servants, and to give them what Orders and Instructions he thinks necessary for the Services they have to do, and to carry on the great Work entrusted to their Care and Direction: So we have Reason to think, that God, who in every Particular we are assured will act for the best, will choose his; because knowing the Nature of those Services, and what Abilities are best suited to the Performance of them, he best knows how to adapt the one to the other, and therefore, in such Cases, no one can so properly choose for him, as himself.

3. God, as a wise and good Being, will be sure to do every thing which makes for the  
the

the Benefit and Advantage of his Creatures, and also in such way or manner, if one way or manner be more conducive to this than another, as tends to *that their Benefit and Advantage* in greater Degrees. Consequently if his instituting his own Ministry, or the giving others proper Directions for the doing of it in a *certain way*, will have a better Effect than the leaving it to others, *destitute of such Directions*, to do for him, he will certainly take the Management or Ordering of such Institution upon himself, that is, he will either interpose immediately himself for that purpose, or he will grant others a Commission with special Instructions how to act in such an Affair. Now this good End (good and beneficial we mean with regard to Man) will be answer'd by God's appointing his own Ministry, *viz.* that the Doctrines of Men, thus solemnly chose, and set apart for this great Work, will make greater Impressions upon, and consequently have more Influence over the Minds of Men, than if those Officers were of human Institution only. It being a most certain Truth, " that  
 " the Force with which any Doctrine, Pre-  
 " cept, &c. acts upon the Minds of Men,  
 " will

“ will be always be in a compound Ratio  
 “ of its Importance and Certainty.” And  
 what is it that constitutes its Certainty, *in  
 such a Case*, but the Authority of the Pro-  
 mulger? Supposing a Person to be taught a  
 Truth by one who he knows has had a Com-  
 mission from God to teach him it, it will  
 certainly have a greater Weight with him,  
 and he will be inclin'd to yield it a more  
 ready and willing Obedience, than if he was  
 taught it by one who was appointed by a  
 Fellow-Creature of his, without any special,  
 previous Order for that Business. Because  
 there always will be this Doubt hanging upon  
 him, *viz.* that the one may have a View of  
 imposing on him by it; but, God who ap-  
 pointed the other, could have none, except-  
 ing the View of some future Benefit to his  
 Creatures by such his Instruction, and that  
 particular Method of conveying it to them.

4. Tho' to a thoughtful Person, and one  
 given to Contemplation, the present Scheme  
 of Things, or the Constitution of Nature,  
 affords a demonstrative Proof, that the Whole,  
 and all its Parts, consisting both of inani-  
 mate and animate Things, are constantly un-  
 der the Direction and Government of an  
 infinitely

infinitely knowing and perfect Being, whose supreme Delight is Virtue, and Vice his utter Abhorrence ; that a pursuit of the former will necessarily acquire his Approbation and Favour ; a production of the other, as necessarily his Displeasure ; and therefore, however ruffled and untoward present Appearances be, yet the Consequences of Virtue will, in some Period or other of Man's Existence, be Happiness, and the Consequences of Vice, Misery. Yet not three Parts in four of Mankind see the Connection of such a Conduct at *one time* with such a Treatment at *another* ; and a Man would lose his Time and Labour, if he endeavour'd to make it out to them, by the deductions of Reason, in a long Chain of Argumentation drawn out and laid before them for that Purpose. Their Faculties (as the Faculties of all those in *low Life* must be) are cramped, and absolutely unfit to take in such kind of Arguments. Nothing therefore but the express Declaration of God himself, or of some sent with a Commission from him, can either convince or satisfy them in the Will of the Deity ; which, of all things, it most nearly concerns them to know, as their fundamental

Interest

Interest plainly lies in directing their Conduct in Subserviency to it ; which, at the same time that it proves the absolute Necessity of a divine Revelation as to this grand Point, shews also the Necessity of some being authoriz'd by him to teach and inforce those Truths that he has thought fit to reveal to the World, and of which the Bulk of Mankind must for ever have continu'd ignorant, had it not been for such a gracious Manifestation of himself. For supposing a Revelation once given, the Doctrines will not come with that Force and Efficacy upon the Minds of Men from the Mouths of Preachers, who voluntarily took upon themselves this Work, or who were set up by others ; as they will from those, chosen either by the particular Interposition of God himself, or by such as he hath commission'd for that very Business. For let but a Man consider with himself, how that God has reveal'd his Will to the World, and constituted an Order of Men, to teach them their Duty in all the various Instances of it, both with regard to what they ought to do, and what not to do ; and to lay before them in the plainest manner the Conditions upon which they are to enjoy his Favour, and to be  
admitted

admitted to Happiness; and that the neglect of coming up to, and complying with those Conditions, shall be the Forfeiture of it, or the exposing themselves to his Indignation and Wrath. Let but a Man consider this, we say, with all that Seriousness and Attention which the Importance of the Matter requires, and it cannot be, but that such a Consideration will naturally engage the Mind, and all the Faculties of it, into a Compliance with his Will, and have all the Effect desir'd upon him.

5. Allowing God's Officers to be of his own Appointment, we from hence see, that all Attempts to deprectate their Character, to vilify their Office, or to maintain its Uselessness; to derogate from the Authority they are vested with for the enforcing the great Duties of Morality upon Mankind, from the Motives of divine Favour or Displeasure; or to call such Authority into Question, with much more to the like Purpose and Effect, so common both in the Mouths and Writings of the Libertines of all Ages; all Attempts, we say, of this Nature and Tendency, will proportionably lessen the good Influences their Doctrines would otherwise

necessarily have, and consequently be attended with very destructive Effects both to Religion and civil Society.

6. If it be objected, that by our way of reasoning, none ought to serve in the Church, but who are thus chose immediately by God himself; such Objectors may please to consider, that it serves all the Ends and Purposes of Religion full as well, if after God has once instituted a Ministry, and proclaim'd the Conditions upon which Men's Admissiõn into it is to be regulated, and at the same time enjoin'd that none be permitted to have any Share in the Administration of ecclesiastical Affairs, who do not answer to those Conditions, and consequently have the Qualifications proper for the discharging of such like Offices. To expect a constant, uninterrupted Interposition of the Deity in the Choice of his Ministers, or in bringing about any other End, is directly contrary to his common Methods of Proceeding, and destructive of that *Order*, and those *settled Rules*, which he has established in the Universe. For this would be fixing and unfixing, and so setting God at Odds with himself. It is sufficient that God leads the way, and acquaints Man-kind



kind how *this* or any *other* End may be obtain'd. As far as we can see into the Constitution of Things, or have any knowledge of the Secrets of Nature, it seems that God has so contriv'd this great Machine of the World, and adjusted the several Parts of it with such a Relation to, and Dependence on each other, that all Events to be accomplished, are generally brought about by the Instrumentality of others, or in Consequence of the working of Second Causes. Tho' as in extraordinary Cases extraordinary Means are necessary, from that Consideration therefore arises the Expediency of the Deity's interposing in an extraordinary Manner. But when God has once given sufficient Instructions about the doing any particular Thing, to expect a constant, future Interposition of himself after this, is to put upon God that Necessity, as a late judicious and learned Writer words it, which common Nature is freed from, *viz.* of multiplying things without sufficient Cause being given for them.

7. Supposing therefore religious Worship to be a Duty, which God by Revelation has enjoin'd his Creatures, and consequently a Church necessary; we have Reasons *à pri-*

*ori* to conclude, that he will appoint, or give Orders for appointing, those who shall preside over, and have the supreme Management of religious Affairs. And thus much with respect to the first.

§. Touching the second we observe, that in Cases not investigable by Reason, or where, amongst a given Number of them, the Preference of one to another is not easily discover'd; the Choice of some particular one or other out of many, is best made by the special Order, or Interposition of the Deity; because the Determination coming from such Authority will be sure to be acquiesced in by all wise Men. And when one, of two or more Things, originally indifferent, is to become Matter of strict religious Observance; among a Number of Men, all free and equal, some would be for *fixing* upon *this*, and some upon *that*, and so they would never come to any Conclusion which would be thought to bind universally, and without Distinction; which of course would be the Parent of great Disorder and Distraction in the World. Nor in Matters of this Nature can the civil Magistrate lay Men under the same and equal Obligations (tho' under Ob-

ligations

ligations he may certainly lay them) with the Deity, to the regular, conscientious Observance of them. Human Authority will never be found so binding, nor will it act with that Strength and Efficacy upon the Minds of thinking, considerate Persons, as divine: Which, by the way, will obviate any Objection that may be made for the Validity of the civil Magistrate's Order with regard to this Particular. And it plainly shews it to be an Instance both of Wisdom and Goodness in God, that as publick Worship was a Duty resulting from our dependent Condition, so, in all extraordinary Manifestations of himself for this Purpose, he would be pleas'd to set apart a certain Proportion of Time for the better and more orderly Performance of this Duty; since Time and Place are necessary to this End. And forasmuch as it lies out of the Reach of the Powers of the human Mind to determine what Space or Portion of Time ought to be expended in the more immediate Service of our Creator, therefore 'tis but fitting that God himself should prescribe it, in order to prevent any Differences that might arise from the Non-Determination of it. It being much more reasonable of the two; that the Ser-

vant should know from his Master what Services he is to pay him, and when and in what Way, than that the Servant should take upon himself to choose those Services, as also the Time when, and the Manner in which he will perform them. And if this be true, and stands with Propriety in the Case betwixt Master and Servant, how much more strongly holds it in respect of the Services due from a Creature to its Creator, the supreme Lord and Governor of the Universe! And what Reason, or the Right of the Case requires should be done, in Fact hath been done in some of those first Revelations God was pleas'd to make of himself to the World. Besides, *uninstructed* Reason could never have discover'd how that the *seventh* Day should have been chose before the *sixth*, since, antecedent to such Command of God's, it could never have been made out that *that* Day was more acceptable to him than the *other*. And therefore, since Reason did not know how to make Choice, or to constitute a Difference betwixt one Day and another (which should be the Ground of strict indispensable Obligation to his Creatures) it pleas'd the great Creator to instruct Reason, by making Choice himself of the seventh Day for the

having

having religious Service done him in. The same holds in respect of the *Jewish* Clergy having a Right to a certain Share of the national Property, in Consideration of their being the Ministers of Religion: Because no Reasons *à priori* can be given why this Part rather than that, the Tenth sooner than the Twelfth, or Eighth, should be set aside for their Maintenance. And therefore we have presumptive Evidence (tho' we were not told it in their History that it actually was so) that their respective Quota's would be mark'd out by God's Appointment, whenever he should be pleased to reveal himself with regard to Matters of this Nature. Whence we see, by the Bye, that Things originally, or in their own Nature indifferent, may become fit Subject-Matters of Men's Obedience, when enjoin'd by a proper, competent Authority; tho' the contrary to this hath been strongly insisted upon.

9. But to see how the Case stands in the *Mosaick* Account of Things before the Delivery of the Law upon Mount *Sinai*, with that surprizing Solemnity which attended the Publication of it to the Children of *Israel*.

10. *Moses*, in the Beginning of his History concerning the Creation, has given us, no

particular Account of any Form of civil or ecclesiastical Policy being establish'd for the Use of the People of this first Age of the World, either by God himself, or agreed upon amongst themselves by common Consent: The Reason undoubtedly must be, that the Number of Families in those Days being but few, and they continually moving from Place to Place in quest of new Settlements, and of the common Necessaries of Life, it became absolutely impracticable for them to form themselves, or to be form'd by others into distinct, particular Societies, either civil or religious. In the second Chapter of his first Book we read indeed, that God appointed the seventh Day (*on which he rested from all the Work that he had done*) to be kept holy to him, that is, he appropriated it to religious Use. And further on we read of *Men calling on the Name of the Lord*; which can be consider'd no other than as a solemn Act of religious Worship, by which they invocated the great Dispenser of all Things, for his granting them the Blessings they wanted, or for averting those Evils they were afraid of; or else by making him their Acknowledgments for the Favours they had receiv'd from him. After the Account  
given

given us of the Flood, of the Motives leading to it, and the Consequences arising from it, we read of Altars being rais'd, Sacrifices offer'd, and Tithes paid: All which evidently shew, that the Practice of raising Altars, of sacrificing, &c. prevail'd in the World long before the Law was given by *Moses*, and consequently could not have its Rise from that Institution. The Question then which naturally offers, is, whence had this Custom its Beginning? Or to what Authority was its first Establishment owing? — Now this Practice of raising Altars, of sacrificing, and paying Tithes, so universally (tho', by the way, this Universality is a good Argument of the contrary, as shall be shewn immediately) prevailing in the World among all sorts of People, hath given Occasion to some to think, that the Patriarchs, and their immediate Descendants, borrow'd it from the Heathens, among whom, by Times, they sojourn'd; and that *Moses*, a cunning, politick Man, and one nearly related to the Priesthood, and consequently desirous of annexing both *Profit* and *Dignity* to it, introduced those Customs into his own Body of Laws, and made 'em a Part of it, tho' pretending at the same time to have had

had them communicated from Heaven to him, and therefore that they were of divine Extraction. Such hath been the Way of Reasoning, to make Men believe that Tithes and Sacrifices were originally of human Appointment only. But that this Argumentation is false, and the Doctrine what ought not to be given into the Belief of, will appear from hence.

II. That an universal Concurrence of Mankind in a Particular, which from the Nature of it afforded no Proof for such Concurrence, is a strong Presumption of its being the Effect of some Interposition of God himself for that Purpose: For this Concurrence being an Effect, and every Effect necessarily requiring a Cause, and this Cause not being to be found either in the Thing itself, or in its Habitudes and Relation to other Things, can be no other than the Sense of a superior Being enjoining such a Practice. For tho' Reason might and (if properly apply'd, and duly improv'd) would teach them, that publick Worship was a Duty, a proper Duty indeed of rational dependent Beings; and that certain Acts, as necessary Circumstances of it, ought to be perform'd, Rites administer'd, and



and Ceremonies observ'd; which Things cannot be done, nor the Offices of Religion executed in such a manner as to obtain those good Effects, which, by being properly apply'd and directed, they are capable of producing, without a Sett of Men being appointed to have the Care and Management of them; and there being no sufficient Inducement for Men to take upon themselves such a Work, without having a proper Maintenance provided for them; and since natural Reason could never inform them, that *one* Part rather than *another*, *this* sooner than *that*, should be assign'd for this Use: Therefore a Thing of such general Indifferency could never become Matter of so strict and universal an Observance, as the Payment of Tithes ever has been, unless it receiv'd its binding Force and Efficacy from some positive Command or Institution of the Creator.

12. It would be needless here to go about to prove the Authority of *Moses*, as a divine Prophet, or that he writ his five Books by Inspiration, or immediate Communication from God himself, but we shall proceed upon Supposition of the Truth of that History, since

since we write in a Christian Country, and to a Christian People; who, therefore, in common Equity, must be allow'd to admit of *Moses's* acting by a divine Commission, and in Virtue of it. However, if the Reader is desirous of seeing *Moses's* Character in this respect fully made out, and prov'd, let him consult the incomparable Author of the *Divine Legation of Moses demonstrated*, who has placed *Moses's* Pretensions in such a Light, and shewn both the Truth and Reasonableness of them in so ample and convincing a Manner, that they stand establish'd beyond all Contradiction. Whoever reads this sacred Historian, cannot deny but that God reveal'd himself to Mankind in a very extraordinary Way; that in those extraordinary Communications of his Will, 'tis likely he deliver'd a Collection of religious Rites, Customs and Ordinances, to be by them observ'd, and handed down to future Generations: some of which, most probably, afterwards came to be inserted into *Moses's* Catalogue of Laws, and made a Part of it, tho' no Account be any-where given either as to the Time when, or the Reasons upon which they were commanded. Thus, for Instance, we read,

read,

read, that *Noah* sacrific'd, *Gen.* Chap. viii. Ver. 20, 21; and that God was well-pleas'd with his doing of it: He must be pleas'd therefore, either upon the Account of the *inherent* Worth, or *natural* Acceptableness of Sacrifices, or else because they were performed in Obedience to some Command or other of his; Reason not being able to assign any other Ground, excepting those two, for such an Approbation of them. But they were approv'd, not for the sake of any natural Acceptableness of theirs, since we may justly defy the greatest Sticklers for Reason to shew us any such natural Worth or Acceptableness in them. We must conclude therefore, that he was pleas'd, because they were done in Consequence of some Command or Injunction of his. But we find no Mention any-where made, as to the particular Time when *God* instituted Sacrifices. We must be forc'd to conclude therefore, that they, and in all Likelihood many other Practices (since their Origin can no other ways be accounted for) were the Effects of God's immediate Communication, or else some certain Parts of the original Revelation suppos'd to be given to *Adam* in his first

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Intercourse with the supreme Being, and deliver'd down from one to another by Tradition.

13. *Cain* and *Abel*, the two first Brothers we have any Account of, are said to have follow'd two different Occupations or Employments; the one a Tiller of the Ground, the other a Feeder of Flocks. At a certain Time, each of them brought an Offering to the Lord of the Fruits of his respective Labour. God is said to have had Regard to the one, but not to the other. We ask, whence could arise this Difference? Why was one prefer'd to the other? Let us view the Matter all we can by natural Light, and *Cain's* Offering will appear every way as acceptable in itself as *Abel's* does; or rather the more acceptable, as his was an Offering without Blood; the other's not so, but at the Expence of the Life of an Animal. Supposing therefore, Offerings, Sacrifices, &c. were of Nature's dictating; or that *Cain* and *Abel* were under full Convictions from Reason, that it was their Duty to make those Kinds of Acknowledgments, as being the Marks and Indications of a grateful Mind to the great Disposer of all Things, they must,

must, under this Notion of them, claim an equal Acceptance from him ; because, in this View, each are suppos'd to act in Consequence of a Sense of Duty, and therefore both equally deserving of divine Favour and Regard. Allowing then those Acts of theirs to have had their Rise from human Reason, and the one could not possibly have been accepted preferably to the other. Sacrifices, Offerings, and all sorts of Oblations, therefore, must suppose a divine Revelation, and therefore a divine Command, a *ready* and *willing* Obedience to which was the Ground of *Abel's* Merit in that particular Act : consequently, *Cain's* Fault must lie in his *unwilling* Compliance with the divine Command, or his obeying it *grudgingly*, and not from the *Heart*.

14. It is proper to take Notice, that Sacrifices not being found by Reason to have any sort of Connection with the Forgiveness of Offences, has been made use of to shew that they could never have had their Appointment from a Being of infinite Wisdom and Goodness, Qualities which are ever ascrib'd to the first great Cause of all Things : But that sacrificing being a gainful Trade,  
and

and what brought in much Profit to the Priests, was altogether an Invention of theirs. But to this, we presume, the Answer is ready, *viz.* that our not being able to see into the Reason of any Appointment, can be no Argument that such Appointment had not its Origin from a proper, lawful Authority, and may serve some grand Purpose or Design; otherwise we make the human Capacity in its present State adequate to, and comprehensive of all Possibles. A Pretension, the greatest Advocates for human Abilities dare not, we presume, lay any sort of Claim to. For, to use the Words, as near as we can remember them, of a very ingenious Writer; “ In a System, whose Parts are infinitely relative to each other, a Mind that sees not infinitely, can see nothing clearly.” The same, with equal Propriety, may be said of a Number of Revelations given successively to the World, all relative to each other, and making one entire *Scheme*, or grand *Oeconomy*, the several Parts of which were drawn out, and communicated at different times to Mankind, according as the Circumstances of Things would give Leave. For who can pronounce either for, or against

gainst the Fitness and Expediency of any of those Parts, or of the *Credenda* and *Agenda* of those Doctrines and Institutions which they contain, without being acquainted with the Dependency of them upon each other? And who can explore the Depths of infinite Wisdom in all the various Methods of Government God is pleased to make use of in regard to his Creatures? How he accommodates himself, in all Revelations of his Will to Mankind, to their Capacities of taking Things? directs his Dispensations, and conducts all Events, in a manner perfectly suited to the Circumstances they are in? Or what Knowledge less than infinite can declare the Dependence and Relation which all the Parts of this grand Oeconomy of God's bear to each other? How they successively tend to one Point, admirably support one another, and are contriv'd, by the Use of various intermediate Means, to lead Men *insensibly* from Type to Antitype, from carnal to spiritual, from Things temporal to Things eternal? But to proceed:

15. As to the other Part of the Objection, which would make Sacrifices to be an Invention of the Priests, upon account of the

Benefits they brought in to them, it needs no other Confutation but what may be drawn from the very Principle on which such Objection is grounded, *viz.* the private Interest of the Priests: for, if those were such a cunning Sett of People, and so well skill'd in the Arts of draining Money from the Laity, as these Men would make us believe; they would, 'tis presum'd, have contriv'd Ways and Means more profitable and less laborious than the Practice of sacrificing. For the killing, and offering of Sacrifices, were always, and with very great Reason, deem'd painful and laborious Services. And the Redemption of the first-born of all the Families in *Israel*, who must have undertook this Work, had not the Tribe of *Levi* been substituted in their Room, seems to imply (and really does so) as much as this. Let it be observ'd further, that if Sacrifices were a Piece of Priest-Craft, because of a lucrative Nature, whence comes it that they were so universal? Did the Priests of all Nations meet together, and agree amongst themselves to impose on the People in this Particular? Such a Convention was absolutely impossible. Besides, if Sacrifices were the Ef-

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fect of human Contrivance solely, the Plot, by some Means or other, would have taken Air, and the Cheat have been discover'd: For it cannot be, but that some of the *holy Tribe* would have taken Disgust at something or other, or have thought themselves affronted upon certain Occasions by some of their Fraternity, who, to shew a suitable Repentment, would not fail to have laid open the whole Scheme of Priestly Policy and Invention, but greedily and with Pleasure have embrac'd such an Opportunity. This always was the Case of every *designing* Body of Men, and ever will be, whilst there is such a Body in the World, that is, of such who make the Good of others the *pretended*, but their own private Interest the *true* and *sole* End of their Pursuits.

16. From the Wisdom and Goodness of God, which, considered as acting in Conjunction, or jointly influencing the Deity in his Dealings with his Creatures, denotes his pursuing the best End, *viz.* their Happiness, by the best Means; from the Wisdom and Goodness of God, we say, we have the strongest Assurances to conclude, that his Design in revealing himself to Mankind, in those first and early Ages of the World, was

for their Instruction in Things which affected their Happiness and Well-Being in some part or other of their Existence. Consequently, all his Laws, Precepts, &c. must have some sort of Reference to this End; tho' such Reference might not then be capable of being discover'd by them. And as Religion is confessedly a Matter of such vast Importance to Man's safe and comfortable Continuance in Being, thro' every Period of his Existence, so, it is certain, that a great Part of those Precepts, Ordinances, &c. must relate to divine Worship, and the manner in which several Acts, as Circumstances of it, ought to be perform'd; to the Institution of certain religious Rites, Customs, &c. the Observance of which should *by degrees* lead them on forwards, and train them up so, as that they shall necessarily, by this Means, acquire such a Nature, *i. e.* such Habits of Mind, as would render them worthy of the divine Regard, and fitly dispos'd for the Reception of those Communications of Goodness, which it was proper for him to bestow, and suitable for Creatures in their Circumstances to receive. And notwithstanding his dealing thus with his Creatures, it might so  
happen,

happen, that the Connection of one as *Means* with the other as an *End*, could not be trac'd out, neither might it be in the Intention of our Creator that it should: But for certain momentous Reasons he left it to future Ages to discover, the better to display those illustrious Marks of Wisdom which all the Parts of God's Oeconomy are big with, some of which, probably, may be found out in one Period or other of that Progression, which Religion, as well as other Arts and Sciences, is ever found to have made, from the Creation of the World down to the present times, and which will continue to be carried on in the same manner to future Ages, by slow and easy, tho' not perhaps always by regular Steps and Gradations, which Progression may be for the most part imperceptible, and many times broke into, and discontinued, by that Confusion and Embarras which the Mixture of opposite Causes, and incompatible Interests ever brings into the World.

17. The Matter may be plac'd and view'd in the following Light. God, 'tis probable, enjoin'd the raising of Altars, the use of Sacrifices, the Payment of Tithes, with many other religious Rites, in some of the first

Revelations of his Will to Mankind ; and made his Favour or Displeasure the necessary Consequence of their Compliance with, or Neglect of them. For his Favour or Displeasure will ever follow the Observance or Non-observance of such Actions as he hath commanded ; and they receiving those Customs, Rites and Institutions at his Hands, took Care (as containing Matters of a general Significancy or Concern) to instruct their Children, their Friends, their Servants, and all other their Dependents in them ; and enforce'd an Obedience to them upon such Motives and Considerations as had the most natural Aptitude at that time to incline their Minds, and produce a Conformity of Action to them. And many of those continually shifting from one Place to another in search of new Habitations, the Practice of raising Altars, of Sacrificing, tho' in different manners, and apply'd to different, and (sometimes) contrary Objects of Worship, became, by this Means, to prevail over the whole Earth. Tho' in Process of Time, those religious Notions, Customs, &c. were in a Manner quite lost, in the Multitude of Additions which Men made of their own to them ; or were so  
wrapt

wrapt up in Fable and Allegory, that the true original ones could not be trac'd out and ascertain'd. Whence 'tis reasonable to conclude, that the various kinds of Sacrifices, as practis'd by the Heathens, under the Notion of Means of Atonement, will, if trac'd up to their first Foundation and Settlement, be found (tho' much deprav'd and alter'd from what they were in their original Institution) to be deriv'd from the *Hebrews*, to whom they had been deliver'd in the first Ages of the World, by God's particular Communication. For Sacrifices were always us'd by the Antients, either as Means of placating their Gods, and averting their Wrath; or else of obtaining some special Favour, or the like; that is, they were look'd upon as proper Means to render the Gods propitious to them. Tho' natural Reason could never have discover'd that they had any Connection with this End. And Means, which in their natural Tendency or Operation have no sort of Connection with the End propos'd of their Appointment, Reason could never have been the Author of; but consequently they must have had their Origin from some posi-

tive Law or Command of that Being, who instituted them for such Purposes.

18. With some it has been an Opinion (and an Opinion obstinately defended) that *Abraham* first carry'd the Doctrine of the Being of a God and Providence down along with him into *Egypt*, whose Inhabitants till this time were utterly void of all Sense of the Superintendence of a superior Power, and consequently had no sorts of religious Rites, Customs, &c. in Use amongst them, before they were taught them by this Father of the *Faithful*; which Rites, Customs and other religious Notions, they by their future Converse with the Patriarchs, especially *Joseph*, who resided a considerable time amongst them, had Opportunities both to enlarge and improve. But that this is a Mistake, is, we presume, demonstrable from hence, *viz.* that at the Time of *Abraham's* going into *Egypt*, a civil Policy was already established there; and such a civil Policy in truth it was, as clearly bespoke both the Institutors and Conductors of it to be well-skill'd in the Arts of Legislation, and in all the Methods of improving a growing State: And which, considering the slow and easy, but

but gradual Advance, which Arts and Sciences ever make in their progressive State, must have been for a long Tract of Time in arriving to that Perfection in which we find it at this Period of their civil Government. For we are told in holy Writ, “ that the Princes  
 “ of *Pharaoh* also saw her (*Abraham’s* Wife)  
 “ and commended her before *Pharaoh*; and  
 “ the Woman was taken into *Pharaoh’s*  
 “ House.” By which we are given to understand, that *Pharaoh’s* Court was both splendid and luxurious, the genuine Effect of much Wealth and Opulence; and consequently a demonstrative Proof, that all kinds of Arts and Trades were in a flourishing Condition at the time of *Abraham’s* Entrance into *Egypt*. And if there was a civil Policy at this Time in *Egypt*, then must there be some Religion profess’d in common by the Members of that political Society: Because no civil Policy ever was either fram’d at first, or supported afterwards, but by the concurring Aid and Assistance of Religion. It is impossible both in Reason and Fact that it should be otherwise. The Question then is, how came the *Egyptians*, as also all other Nations, first by their religious Notions? were they of Reason’s

son's finding out? Or had they them handed down from one to another by Tradition? 'Tis impossible that their Discovery should be owing to Reason, or any Effect of the Operation of that Principle in its Searches after Truth. Because Reason, if once set to Work and properly apply'd, would have directed them (if it could be suppos'd to have directed them at all, to a Scheme of religious Worship, more perfect in its Kind, than any that is to be found, either in *Egypt*, or in any other of the politeſt and moſt civiliz'd Heathen Nations. The many ridiculous and abſurd Rites and Ceremonies with which their Religion was conſtantly clogg'd, and the Falſhoods and Inconſiſtencies which were known to abound even in the ſouder Parts of Paganism, were both too numerous and too groſs to be the Productions of Reason. What Reason in any Age could have diſcovered, would not have been ſo irrational. When indeed thoſe Abſurdities, by the Concurrence of certain Cauſes, came to be incorporated into their Religion, and compos'd the greateſt Part of it, by being of popular Belief, then was Reason many times call'd in to hide them from the Sight of inquisitive Explorers,



Explorers, by the Addition of others made to them. And thus it constantly fared with Paganism. As soon as one Falshood was likely to be detected, so surely was another invented to hide it; till, in many Places, the Superstructure growing, by this Means, too heavy for the Foundation to bear, it tumbled down of itself, fell to Pieces, and expos'd to the naked Eye a whole Heap of Absurdities, which it was no longer in the Power of the ablest Advocates to conceal. Not but that the wise and better Sort of Pagans, both saw, and in Secret confess'd and lamented those Absurdities, Falshoods and Inconsistencies, with which their Religion was all over-stuff'd, tho' upon account of the People's inveterate Prejudices, and inviolable Attachments to their particular favourite Systems of Superstition, they durst neither exhibit them to open View, nor consequently attempt a Reform of them. The common Opinion in all Ages having been, that to innovate in Matters of Religion, would necessarily be the Parent of much Distraction and Confusion to civil Society; Mankind in all Ages ever holding their religious Rights, Institutions, &c. in equal Esteem with, or rather of much greater Importance than their civil ones. 19. To

19. To the above we shall adjoin the following Extract from a late Author, whose Words are as follows: “ How then can Reason, *says he*, be the Origin of Religion, since it has neither Consent, nor Practice, nor a direct Knowledge of any one Truth? Yet all those Difficulties are removed, by allowing that divine Things were originally taught by Revelation, the Notices whereof passing by oral Tradition only, in Process of Time became so alter’d and obscur’d, that Mankind had lost the true Apprehensions of Things, and could not recover the clear Knowledge of them without a supernatural Assistance. And this occasioned those lame imperfect Accounts of God and Providence, the Soul’s Immortality, and a future State.”

20. We cannot but conclude therefore, that the religious Notions, Customs, &c. in Use among the *Egyptians*, as among all other Heathen Nations, before the Institution of civil Government, were either (though suffering Alterations in greater or less Degrees) Parts of, or deriv’d from certain Precepts contain’d in those first and early Revelations God made of himself to Mankind;  
and

and afterwards convey'd from one to another by Tradition. Whence came it then, that the Object of Worship, or rather the Idea of him, with the Rites, Ceremonies, &c. which, as Circumstances of it, attended religious Worship, suffered such great and monstrous Corruptions? The following Causes may, probably, with some Persons be thought to account for the Reasons of them.

21. *1<sup>st</sup>*, Oral Tradition, from the very Nature of it, is liable to great and various Corruptions. It is as true as it is a common Observation, that a Story always gets by telling. It is, as it were, natural to Man to add to a Relation. Additions therefore, of Course, will be made to Facts transmitted from one to another by Tradition. And this seems to be the first and most natural Source of Corruption. And to this accumulating (if we may be allow'd the Expression) Spirit or Disposition in Man, may we, with great Probability, ascribe many of those strange, those odd Tales so frequently told about the Pagan Gods; some of which, indeed, were of such an extravagant Sort and Size, as required an uncommon Kind of Taste to let them go freely down.

22. *2<sup>dly</sup>*,

22. *2dly*, It is of the Effence of a finite limited Being to have its Powers and Qualities of a changeable, perishing Nature; and consequently, subject to great Uncertainties and Fluctuations in the several Periods of its Existence. No Wonder then if the Memory, in common with the other Faculties of the Mind, be indispos'd at certain Junctures to discharge its proper Functions; that is, it cannot always retain the Idea of any Object or Event long together, but is either apt to forget some Circumstance or other, which should be attendant on it, as making a Part of it; or else to cloath it with some new Attribute or Property not belonging to it in its proper, original Existence. The Memory, therefore, is but an imperfect Store-house, as it is crowded with an almost infinite Number of Ideas arising from the Action of external Objects upon the Organs of Sense; the Memory, we say, as at present circumstanc'd, is but a sort of an imperfect Store-house for the Reception of Facts to be lodg'd in it, to be call'd out, and review'd there at times, when the Mind shall have Occasion for the Use of them, unless such Facts shall be sometimes repeated,

peated, in order to make the Impreffions caused by them more firm and laſting, or to prevent the Addition of other Circumſtances of Things and Perſons being made to them.

23. *3dly*, We took Notice above, that, notwithstanding Men's great Improvement in moral and religious Science, it was ſtill found neceſſary, that their Opinions concerning the Being and Attributes of God, his governing the World by his Providence, and the like, be drawn up after the Manner of a Creed; or, in other Words, that a Formulary of Faith, or Scheme of religious Worſhip, to be profeſſed in common by every Individual, ſhould be agreed upon, and eſta bliſh'd by common Conſent; the better to prevent the contrary and oppoſite Characters of Infidelity and Superſtition from mixing with them. And if it was judg'd neceſſary in thoſe enlighten'd Times (when Arts and Sciences of all Kinds had made ſuch a conſiderable Proſiciency) to make this Proviſion, how much more ſo muſt it have been in the firſt rude and uncultivated Ages of the World, when Men had ſcarce begun to emerge out of that  
State

State of Barbarism and Ignorance, which had on all Sides so closely beset them! But such a Provision as this was impossible in Fact to be made in those Days. And for this plain Reason, that Letters were not yet in Being, nor consequently the Use and Benefit of them known; which, humanly speaking, were the only probable Means of preserving a Matter of Fact entirely free from Corruption: For, supposing God to have revealed himself with regard to the Observance of certain Rites and Ceremonies, or to the Performance of certain particular Acts, and in a certain particular Manner; there seems to be no way of conveying down the Matter of such Revelation to future Times, but either by written Records, or in Case of Failure of them, by a further Manifestation of his Will, with respect to such particular Points, when either the Characters of the former Revelation were effaced out of Men's Minds, or, which generally happen'd, when such Additions had been made to the Things reveal'd at different Times, sometimes to serve private Views, but commonly, and for the most Part, out of unavoidable Ignorance; when such Additions,

ditions, we say, had been made to the Matter of the former Revelation, or the Facts contain'd in it, that the true and found could not be distinguish'd from the false and fictitious Parts, and so the first Original could not be trac'd out and discover'd. And here both sacred and profane History comes in opportunely to confirm our Account of this matter. For after all our Enquiries, we shall not be able to find any People upon the Face of the Earth, with whom the Notions of a Deity, and of his Administration, were preserv'd distinct and just, excepting those to whom God was pleas'd to reveal himself successively for that very Purpose. 'Tis likely all other Nations had gradually corrupted their religious Notions in the Way and Manner before-mentioned; and particularly for the want of written Records; which, as standing Monuments of the Things reveal'd, would have preserv'd the Memorial of them to future Generations.

24. Another Cause, equally concurring with the other before-mentioned, to corrupt Men's religious Notions, was the want of Leisure to attend to them with that Seriousness and Composure of Mind, which the

Importance of the Matter required. For, without frequent Attention had to any particular Object, either the Idea of it will be obliterated, or other Circumstances of Things and Persons will most probably mix with it, by which Means it becomes quite different from what it formerly was, and will accordingly be so consider'd by those who view it. In those early Ages of the World, when few or no Improvements had been made in any Trade, or Branch of Business, Man's whole Time, Thought, and Labour would be employ'd in furnishing himself and Family with the Necessaries of Life. For Lands and Houses, and other Materials of an earthly Subsistence, did not in those Days, as they now do in ours, descend from one to another by Inheritance; but every one found it difficult enough to provide for himself, and for the Wants of those whom Providence had put under his more particular Care and Protection. In such Cases, what Progress could be expected in Matters of Religion? Or rather, would not Ignorance keep gradually growing upon them, with respect to those Points, till such time as their Notions of a Deity were either in a manner wholly absorb'd, or, which was

gene-



generally the Fact, quite alter'd from those which were originally revealed from Heaven to them? We all of us know, that to make any considerable Proficiency in *this*, or *that* particular Kind of Science, necessarily supposes good natural Abilities, and a proper Application of them, which all are as sensible can never suit with the Condition of those whose Time is wholly taken up in directing all their Powers of Thought and Action to other Purposes, and in Pursuit of other and different Ends. Under such Circumstances, therefore, 'tis likely that all kinds of religious Truths, Customs, &c. handed down from one to another by Tradition, should rather be corrupted, or incline to the opposite Extremes, either of Atheism or Superstition, than carry'd to greater Lengths of Refinement and Perfection.

25. “ When the first Planters of the  
 “ World, (*says the last quoted Author*) had  
 “ forgot every thing of the God of their  
 “ Forefathers, but the Name of such a Be-  
 “ ing; had no Instructors but the Painting  
 “ of the Fields, the Flowing of the Sea, the  
 “ Motions of the Heavens, and the Reflexi-  
 “ ons they could make upon themselves;

“ their Time consum’d in the necessary Toil  
“ of clearing the Ground, and making Pro-  
“ vision for a miserable Support: Thousands  
“ of Years must have pass’d before they  
“ could have formed such a Body of Phi-  
“ losophy, and Knowledge of the Works of  
“ God, as thence to infer the Necessity of  
“ his Existence, or the Perfections of his  
“ Nature. And why may we not conclude,  
“ that if God had not made a Revelation,  
“ they would never have reason’d, nor  
“ thought of him at all; since, notwith-  
“ standing the Stock of Knowledge they  
“ once had, they could not retain in their  
“ Mind any just Notions of him, but turn’d  
“ them into a Lie, Figments, and Fables  
“ of their own Invention? And when  
“ Knowledge again increased in the World,  
“ the very Contemplation of visible Things  
“ fix’d their Admiration there, and hinder’d  
“ their Ascent to the Author and Maker of  
“ them.” See a Book intitled, *The Know-  
ledge of divine Things from Revelation, not  
from Reason or Nature.* Tho’, in Truth,  
the Author seems to have too much cry’d  
down the Use of Reason in Matters of Re-  
ligion, as being of little or no Service to  
Man

Man in his Searches after Things relating either to his temporal or eternal Interest. The contrary to which is evident in every Day's Experience. Witness the noble Discoveries which have been made in all Parts of Philosophy, and the glorious Progress which Arts and Sciences of all sorts have made towards greater Degrees of Perfection, by the Assistance of this truly divine Faculty or Power. But, to go on with our Subject :

26. The first Gods that were worshipp'd under material sensible Forms, were the Sun, Moon, and other heavenly Bodies. The Effects which those Luminaries, particularly that great and principal one, the Sun, had upon this Mundane System, were visible to the Eye of the most careless Observer, if he observ'd any thing at all. It was seen to be primarily concern'd in the Production of many of the Things here upon Earth ; and that the whole, or most of them, were preserv'd in Life and Motion with its vital Heat and Influence. By its kind, benign Aspects the Fruits of the Earth took Root, grew up, ripen'd, and became fit for the Use of Man ; and with its Assistance Men's

Labours were further'd, and they enabled to taste and enjoy the Products of them; or rather, Men's Care and Industry, and the Pains they took to get a Livelihood, would, without its Concurrence, have been abortive, and of no Significancy. 'Tis to its all-enlivening and animating Influence that Men are indebted for a comfortable Continuance in Being. And the other heavenly Bodies would as naturally come in for a Share of Adoration, proportion'd to their supposed Efficacy in bringing the Fruits of the Earth to Perfection. The first Species of Idolatry then that prevail'd in the World was, most probably, Planet-Worship.

27. One Means, among others, that led Men to worship their Gods in bodily Shapes, and at last ended in the easy Reception of Image-Worship, probably might be the extreme Difficulty of framing an Idea of a purely spiritual Nature, and of dwelling long upon the Contemplation of it. It was found a painful Task for the Mind to withdraw herself entirely from all material Considerations, and to fix her Attention upon a Being devoid of Sense and Matter. Abstraction is not the proper Work of low, groveling,

ling, and uncultivated Understandings. To confess the Truth, notwithstanding the Advantages to be gather'd from the Writings of the most improv'd Reason, and the Benefit to be had from the last and most perfect Revelation of the Will of God to Mankind; notwithstanding these Assistances, we say, if many, in those Times, were ask'd what their Idea of God was, they would be found to have very gross and absurd Conceptions of him, and apt to cloath him with a corporeal Nature, with Flesh and Blood, and Organs of Sense like themselves. And accordingly, as they us'd themselves to contemplate, and represent the divine Nature in their Minds by a visible Form or Figure; so, by Degrees, they would begin to worship the divine Being under a visible Mark or Representation, till at last the Adoration of the Thing *represented* ended in that of the Thing *representing*.

28. But to satisfy the Reader's Curiosity, who, probably, wants to be better acquainted with the several distinct Species of Idolatry that prevail'd in the Heathen World; whence they had their Rise, and what the Occasion of it; and how, in Course, they

succeeded each other; we would refer him to that incomparable Performance above-mentioned, *the divine Legation of Moses demonstrated*, where he will find that excellent Author to have describ'd, with great Justness and Propriety, the Nature and Properties of the several kinds of religious Worship in use among the Heathens; and the different Sources from whence each of them flow'd, and how naturally one introduc'd another.

29. Supposing it should be ask'd, if religious Notions were liable to so many and such great Corruptions, whence came it that, after such a Number of Changes and Alterations made in it, the Idea of God came not to be intirely eras'd out of Men's Minds? But, on the contrary, we find, that there never was any Nation upon the Earth but what had some Sense, some Notion of a superior, all-governing Principle, differing indeed in different Countries, according as Men have been taught to conceive differently of such a Being. In Answer to this we may observe, that when once the Sense of a superior, animadverting Power, which first made, and afterwards preserves them in  
their

their Existences, has taken Possession of Men's Minds, it naturally excites there a sort of religious Awe and Reverence towards such a Being. For what we are necessarily dependent on, as to what we are, and as to what we have, such an one we are as necessarily dispos'd to fear, and to stand in Awe of, and to please him by all the various Methods of acting that we judge agreeable to him, and in our Power to observe. And tho' such Sense be corrupted by the abovemention'd Ways and Means, or in a manner quite different from any that has been already assign'd; yet such Corruption, instead of abating, does really, and in Fact, both heighten and inflame this religious Zeal and Reverence. For corrupt Religion, or Religion mix'd with Superstition, is ever found, in Proportion to the Degrees of such Mixture, to possess its Votaries with a kind of religious Phrenzy and Madness. Agreeably to this, we read in Scripture of *Baal's Prophets leaning upon the Altar which was made, and cutting themselves with Knives and Lancets after their Manner, till the Blood gushed out upon them.* All which must be supposed to be done in

Honour

Honour of the Gods they worshipp'd. A sure Sign that they were seiz'd with the abovementioned Distemper.

30. The Conclusion we would draw from this Digression, which we have been led into, is, that all the Religion which was in the World before the Institution of political Societies, was derived from those Revelations which God has been pleas'd to make to *Noah* and his Descendants, and by them communicated to their Children, and so convey'd down from one to another by oral Tradition. That a Revelation therefore there has been, or rather a successive Series of Revelations, with respect to religious Truths, Notions, and Customs, seems to be abundantly evident; tho' we may be in the dark, either as to the Time when, or the Occasion upon which each was given. For sure we are that they can be deriv'd from no other Source. But to return to the *Mosaick* Account of Things.

31. The principal Part of *Moses's* second Book is taken up in giving a Detail, and furnishing out a sort of History of the many surprizing Signs and Wonders that were wrought, and of the sundry kinds of Plagues brought



brought upon *Pharaoh* and his People, as a proper Punishment for his refusing, Time after Time (when solemnly call'd upon to do it) thro' a Spirit of Obstinacy, the *Israelites* to go and do Sacrifice to the God of their Fathers in the Wilderness. After they had obtain'd Leave of *Pharaoh* to depart out of *Egypt*, *Moses* goes on to shew how the Lord conducted them on in their Journey; He going before them by Day in a Pillar of a Cloud, to lead them the Way; and by Night in a Pillar of Fire, to give them Light. And when he had brought them in this manner to the *Red Sea*, how he then divided the Waters, so as to be a Wall on the right-hand and on the left, till they had pass'd securely over; and how *Pharaoh* and his Host were drowned in their Pursuit after them. The Book proceeds, in the next Place, to shew how *Moses* was taken up into the Mount; had the two Tables of Stone, with the ten Commandments engraven on them by the Finger of God, deliver'd to him; how God spoke to him Face to Face, and, in this Interview, he received from him the necessary Orders for making the Tabernacle, the Ark, the Mercy-Seat, with the Cheru-  
bims,

bims, the Tables, the Altar of Incense, &c. with other Things of the same or like Nature, till we come to the 28th Chapter, where it, and most of the remaining Part of this Book, with a great deal of the three following ones, are, in a great measure, taken up in giving an Account of the Institution of the *Jewish* Priesthood; describing the Manner of *Aaron* and his Sons Consecration, the holy Garments, the *Urim* and *Thummim*, and the Difference betwixt a Prophecy utter'd by the Judgment of *Urim* and *Thummim*, and that which was utter'd by an ordinary Prophet; the Distinction and Division of the *Levites*; their proper Offices and Employments; the Ephod, the Breast-Plate, the Rites and Ceremonies of the Sacrificature, and an Account of the whole religious Service of the *Jewish* Church; here *Moses* is full and particular, and speaks to all those Points with the greatest Propriety and Exactness.

32. Such a Procedure is so far from being inconsistent with our Ideas of infinite Wisdom and Goodness, (Attributes essentially belonging to the divine Nature) that it is no more than what might be reasonably expected.

expected from a Being of such absolute Perfection in so extraordinary a Manifestation of himself: For since nothing can keep the Mind so steddily attach'd to the Cause of Virtue, as the Sense of a Being who will reward such a Conduct with an Over-Balance of Pleasure to what, either upon Apprehension, or in Reality, can flow from the contrary Course of acting; and who will punish all Disobedience to his Will with a Degree of Misery superior in Fact to the Pleasure resulting from the Gratification of any vicious Appetite whatsoever: And since such a Sense of God, and of his Administration, can no ways be preserv'd in Men's Minds in a Degree suited to be a Principle of Action in rational sensible Beings, but by religious Worship; and since religious Worship cannot be performed *so* as to obtain its intended End, without a suitable Provision being made for this very Purpose; so we find *in Fact*, that God, ever consulting his Creatures Happiness in the best manner possible, at the same time that he reveal'd himself in so extraordinary a manner to *Moses*, did himself appoint a Church, and set apart a Number of Men to be Officers in it, who

who, consequently, were to have the Management of those Matters wholly in their own Hands, and to give up themselves to them. For we find, that *Aaron* and his Sons were, by his express Order, separated for holy Uses, that is, to attend the Offices of Religion : And this Separation of *Aaron* and his Sons was not only a Separation from the rest of the *Israelites*, but also from the Body of *Levites* in general, who had their several Ministrations *at first* about the Tabernacle, and *afterwards* in the Temple. And as they had distinct, particular Offices, so their Appointment to those Offices was by a distinct, particular Consecration ; and by the putting on, and wearing of certain Robes and Garments peculiar to their respective Functions, and the Business each had to do : All which are describ'd at large in the Eighth Chapter of *Numbers*. And the Rights and Exercise of the Priesthood being, by God's immediate Command, limited to the Tribe of *Levi*, from the Time of this Appropriation of theirs, that Tribe became exempted from all Business of a secular Nature, that they might have nothing to interrupt them in the Discharge of the Duties of their

their Calling. And this falls in entirely with what we have proved in the second Section of Part the first, concerning Church-Officers, the Nature of their Employ, and the proper End of their Appointment. And thus Reason and Matter of Fact mutually aid and support each other.

33. As it makes no Part of our present Design, to enumerate all the different Ranks of the Priests of this Nation, together with their distinct Offices and Employments, and the Qualifications necessary for performing the Duties of them; so, omitting those, we shall pass on to other Things, only taking Notice first, that as no *Levite*, till the Age of twenty-five Years and upwards, was to be admitted to wait upon the Service of the Tabernacle of the Congregation; so, at the Age of fifty Years, they were allow'd the Liberty of retiring from this Service. By which wise Contrivance it was provided, that as on the one hand none should be taken into those Offices till they were of Age and Abilities fitted to perform the Duties of them; so, on the other hand, that in Consideration of Years growing upon them, and Men's Strength accordingly failing them, their constant

stant Attendance upon those laborious Ministrations (for such those of the Sacrificature really were) likewise then ceased, and were at an End.

34. From the Account now given we may safely conclude, that the *Jewish* Church had, from its first Erection, a standing Ministry; and that none were permitted to serve in holy Things but the *Levites*, separated on purpose from the rest of their Brethren for this very Business. Which, by the way, fully establishes our Doctrine of the Nature and Properties of a religious Society, as explained above, *viz.* that every such Society must have a Body of Men constituted to preside over, and have the Administration of religious Matters committed to them.

35. It would detain the Reader too long to have an Account delivered him of the several Kinds of Tithes which were by the express Order and Nomination of God himself appropriated for the Levites Use. Besides those, they had a Right in many of the various sorts of Offerings that were made, as also other Allowances, that were declared to be their Due by God's particular Appointment. We shall only observe, that all those

Appropriations in their Favour, if consider'd and attended to by us, sufficiently shew the Greatness of God's Love and Kindness to those who are peculiarly, and in a more eminent manner employ'd in his Service, and whose proper Business it is to officiate at the Altar. For, had he not a more than ordinary Care and Tenderneſs for them, he would never have made ſuch an ample Provision for them of the good Things of this Life, and in a way ſo eaſy and commodious to them; and declar'd his Abhorrence of the Fact in ſuch ſtrong Terms, and the Vengeance he would take of thoſe who are guilty of it, that is, of ſuch who would deprive them of their Right in ſuch Things as God had aſſign'd for their Maintenance, by aſſuring us, that every Indignity offer'd to their Perſons, or Injury to their Characters, and Encroachments made upon their Properties, he ſhould ever look upon to be the ſame as an Affront offer'd to himſelf, and who would reſent it accordingly.

36. That the Officers of the *Jewiſh* Church made uſe of publick Forms in their Devotions, and ſuch like religious Exerciſes, is evident to every one that will but turn to the

sixth Chapter of *Numbers*, where he will find God himself, in the twenty-third Verse, setting down the very Form of Words with which the Priests were commanded to bless the People. And one of their Writers tells us, that they [the *Jews*] had a publick Liturgy, Set-Forms of Prayer, &c. supposed, as he says, to be drawn up by that famous Scribe *Ezra*, with the Assistance of the great Senate, consisting of one hundred and twenty Elders; and that those Forms were in Number eighteen, which he enumerates there in their Order, with the Subject-Matter they contain'd.

37. As to Subscription, it could be of no Significancy at all in the *Jewish* Church; for all their religious Rites and Ceremonies, their Laws and Institutes, even to the minutest Circumstance relating to them, were drawn up by God himself; and thus digested and reduc'd into Form and Order, were deliver'd by him to the *Jews*. And therefore whilst this System, respecting their religious Service, was adhered to and follow'd, Subscription could be of no Use; therefore not necessary. And the Reason is, that those carrying their own Evidence along  
with



with them, and consequently Conviction, there could be no Room for requiring Men's Assent in the Way of Subscription, which always supposes Probability, more or less, but not Certainty. For whoever desires me to subscribe to any single Proposition, or to a Number of Propositions, desires, of Course, my Assent to such Proposition, or Propositions, as appearing to me upon probable Evidence to be true. And the Degrees of Assent will ever be stronger, or weaker, in Proportion as the Evidence on which the Proposition or Propositions rest, is greater or less: But Certainty, or what is actually known to be true (as all Things coming immediately from God, and deliver'd by him, must be) never courts, but demands our Assent; that is, we cannot avoid giving it.

38. But in the Christian Church, as in all others (excepting the *Jewish*) pretended to be founded on certain Revelations from Heaven, where the outward Polity, comprehending the several Rites, Ceremonies, and other Properties necessarily attendant on all instituted religious Worship; in such Cases as those, we say, Subscription must be of Service, and therefore necessary. For suppo-

ving a Number of Christians combin'd into a Body, from a religious Consideration, to make the best use of the Means in their Power for establishing such a Policy, or Form of Government, as would best answer the End of such religious Association; yet, considering the Difference there ever is in Men's Understandings, as likewise the Difference in the Means of their Improvement, that is, in their Education and Way of bringing up, their Opinions in this, as well as in all other Things, (not capable of strict mathematical Certainty) will of Necessity be different; and consequently the same Form both of Doctrine and Discipline, which some thought best calculated for obtaining the End of their Convention, others would think not so. And therefore, whilst one is making Choice of *this*, others would be for fixing on *that*. And 'tis more than probable, that this Diversity of Sentiments will, agreeably to what we have shewn above, give Rise to different Churches, tho' founded upon the same Revelation of the Will of God to Mankind. The Security of which Churches therefore (as also the Consideration of preserving Peace and Unity among the Members of them) necessarily re-

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quires that the Members of each Church do give some publick Testimony of their Zeal and Affection for its Interests, before they are allow'd to hold Communion with her; at least it is necessary, that those should subscribe who are to be Officers in any particular Church.

39. That Excommunication was in use among the *Jews*, and the Infliction of it as a Punishment, or rather, the Right to the Exercise of this expulsive Power, belong'd chiefly to the Priests of that Nation, is abundantly manifest to every one who has the least Acquaintance with the History of this People, or that knows any thing of their Laws, their Customs and Institutions. And that they grounded their Practice in this Particular upon divine Command, plainly appears from several Passages in the Old Testament, most of which we shall now enumerate.

40. There have not been wanting some who have run up the Institution of this sort of Punishment as high as to the Time of *Cain's* killing his Brother *Abel*, when God is said to have driven him out from his Presence. Which Opinion of theirs they ground upon those Words of *Cain*: *Behold*, says

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he, *thou hast driven me out this Day from the Face of the Earth; and from thy Face I shall be hid, and I shall be a Fugitive and a Vagabond in the Earth; and it shall come to pass that every one that findeth me shall slay me.* Which Words, as they think, denote *Cain's* being prohibited the holding any manner of Intercourse with other Men, Whether they necessarily imply so much as this, we shall not take upon us to determine; or what the Consequences of such a Prohibition at that time might have been, we care not to mention,

41. The next Instance (if that last mentioned was such an one) of this sort of Punishment which occurs in the History of the *Jewish* People, is in the eighth Chapter of *Numbers*; when *Korab*, and his Associates *Dathan* and *Abiram*, rebell'd against *Moses* and *Aaron*, by making themselves equal with them, and in endeavouring to persuade the rest of the Congregation that they were so likewise; and at the same time accusing the Ruler of the People of Pride and Ambition for annexing the Office of High-Priest to *Aaron* and his Family for ever, to the manifest Prejudice of those who,

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they pretended, had an equal Right, and therefore as good a Claim to it as any of his own Family. The Lord, after *Moses* had generously interceded with him for the rest of the Congregation, that they might not share the same common Fate with the Rebels, the Lord, we say, address'd himself to *Moses* in the following manner: *Speak unto the Congregation, that they get them up from about the Tabernacle of Korah, Dathan and Abiram; which when they accordingly had done, the Earth opened her Mouth, and swallowed them up, with every thing which belonged to them, as unworthy to continue any longer upon the Face of it,*

42. In like manner, when *Achan*, contrary to God's express Prohibition to all the Children of *Israel* in general, had, from a Spirit of Covetousness, preserv'd and taken to himself some of the best of the Spoils of *Jericho*; *Joshua*, by the immediate Direction of God, took him, and the Silver, and the Garment, and the Wedge of Gold, and his Sons, and his Daughters, and his Oxen, and his Asses, and his Sheep, and his Tent, and all that he had, and brought them into the Valley of *Achor*. And when *Moses*,

with all *Israel*, had brought them thither, he immediately proceeds to pass Sentence against them, which, as soon as he had done speaking, was accordingly executed upon them. And this Practice of dealing with Offenders, that is, of separating themselves from them before the Sentence of Condemnation was allow'd to take Place, was what was universally adher'd to by the *Jews*. And these Instances indeed seem to shew, that Excommunication was in use among the *Jews* before that the Power of inflicting capital Punishments was in a great measure withdrawn from them, contrary to the Opinion of those who hold that it was taken up afterwards. Tho' it is proper to take Notice, that whilst the *Jews* preserv'd their Liberty (which was, as long as they continued in the Paths of Obedience) and the Law had its full Force, and was executed impartially, and without Respect of Persons (which it ever was, whilst God was the supreme Magistrate in Civils) that in their History but few Instances are to be found of Excommunication for Acts of Impiety and Immorality of any sort; because the same Facts, which, after their Law was

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broke through, that is, upon the withdrawing of the extraordinary Providence under which that People liv'd all the Time the *Mosaick* Institute or Dispensation continu'd perfect, and in its full Vigour; the same Acts, we say, which now subjected them, as they did the Members of all other religious Societies, *rightly form'd*, and pursuing the *proper Ends of their Institution*, to Excommunication, were, by their Law, punish'd with Death. Adultery, Disobedience to Parents both natural and political, Idolatry, Profanation of the Sabbath, and, in short, all kinds of notorious Offences, did, by their Law, subject the Perpetrators of them to capital Punishments. And consequently, as the Persons guilty of those Crimes, were not permitted to live, there was no Occasion for excluding them from the Temple by any such formal Act as that of Excommunication must be acknowledg'd to be. Though, agreeably to what we observ'd above, before the Administration of Justice was allow'd to take Place, the People met together upon such an Occasion, were oblig'd to retire to a certain Distance from them, which when they had done, the Law was then executed upon them.

But

But after the *Jews* Return from the *Babylonish* Captivity, when their Oeconomy was falling to Pieces apace, and their Law could not, as before, be equally executed, that is, whilst the extraordinary Providence was gradually withdrawing itself, it was usual for them to treat Offenders in this Manner, that is, by separating them from the Congregation. A most famous Instance of which appears in the seventh and eighth Verses of the tenth Chapter of *Ezra*: And *they made Proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalems, unto all the Children of the Captivity, that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalems, and that whosoever would not come within three Days, according to the Counsel of the Princes and the Elders, all his Substance should be forfeited, and himself separated from the Congregation of those that had been carry'd away.* In which Words we have a positive Denunciation of this excommunicating Power, against all such as refused to come up to *Jerusalems* to satisfy the Ends of such Convention.

43. *Josephus* likewise, in the seventh Chapter of the second Book of the History of the *Jewish Wars*, giving an Account of the three Sects into which this People was at this time

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divided, viz. the *Essenes*, the *Pharisees*, and the *Sadduces*, speaks of Excommunication as a most severe Punishment amongst those of the first Division. His Words are as follows, *Upon the taking of any Man in a notorious Wickedness, he is excluded the Congregation; and whosoever incurs that Sentence, comes probably to a miserable End; for he is not allow'd so much as to receive a Bit of Bread from the Hands of a Stranger, tho' his Life itself were in Hazard; so that Men are driven to graze like Beasts till the Flesh rots from the Bone: In this Distress the Society hath sometimes had the Charity and Compassion to receive them again, when they were at the very Point of Death, computing that the Punishment they suffer'd might in some Degree atone for the Offence.* Tho' such an extraordinary Punishment ought not to be inflicted but upon the Commission of some extraordinary Crime; not upon any one surely under a capital one: It being against all the Ties and Rules of common Humanity, and contrary to the just legitimate Purposes of all religious Societies whatever, to punish such Sorts of Offences after this Rate, and with such extreme Severity; because this the very Nature of Religion, all whose Acts ought

ought to be free and voluntary, absolutely forbids and condemns.

44. And that the Governors of the *Jewish* Church were vested with the common necessary Powers of ordering and doing all those Things which were judg'd fit and expedient for the Service of that Church, and the Administration of her Ordinances, may be gather'd from the Practice and common Methods of Proceeding of her Governors, especially from *Numbers*, Chap. iv. Verses the 19th and 27th.

45. This Description of the *Jewish* Church, and of the Means by which Religion was carry'd on amongst them, and both the Sense and Spirit of it preserv'd active and vigorous in their Minds, falls in with the general Doctrine of a Church, as laid down and demonstrated in the foregoing Sections, which will appear abundantly manifest to any one who will compare them together. For here is a Church, with all its several Rites and Ceremonies drawn out and exhibited to the open View of all its Members, with a Ministry constituted to have the Cognizance of Matters of Religion, and to perform all the publick Offices of it; who have their Maintenance,  
with

with all their other various Dues, prescrib'd and mark'd out by God himself, the better to prevent the Cares and Business of this World, to enjoy the good Things of it, diverting them from their Attendance on his Service; entrusted with a Power of excommunicating all disobedient, refractory Members; acting and governing by certain stated Rules and Methods of Proceeding; and all this in a most regular and orderly Manner.

46. Touching the Independence of the *Jewish* Church on the State, and, reciprocally, the Independence of the State on the Church, from whence results the Supremacy of each, we may observe, that God, immediately, and at the same Time that he instituted both the civil and religious Policy of this People, incorporated the one into the other; and consequently we are not to expect a full and particular Description of the several Powers, Rights, &c. which belong to a Church in her natural independent Capacity, since neither Church nor State can exist but in Union with each other.

47. The Reason which determined the Deity to make the Union betwixt the two

Societies himself, might, probably, be one of these following.

1<sup>st</sup>, To serve as a Pattern for others to go by.

48. For, knowing that in Consequence of the fatal Propensity of both Societies to the Abuse of their respective Administrations, they could never subsist conveniently but in Union with each other; he, in Consequence of his Love to Mankind in general, and to the *Jewish* Nation in particular, (whom, for fundry wise Reasons, he had pitch'd upon, as the properest Means to preserve those Notions which he, at different times, had communicated to them, of his Nature and Attributes, pure and uncorrupted) he, we say, made the Union himself, intending most likely by this, that it should serve (when he should be pleas'd to reveal himself more fully again to the World) as a Pattern for other Nations to take Examples by; if not in fixing the Conditions or Terms of Union, and in adjusting the reciprocal Rights, Duties, &c. consequent upon it, yet in evincing both the Lawfulness and Expediency of such a Practice betwixt the governing Part of both Societies.

49. As God was the Author both of the civil and ecclesiastical Polity of the *Jews*; and considering the Abuses to which the two Societies were liable in the Exercise of their respective Powers, it was necessary that some kind of Union should be entered into by them, if they would attain the proper Ends of their Institution; so it seems fitting that God should complete the whole Affair by making this Union betwixt the two Societies himself.—The Fact, in truth, could not be otherwise. The Form of Government under which the *Jewish* People lived, was different from that of any other Nation under the Sun. For theirs was a perfect Theocracy, God himself condescending to be their King, or supreme Magistrate, by which Means it would necessarily come to pass, that he must be Legislator both in Civils and Ecclesiasticals; the Consequence of which is, that the Object of their civil and religious Institutes being one and the same, their religious and civil Policy would, of Course, run into each other, and become perfectly incorporated. From whence likewise it would follow, that every Breach of this Policy, or (in other Words) all Sorts of Crimes committed in such

such a State, would necessarily render the Subject guilty of *lese* Majesty, and be punished accordingly. And in this View may be justify'd all those penal Laws relating to Matters both of Opinion and Practice in the *Mosaick* Dispensation, which have in all Ages been complain'd of as iniquitous and unjust.

30. Had there not indeed been this close Union betwixt the two Societies, the People could never have been preserv'd, finally, as they were, from Idolatry. For at the time of the Union, their religious and civil Concerns came to be so mix'd and blended together, that they rose and fell with each other; our Meaning is, that the stricter those People were in their Religion, or the more careful in the Observance of those Laws, Statutes, and Ordinances, which God had drawn up for their Use, and deliver'd to them, the happier and more prosperous they constantly were; and, reciprocally, their Afflictions and Sufferings ever increas'd in Proportion to their Undutifulness to God, and to their Neglect of his Precepts. This will appear universally true to any one who reads the History of this People, as it is  
given

given us in the Old Testament. When they withdrew themselves from the Service of the true God, and had given themselves up to the working of all manner of Uncleanness with Greediness; God, provok'd at those Practices, did, as he denounc'd he ever would do in such Cases, withdraw himself from them; and then no Wonder, that we find them at such Junctures as those become an easy Prey to their Enemies: But when they kept close to their Obedience, and were zealous in the Service of the God of their Fathers, he, agreeably to his Promise, was always with them, making them successful in all their Undertakings, and to prosper in whatever they went about. And it is a surprizing Consideration, that, notwithstanding temporal Blessings and Afflictions, (the strongest Motives, that as a People at that Time circumstanc'd, they were capable of being influenc'd by) always follow'd their Obedience or Disobedience to God's Laws, yet this indissoluble Connection of one with the other was not sufficient to keep them in the Paths of their Duty. Their History informs us how forward they were (notwithstanding the repeated Promises and Threat-

enings made use of, the one to engage them by the Hopes of enjoying the good Things of this World in the Service of the only true God ; the other to restrain them, thro' the Fear of Punishment, from every Act of Rebellion against him;) their History informs us, we say, how forward they were, notwithstanding the Provisions made against it (the best Provisions infinite Wisdom could contrive) to fall off from his Service, and to join with the neighbouring Nations in their idolatrous Practices ; prostituting themselves in the most scandalous manner, and in Contradiction to the best and most perfect System of Laws that any Body of People besides themselves were ever blest'd with. Whence this Defection in the *Israelites* from the Service of the true God, and his Religion, could arise ; and what Ends God had to serve by his preserving the *Jews* (as he did finally) from Idolatry, are Questions which we shall not now enter upon the Consideration of, as foreign to the Design of our present Subject.



## § II.

I. **T**HE Design of every Revelation, actually coming from the supreme Being, was to acquaint those, to whom it was first communicated, as likewise all others, who, after careful and impartial Enquiry made into the Evidences of the Truth of its Pretensions, were come to a full Belief of its being of divine Extraction; the Design, we say, of every such Revelation, was to inform all those, who thus embrac'd it, what particular Actions, both as to the Matter and Manner of them, as well as what Omissions, were agreeable to the divine Will, and, on that Consideration, introductive to his Favour and Acceptance; and what Actions and Omissions had the contrary Tendency, and, as such, became the Ground and Foundation of his Displeasure: Or, the Design of God's revealing himself in this Manner, might not only be to do this, but likewise to discover some Truths, which Reason, left to itself, without any other Guide or Assistance, could not have trac'd out, the Belief of which was, some way or other, in this or that Degree, necessary to their Happiness. Now

if a Revelation would answer the End for which it was given, and carry with it the proper, necessary means of Conviction of its Descent from Heaven, the Doctrines it exhibits, the Precepts it enjoins, the Duties it enforces, and the Motives and Assistances it proposes for the due and conscientious Observance of them, must all and each of them, in their Nature and Tendency, be suited to the particular Times, Places, and Genius's of the People, for whose Use such Revelation was intended. For had it not this Resemblance, and these Marks of Conformity and Agreement, it cannot be, but that such a Revelation would be rejected as the Imposture of some *designing* Being, who, in not accomodating himself to their Capacities, that is, to their Conceptions of Things and Persons, would be thought to deal arbitrarily with them; and not in a way which their Wants and Necessities of *this Kind* seem'd to require: Because the Mind will necessarily judge of Things according to the State and Disposition in which she is to view and consider them. And this shews us, that a Revelation may be fit at one Juncture, which is not so at another;

another; and to *this* Nation, or Body of Men, which is unfit for *that*, varying according as Men's Capacities of admitting it are different. God, says a certain great Author, *temper'd the ceremonial Law according to the Condition and Capacity of the Persons it was prescrib'd to, and therefore the Sanctions of it did immediately respect their temporal Concerns.*

2. And it is worth our Notice and Observation in this Place, that every Religion, founded upon some new Dispensation, that is, on a later Discovery of his Will (when God is pleas'd to reveal Himself, for certain wise and good Reasons, more than once to the same People) must take its rise from, and consequently be laid upon the Foundation of the preceding one; for the Reason of this last Revelation coming down from above, being its greater Suitableness and Correspondency to the particular Times in which it was communicated, or, otherwise, the Manifestation of certain Truths, which former Times could not bear to have brought to Light, the Seasonableness of the former must now expire, and with it likewise its Obligation. And thus the *Mosaick* Oecono-

my fell to Pieces at the coming of Christ, and a new one arose with his preaching of the Gospel; the obligatory Force of that Religion then dying, and its whole Scheme of outward Polity now destroyed, and at an End. Not that we would be thought to mean, that the moral Actions, or those Collections of Precepts and Institutions, as laid in Nature, and therefore if properly applyed, investigable by Reason, which were either illustrated, or enforced, in the preceding Revelation, are of no Significancy under the New; for being of universal Extent, and consequently of universal Obligation, if Men's Occasions require either a further Explanation of them, or that additional Sanctions be made to them, they will, in every succeeding Revelation, be sure to be set in such Lights as are best adapted to Men's Understandings, or their ways of Apprehension, and strengthened by such Motives as are most likely to influence their Wills, and engage an Obedience to them: the great and principal, tho' not the only End of all Revelation, being the better and more strict Observance of all such Duties as result from the Relation betwixt a rational Creature and its Creator; that

that is, it is to engage Mankind to the Promotion of every Kind and Branch of Virtue by the most powerful and best adapted Motives for this Purpose. But our Meaning is, that there are certain *Credenda* as well as *Agenda*, that is, certain positive Institutions, which are to be Matters both of Faith and Practice, as also external Modes of Worship, certain Rites and Ceremonies, necessary to be observed, that at one Age of the World it might be expedient to have communicated, which the Temper and Genius of Men of former Times would not have born with, or which their Capacities could not have taken in and admitted. Whence we learn, that in a Series of Revelations given successively from the supreme Being to the same People, every one from the first to the last in the Series, like the several Links in a Chain, must be connected with the immediately preceding one, and received upon the supposed Truth of that other's divine Authority. And this Account of the Matter as given above, will furnish us with an Answer to those who demand, why did not God reveal himself to all Nations and sorts of People, as well as to the *Jews*, inconfi-

derable, with respect to others, both in Number, Opulence, and Power. And one of the principal Reasons perhaps might be, because the Times, the Institutions, and Customs of those other Nations could not bear it, and so, in all Probability, the End of it would have been defeated.

3. That a further and more extensive Revelation of the Will of God to Mankind, than what was vouchsafed at different Times, and upon different Occasions, to the *Jewish* People, was absolutely necessary, appears abundantly evident, from the deplorable Condition in which the greatest Part of the World lay at the Time of Christ's Appearance in the Flesh; Men were sunk into the grossest Idolatry, and train'd up in all the various Modes of a continually encreasing and over-spreading Superstition; blinded by Ignorance, and misled by the strongest and most inveterate Attachments to all sorts of Sensuality and Vice; out of which there appeared no human Means of extricating themselves. The *Jewish* Religion was design'd for the Use of the People of that Nation only; and therefore but little Benefit could be expected from a Religion under such

such Confinement to the Descendants from one particular Family, excepting to those, who, by their Intercourses with that People, had Opportunities of borrowing some of their religious Rites and Institutions, which, in their Removes and Translations from one Country into another, would unavoidably suffer, as the Custom of them ever was to do in those Cases, many and great Depravities. Besides, the Doctrine of a future State of Rewards and Punishments ( the only possible Means of securing, under the Administration of an unequal Providence, the Interests of Virtue in all difficult Instances of it ) made no Part of that Oeconomy under which they lived, nor was it any where to be found in their Law. A fuller and more explicit Declaration of God's Will therefore was greatly wanted, and 'twas what the miserable, the distracted Circumstances of Mankind loudly called out for.

4. But tho' the Fact be as we have now stated it, yet it must be confessed, that the very Possibility of a Revelation hath been deny'd, or, which comes much to the same, the Self-sufficiency of human Reason for all the great Ends of Religion hath been strenuously

nuously maintain'd: And this in a Christian Country, and by a Sett of People, who, tho' they reject a Revelation, are indebted to its Instructions for all the Advances they have made, both in moral and religious Science. That true Religion, that God can require no more of Men, than Nature requires ( see the *Philosophical Enquirer* ) has been asserted, with great Assurance, and with equal Ignorance of the Nature and Extent of the Abilities of the human Mind. If indeed Revelation can discover no religious Truths, can place no Matters of Duty in a clearer Light, nor press the Observance of them by stronger Motives, than what may be collected by the Use of *unassisted* Reason, then we grant the Consequence to be necessary, *viz.* That in this View all Revelation must be needless, and of no Significancy; and consequently unbecoming the Perfections of the supreme Being to vouchsafe to any of his Creatures. But provided the very Reverse of this can be made to appear, then may a Revelation, for what such Writers have prov'd to the contrary, have been granted, because such a condescending Intercourse on God's Part, is, in respect of religious Mat-  
ters,



ters, and Men's Concerns both in this Life and the next, perfectly agreeable to our Notions of infinite Wisdom and Goodness.

5. The proper Answer to those who talk in this Strain, is, not what Reason *might* do in such or such given Case, but what Progress Reason *actually* has made, or is likely to make, in religious Science. The Fact really is, that it was never yet found sufficient to lead Men into right Notions concerning the Being and Attributes of God; nor to such Degrees of Conviction, in regard to a future State, as the human Mind could securely and with Pleasure acquiesce in; and tho' it might trace out all, or most of the Lines of Duty which Men owe to each other, still it could not discover the Foundation on which the Obligation to the constant Practice of those Duties rested. For our Assurance in this respect are we indebted to that Gospel which brought Life and Immortality to Light. And as it is a great Blessing for us to be let into the Knowledge of all this in so easy and familiar a Manner, so ought we with all Thankfulness to acknowledge the Favour, and not let our foolish Minds boggle, and raise Objections, we know not why,

why, nor we know not wherefore, unless from the Pride of our own Hearts, and a strong Persuasion of our own Sufficiency. It is the most miserable Infatuation Men can possibly lie under, when they suffer themselves to be so easily drawn into the Belief of their own Independence, or, who willingly erect themselves into such a Sort of Independency on the supreme Being.

6. But granting Mankind to make the best possible Improvement of their Powers of Thought or Understanding, or let Reason be placed in the most advantageous Situation in which she can be view'd, and yet notwithstanding this, without some further Assistance being given her, she will be found absolutely unable to attain the great Ends and Purposes of human Life thro' every Period of its Being; a very insufficient Guide to conduct Man to his chief and final Good, or, to speak more properly, unfit to shew him wherein his chief and final Good consists, and how it may be most effectually furthered and promoted. And therefore a Revelation from Heaven extremely much wanted.

7. We shall but mention in one single Article or Proposition, from whence we apprehend this necessity of a Revelation is clearly deducible, and it is this, *Man hath sinned*. For if it can be made to appear, that as all Men have sinned, and come short in the Performance of their Duty, and consequently rendered themselves proper Objects of divine Punishment, so, in Consequence of this Deviation of theirs from the Will of their Maker, natural Reason could never give them such satisfactory Assurance as they could safely acquiesce in, that any future Actions of theirs would exempt the Sinner from Punishment; then is it a necessary, self-evident Truth, “That  
 “ a Revelation is requisite to teach Men  
 “ that which the Light of Nature could  
 “ never have done, *viz.* upon what Terms  
 “ or Conditions God will admit repenting  
 “ Sinners to Mercy and Favour again.” To come to the Point.

8. Sin is the Transgression of the Law of God, or, it is a voluntary Opposition of Word and Action to his Will. Now as all Men have *actually* sinn'd, they, from the common Principles of Justice, are liable to suffer a Degree of Punishment proportion'd

to the Nature and Extent of their Transgressions. Our Enquiry then must be, Will Reason, unassisted Reason, give the Sinner any Assurance that his Sins shall be forgiven? The Means which the Wise and better Part of the unlightened World would conclude as most proper for this End, must be Repentance. But whether Repentance would *strictly*, and *in the Nature of the Thing*, secure the Sinner from that *dreaded* Punishment, shall now be considered. Repentance, properly speaking, consists in a Sorrow of Mind for having transgress'd God's Laws, accompany'd with earnest and sincere Resolutions of Amendment for the future. With regard to Sorrow we observe, that Sorrow as Sorrow, or Sorrow considered *abstractly* from the Influence it should necessarily have upon the future Conduct of the Sinner, can avail nothing, and for this Reason, because it makes no Reparation for the Offence committed. Our next Enquiry therefore must be, Is a constant Obedience consequent upon a past Offence ( in which the whole Efficacy of Repentance must be allowed to consist ) effective of the Sinner's Pardon? Previous to the determining of which

Question,

Question, we shall lay down the following Propofition, which carries its own Evidence along with it.

9. God, as Creator, has an original Right in the Lives and Services of his Creatures; and if fo, then no Creature, at any Juncture, or in any Period of its Life, can withhold fuch Services from his Creator, without breaking in upon his Right. Hence it follows, by way of Corollary, that a ftrict and univerfal Obedience is, at all Times, and upon all Occafions, indifpenfibly due from the Creature to the Creator: From this Obedience no human Authority, no Authority at all, can exempt a Man. This being premis'd, we obferve, that a conftant Obedience, confequent upon a paft Offence ( in which, as we before obferv'd, the whole Virtue of Repentance confifts ) cannot take off the Guilt contracted; becaufe, if a ftrict and univerfal Obedience be conftantly due from the Creature to the Creator, then no one fingle future Act, or number of Acts of Obedience, can, in the Nature of the Thing, claim Deliverance for the Sinner at God's Hands; becaufe there is no particular Act, or Series of Acts of Obedience, which is not  
equally

equally Man's Duty *after* as *before* his Transgression; which being allow'd, then no such particular Act, &c. can give the Offender a Right to claim his Deliverance for the Sinner at God's Hands; and consequently by mere Man no *full* and *satisfactory* Atonement can be made.

10. But we maintain further, that no future particular Action, or Kind of acting, can, *in the Nature of the Thing*, take off the Guilt of a precedent Action. The Reason for it we take to be this: Guilt is the necessary Consequent of every Action, or Omision to act, in Violation of God's Law; therefore when any such Action exists, or has a Foundation in the Nature of Things, Guilt, the necessary and inherent Concomitant of that Action, has the same Foundation likewise: The Connection betwixt every vicious Action, and a proportionate Degree of Guilt, is necessary and unavoidable; but since every Action, when it is once done, cannot be undone, the Consequence is, that as in every assignable Period of Time it will be always predicable of the Agent, that such a Degree of Guilt necessarily cleaves to, and is charg'd upon him: Hence is it, that nothing which  
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the Sinner can do, can, strictly and properly speaking, discharge him from the Guilt contracted. Hence, by the Way, are we qualified to judge of the true State of Mankind before *Life and Immortality were brought to Light by the Gospel*. All Mankind having sinn'd, and by that Means incurr'd the Divine Displeasure, from thence they became fit Objects for God to execute his Wrath and Indignation upon. This was, in Fact, their Condition; this the State of Woe and Misery into which, by a Concurrence of Causes, they had plunged themselves; and what was by far more deplorable, no possible Means could be found to extricate themselves; no Clue of Reason to draw them out of this Labyrinth, that is, to teach them how to propitiate an angry and offended Deity: Man, thro' his Disobedience, had forfeited all Manner of Right and Title to the Favour and Protection of Almighty God.

II. But, say the Defendants for the Sufficiency of human Reason, Man is weak and fallible, hedg'd about on all Sides with Difficulties and Embarrassments, of one Sort or other, naturally connected with, and therefore the necessary Result of, his Circumstances

and Situation in Being; his Passions, or inward Emotions, are liable to be awakened and set agog by outward Solicitors, and the like; and therefore if God is a benevolent Being, he is oblig'd, upon a Principle of Goodness, to discharge the Sinner, upon his Repentance, from Punishment, and consequently that Repentance is meritorious. But before we return an Answer to this, we beg Leave to let our Reader know what we mean by the Term *Merit*. *Merit is that Quality in Actions which necessarily, and in its very Idea, entitles a Man to that which is said to be merited by him.* Which being premised, we observe, that if Repentance was meritorious, then the Penitent would have a Right to, and a Claim upon God for, the Remission of his Sins; and God would be oblig'd, not by the Principles of Goodness, but by those of Justice, to release him from all Sorts and Degrees of Punishment: Because if the Sinner, by Virtue of his Repentance, had a Right to be forgiven, God could not withhold that Forgiveness from him, without breaking in upon the penitent Sinner's Right, that is, without Breach of Justice. This being then the Truth of the Case, we argue further, that if  
God,



God, out of Goodness, discharges the Sinner, it is not simply for the Sake of his Repentance, but in a great Measure proceeds from his Free-will and Pleasure ; we say, it proceeds from, and is owing to, God's Free-will and Pleasure, because, if the Sinner has no Right to demand Pardon at God's Hands, God is at full Liberty either to give, or to withhold it from him. And therefore tho' our Repentance may dispose us for God's Mercy and Forgiveness, yet we can never be certain whether God will be pleased to exercise it or no ; it may give us Hopes, but it never can Assurance ; and what more or greater Anxiety to a Man, than to be ever hovering betwixt Hope and Despair ; sometimes in one State, at other Times in another, totally opposite to the former ! In such a Dilemma, what would a thinking, considerate Man give, or rather what would he not give, to know, whether, after all his Transgressions, his sincere (as he took it to be) Repentance would be accepted of, and himself taken into Favour ?——But we observe further, that those who talk so much of the Frailties of human Nature, do *actually* betray the Cause they are pleading for. For is not the Weakness of human Na-

ture, the Finiteness of its Powers, and its Liableness both to deceive and to be deceived, a convincing Proof of the Insufficiency of human Reason for the great Ends and Purposes of Being? Allowing the Situation of Mankind to be what in Fact it really was, would it not therefore bespeak great Goodness and Condescension in God, to let his Creatures know, that he has ty'd them up to the Observance of their Duty, by more powerful Motives, and stronger Enforcements, than the Light of Nature could ever have suggested? that if the Tendency in *corrupt* Man to Sin be great, he hath ordain'd an infinitely greater, and prepollent Bias (eternal Misery) on the other Side, to draw him off from closing with its Temptations and Allurements? But this can only be made known by Revelation. For tho' Reason might, and, if rightly directed, actually would tell Mankind, that a Difference in Men's Lives in this World will constitute a Difference in them in the next; that is, that the Good shall be rewarded, and the Wicked punished: Yet of what Nature, Degree, and Duration, those Rewards and Punishments shall be, is beyond the Extent of human Reason to determine.—

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But we ask further, Is not Man constituted a free Agent? Does he not find within himself a Power of choosing independently on the Objects which solicit his Choice? If he knows, and is conscious of this, he cannot but know and be conscious, that the greater the Difficulty is which he meets with in resisting the Gratification of any Appetite, the closer must his Attachment to Sin be; the stronger and more confirmed Habits of Vice he must have contracted; and consequently the more odious he must appear in the Sight of him, who is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity. Hence the greater Necessity of knowing what are the Means (if any such Means there be) which God hath ordain'd to reconcile *sinful* Man to an *injur'd* Maker; and forasmuch as the ablest Advocates for Reason are not able to tell us what those Means are, which, when perform'd, will, by Virtue of their being made the Condition of the Sinner's Acceptance with God, entitle him to a Deliverance from Punishment; it follows, that the greater Necessity there is for a Revelation from Heaven.—And hence appears the *Folly*, not to call it by so harsh a Name as *downright Madness*, of rejecting both Christianity, and like-

wife all Arguments in Defence and Support of its Authority : Because they who do this, are generally such as have the greatest Occasion to apply themselves to it for the Benefit of its Instructions. For does not Fact and Experience shew us, that the most licentious and dissolute Livers are *universally* the most bitter and implacable Enemies to the Christian Religion, rejecting its Doctrines, and deriding its Precepts, as unworthy of God to give, and not fitting for Man to receive ? and is it not demonstrable, nay hath it not been already shewn, that such stand most in Need of its Divine Influence and Support ?

12. But, as we before observ'd, the proper Answer to such Objections as those against Christianity, is, not what Reason might do, but what Reason *actually* and *in Fact* has done in the Case under Consideration : For there is a wide Difference betwixt what *might* be, or *ought* to be, and what *really* is. Fact, a Thing too stubborn to yield to any speculative Arguments whatever, is absolutely against them.—But to come to the Consideration of another Objection which has been raised by another Sort of People against the Divine Authority of the Christian Religion, differing indeed

indeed in the Means, but pursuing the same End with the other.

13. It has been made with some, an Objection against the Truth of those Pretensions which Christianity lays Claim to, that it some Way or other gives Rise to persecuting Principles in the Professors of it, and denies that mutual Forbearance, or Indulgence, to Men's Differences in certain Points of Speculation, or Practice, relating to Religion, so universally allowed, and freely granted in the Pagan World. For whence comes it that a Religion, which pretends to be most worthy of God, and every Way suitable to his Perfections, whence comes it, say they, or to what Cause, or Concurrence of Causes is it owing, that it produces such a morose, sour Temper towards those of a different Persuasion, which the Heathens themselves knew nothing of, and which is so opposite to, and inconsistent with, that Love and Charity which it professes to bear towards all Mankind, without any Distinction of Persons or Opinions? The true and proper Answer to which Objection, may, 'tis presum'd, be fetch'd from that essential Difference which

was to be found betwixt the true Genius of Christianity and Paganism.

14. A Revelation from Heaven, which taught Men the Belief of one God, and of one God only; that this same all-mighty Being made the Universe, and settled all the several Sorts of Creatures in their respective Ranks and Stations; that he preserves, and all along continues them in those their distinct Allotments, by Laws fitted to the several Modes of their Existence; that all Things, even from the meanest Insect to the *highest* in the *highest* Class of Beings, are under his Inspection, Care and Government; that all Creatures, capable of discerning Good and Evil, and of knowing their Obligations to pursue the one and to avoid the other, both for themselves and others, are accountable to him for all that Good and Evil which they do, or are the voluntary Instruments of being done, in their several Situations, and for the Use or Abuse of those Talents and Powers of Action with which they are entrusted. And finally, that he has appointed a Day on which he has declared he will judge the World, and after a Separation made of one from the other, will reward the Good and  
Virtuous,

Virtuous, and punish the Wicked, in Proportion to the Advances they have *knowingly* made in Virtue and Vice. A Revelation, we say, of this Kind, enjoining the Worship of one God, and forbidding all Sorts of Commerce with more, will necessarily give Rise to a Scheme or System of religious Truths, either directly expressed in, or which may by necessary Consequence be deduced from, the Account there given of him. Men's Assent to, or their Agreement in the Doctrines of which, or a Conformity with the Articles of Faith, as drawn out in and composing this System, are made the Terms of religious Communion, and the Condition of Men's being admitted Members of that Church founded on such particular Revelation. Supposing therefore a Number of Men to receive such a Revelation as this, either immediately at the Hands of God himself, or else coming to a strong Persuasion of the Reality of its divine Origin, by the Instruction and Conveyance of others, who, as *commission'd Means* for propagating the Doctrines of it, took Care to have them placed in such Lights, offer'd such Testimonies and Facts in Confirmation of the Truth of them, and enforc'd them with such

Argu-

Arguments, and Considerations of Things, as would necessarily create Conviction in all attentive, unprejudic'd Minds; supposing, we say, a Number of Men to receive a Revelation of this Sort, and upon such good Grounds, they, in Consequence of that Conviction, are not only obliged to renounce the Belief of more Deities having any Concern with, or interesting themselves in, the Direction of human Affairs, and consequently to refuse joining with others in paying religious Homage to them, but they are oblig'd by the Principles of that Religion to go further than this, (since such was the Design, the great and principal Design, of the Author and Founder of this grand Dispensation;) that is, they were not only obliged to propagate it upon the Ruin and Destruction of all other Religions, form'd upon the many pretended, and sometimes contrary Revelations of different Deities, which either the superstitious Fancies, and whimsical Imaginations of the Multitude, (ever fond of Novelties in Matters of this Nature) at first created, or which were introduced at different Times by Politicians, and to supply certain Defects or Exigencies of Government, without having Recourse to  
which



which Expedient at some peculiar Seasons, Affairs of State could neither be administered, nor Business of a publick Nature, or any ways relating to Civil Government, could be carried on at all. Such monstrous Defects were there in the very Essence and Constitution of their Societies, both Civil and Religious. But this was not the Case of those who turn'd Christians, who could not become such, that is, Members of Christ's Church, or of his Religion, without renouncing the Religion of their Country, or that in which they had been brought up. And they were not only to embrace it themselves, but were tied down by the whole Tenor and Design of it to employ the Means in their Power for making others embrace it likewise. But tho' they were oblig'd to this by the Precepts of their Religion, yet were they obliged to use such Methods in the Doing of it, as agrees with the common Nature of Religion, and with the State and Condition of those who are the proper Subjects of it; that is, they must spread and establish it by Reasoning and Arguments, and not by temporal Force and Violence, such as Fire and Sword, which

Sort

Sort of Proceedings it absolutely disclaims as improper and unsuitable.

15. Now if we direct our Enquiry into the State of Religion ( as to its Effects, we mean, upon Men's Conduct and Behaviour to each other ) as it was when Polytheism had spread itself over the greatest Part of the habitable World, we shall find the Case wholly different in this Respect from what it would have been, supposing it to have taken its Rise from a Revelation from the only one and true God. A Difference in Men's religious ways of Worship, occasion'd by their Belief in the Existence of different Deities, produc'd a mere Indifferency of Action, that is, was not attended with that Fierceness of Temper, or ungovernable Zeal, which a Religion that taught and profess'd the Belief of the Being of one God and Providence, might ( thro' a too strong Desire for its Propagation in the first Professors of it ) have a Tendency to produce towards those who own'd and worshipp'd a Plurality of Gods. For let us but once admit a Number of Deities, all claiming a Share in the Government of the World, and each of them a peculiar Superintendency over the Affairs of that  
People

People whose tutelary God he was, and consequently each of them having an equal Right to be address'd in a Manner suitable to the general Bias of his Nature, and the Disposition he is suppos'd to stand in to his respective Votaries; and then it will appear evident, that there must be the same Reason that A should permit B to worship his God in his own way, quietly, and without Molestation, as there is, that B should allow A that Freedom. And therefore an Acknowledgement of different Deities, and consequently different Modes and Ways of Worship, or the Observance of different Rites and Ceremonies, could give no sort of Pretence for the Exercise of any untoward Conduct, or Ill-Treatment, one of another; or, in other Words, there could be no Persecution upon the Score of religious Differences, arising from the supposed Injunction of different Deities. For the Dispute, if any Disputes there were, would not be whose God was the true and real one, (since if more than one come once to be allowed, each must have the same Evidence for the Existence of his God, as the other has, if the Matter comes to be try'd by the Test

of Reason;) the Dispute, we say, would not be, whose was the true God, but who concern'd himself most in taking Cognizance of, and in ordering human Affairs, and from whom they had the most to hope or fear, as having the strongest Inclination and Power to do them good or harm. And when Men have once given into the Belief of a Multitude of Gods, either distinct from, or contrary to each other, in Nature and Principle, it is difficult to determine, where that inventive Faculty, the Imagination, will stop. Because for the same Reason, one would think, however with the same Ease, that you suppose two or more Gods, may you suppose a Thousand or a Million, and give them such Properties and Powers, as particular Occasions may require; and having cloathed them with different Qualities or Attributes, and each God having something peculiar to himself (otherwise they would be identify'd, and so become one) it must of Necessity happen, that there will be a Difference in their Commands and Institutions, corresponding to those different Natures and Determinations of Will they suppose them possess'd of.

16. Thus stands the Case in Reason. And if we look into the Account which History gives us of those Times, we shall find the Fact much the same, as hath been represented above. For each allowing the other's Pretensions to be true, such a Latitude of religious Thought, with respect to certain Differences in Opinion, affords not the least Room, nor has it in Fact any Tendency, to break in upon that harmonious Correspondency of Wills, and good Agreement of Actions, which might, and actually did, subsist betwixt the Subjects of different Religions, and which is so necessary to their living peaceably, and in Comfort with each other. We find further upon Enquiry, that when any new Deity was set up, and consequently new Rites and Ceremonies, different Forms and Modes of Worship, with other Circumstances and Appendages of instituted Religion were drawn out, and agreed upon, for the Service of the new-invented God, that others, far from denying the Being of such a God, or calling the Expediency of Worshipping him in such particular Manner into Question, have not only embrac'd it themselves, but the supreme Power in Society sometimes

granted it a free and publick Licence, and, upon particular Occasions, and in Consequence of certain concurring Causes, adopted it into a Kind of Partnership with the State's Religion, compounding, mixing, and molding (if such Expressions may be used) both, according to the Notions which they in reality entertained themselves, or which they made the common People to entertain of the sovereign Will of each Deity, generally taking Care in such Cases, to form them suitably to, and in Agreement with, their several Interests. And thus it usually far'd with those Gods who wander'd from Place to Place in quest of new Honours, and after new Establishments, or, to speak more truly, who were thus carried about from one Country into another by certain Sages and Legislators, either thro' a superstitious Fondness in the one, or, by the other, for the better ordering of their particular States, and with a View to advance the Interests of them.

17. Thus have we seen, how a full and perfect Toleration of certain Differences in Matters of Religion would necessarily result from the Nature and Principles of Polytheism; the great Number of Absurdities and  
Falshoods

Falshoods with which it abounded, and which *in a manner* compos'd the whole of their Religion, pav'd the Way to this good Effect, tho' destructive in many Points to the civil Happiness of Mankind, and to a great Degree incompatible with it. *Which good Effect* the Excellency and Perfection of the Christian Religion had a Tendency, tho' but a remote and indirect one, to destroy, as we before observ'd. Many amongst the several Nations to whom it was first communicated, did not deny the Religion of Christ to be from Heaven, and consequently its Pretensions true. And some of the superior Powers gave it not only a favourable Hearing themselves, and received it into their Families, but countenanced the Propagation of it all around them, and wherever their Influence was known to reach : And hitherto the Professors of this Religion had all the Success answerable to their Wishes, and beyond what they expected, or what could in Reason be expected, from a Religion which had to combat with the Lusts and Vices, with the Passions and Prejudices of Mankind. But the first Teachers and Spreaders of Christianity, and after them their Successors in that Work,

knowing it was the Design of their Religion, to draw Men off from the Worship of all such false, imaginary Deities, as everywhere abounded in the Heathen World, they not only insisted on the Truth and Divine Origin of their Religion, but they went further, and with great Courage and Constancy of Mind maintained, in Opposition to all other Religions whatever, that their's was the only true one ; and that it was the Will of the Author and Founder of this Dispensation, that all People should forsake the established national Religions, and turn Christians. This gave great Offence, as it needs must, to those who had been educated in, and had long adher'd to the Religion of their Country, and for which they had been taught to pay the greatest Veneration ; and brought much Ill-will, and worse Treatment upon its Professors. The Religion of those People consisted in a deal of Pomp and Shew, in external Rites and Ceremonies, in Processions, Shews, Lustrations, &c. Things apt to catch and dazzle a Multitude. And this Attempt in the first Christians and Champions of our Faith to overturn and destroy the national Religions, and their undaunted Resolution and Perseverance



rance in it, gave Rise to the hottest Pagan Persecution, and the Suffering all manner of Indignities and Torments, so well known, and withal so common, and yet so chearfully submitted to by them, in the first Ages of Christianity. And herein are verify'd those two remarkable Sayings of our Saviour, *Think not, says he, that I am come to send Peacc, but a Sword.—And ye shall be hated. of all Men for my Name's Sake, but he that endureth to the End shall be saved.* The Accomplishment of which Prediction, as also of that concerning the taking of *Jerusalem* by the *Roman* Army within such a Compass of Time, and of every other Event foretold by him, or, in Truth, by any other Person, gives us an Argument, either of the Divinity of the Being who predicted it, or that the Hand of God, some Way or other, visibly appears in it, that is, that the Person was divinely illuminated. For though Reason, if carefully attended to, will discover what Consequences will flow from Things *so* and *so* posited, or what Effects such and such Causes in certain given Situations will produce, yet are Men always free as well as intelligent, which renders the best-laid Schemes

of human Wisdom liable to be baffled and confounded. Nothing less therefore than a Being of infinite Intelligence, who can see to and thro' the whole of Things, and the Dependence which the several Parts have upon each other, can possibly know what Events will turn up in this or that Age of the World. And consequently as every Prophecy sure to be fulfilled, cannot be so, that is, cannot be brought about by human Contrivance and Ability only, it is evident, that it can no otherwise be effected except by the Direction of divine Wisdom and Power: Or, in other Words, that being omniscient, God sees what Measures will be concerted, and how Matters shall be ordered for the bringing about any Effect, and therefore, in such Cases, can pronounce with as much Certainty about it, as if the Accomplishment was actually past. “ That a Man should fore-  
“ tell very distant Things, that depend on  
“ the arbitrary Determination of free Agents,  
“ or that seem to be entirely at the Plea-  
“ sure and Orderance of Providence, can,  
“ says an ingenious Writer, be never ac-  
“ counted for but by some Intimation given  
“ him

“ him by a Wiser and more knowing Being  
 “ than himself.”

18. When the Lord of Nature, for the fuller and more explicit Discovery of his Will, and the Reformation of such Abuses and monstrous Corruptions as had kept gradually creeping into Religion, was pleas'd to send his Son from on High, to lead Mankind to the true Knowledge of him, by a Method perfectly familiar, and every Way suited to their Apprehensions and Capacities; to teach them the Way in which he would have them worship him, or what was the proper End and Design of religious Worship; and to fulfill the Promise which he had made to the Founder of a chosen peculiar People, that *out of one of the twelve Tribes to be descended from him should come the Saviour of the World, or one who should bless all People, or, rather, in whom all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed*: At the Time foretold by certain Prophets God had rais'd up for this very Purpose, in order to beget a general Expectation of him in the World, at the Time appointed, we say, this divine Messenger made his Appearance in the Flesh, and with the most con-

summate Propriety answered that truly amiable and heroick Character given of him, of his being the Redeemer of Mankind: And he demonstrated as well the Divinity of his Mission, as his Fitness for the Office to which he was appointed, by a Repetition of such Acts as plainly exceeded all the Powers of created Nature; for no Power less than infinite could have done what he did. He restored Sight to the Blind; Speech to the Dumb; Hearing to the Deaf; Life to the Dead: And as his Works were such as never Man perform'd, or could pretend to, so he taught as no Man before him ever taught; he left behind him, for the Use of Mankind, a System of such plain and easy, and withall such excellent and perfect Rules, for the Behaviour of Men in all States and Conditions of Life, and at the same time enforc'd 'em with the strongest Motives and all the engaging Methods of Persuasion, as never were delivered from the Mouth of any Philosopher, or to be found in all their Writings taken together. But, what is above all, he acted as he taught, and his Behaviour in every Instance of it was exactly conformable to the Laws he prescribed.

scribed to others ; he was expos'd to all manner of Insults and Outrages, and suffer'd more and greater Hardships than any of the Sons of Men ever did ; and notwithstanding all those Provocations and Abuses, exceeding in the Number of them, and as affrontive in their Nature, as any that were ever yet submitted to by Man, he did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth. His Love and Affection for Goodness and Righteousness was such, as what the strongest and most powerful Temptations could not stagger, nor consequently overcome ; and he bravely withstood the fiercest Assaults of his cruelest Enemies, by resisting even unto Death. The Consideration of a Life thus exemplary in itself, and so entirely of a Piece with the Doctrines he delivered, is the best-adapted and most prevailing Motive that can be to draw over all thoughtful Men to an Imitation of it. Precept and Example in Conjunction will be ever found, if due Attention be paid them, to have a mighty Efficacy upon others, and will scarce fail, sooner or later, to engage such to an Obedience to, and Observance of them. And this was remarkably verify'd in the

Actions and Sufferings, in the Lives and Deaths of the Apostles and first Teachers of the Christian Faith, as 'is abundantly evident from the History of those Times. Immediately before his Ascension into Heaven, he appointed certain Officers out of those who had constantly attended him, who who had seen his Works, and heard his Doctrines, during his Ministry upon Earth, to carry on and perfect the great Work he had begun amongst them ; with Orders for separating themselves, after they had continued a certain space of Time at *Jerusalem*, and to preach the Gospel to all Nations ; first indeed to the *Jews* ( as was most fitting it should be, they being his chosen Instruments for preserving the Doctrine of the Unity ) and afterwards to the *Gentiles* : The great End of their Institution, or Appointment to this Work, was, to convert Unbelievers to the Christian Faith ; to explain the Doctrines, and enforce the Duties of it ; to instruct the Ignorant ; to satisfy the Doubtful ; to convince the Gainfayer ; and to confirm Believers in the Faith ; and lastly, to administer the two Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Those he calls Apostles, signifying, by the Name he had now given them, that they

they were sent by him, and consequently had their Commission from him. And that all such, as should in After-times embrace his Religion, might be satisfy'd in a Particular of this Moment, we have the Commission granted to the Apostles, left us upon undoubted Record, *John xx. Peace, says, our Saviour, be unto you ; as my Father sent me [ to preach the Gospel ] even so send I You ; and when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said, Receive You the Holy Ghost : Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted ; and whosoever Sins ye retain, they are retained.* And to convince them that this Power was delegated, not to them only, but to all those who should succeed them in that Office to the End of the World, when he afterwards gave them his Directions for the Execution of it, he adds, by way of Encouragement, *Lo I am with You always, even to the End of the World.* This the Apostles, who must be allowed best Judges of the Will of Christ, their common Master, so understood, that whatever hereby was committed to them, was not supposed to be merely personal, but something belonging to their Office, and a Consequence from  
it ;

it; and, in this View, not to die with them, but to continue to the End of the World: And accordingly we find, that when the Number of Believers encreas'd, and the Conversions to Christianity were both large and many, the Apostles ordain'd fit Persons to assist them in the Work entrusted to their Care and Management. And this they did by the Imposition of Hands, in reference to the Method, *Moses*, by God's exprefs and special Order, had used in the consecrating of *Joshua*, in setting him over the Congregation to go out and to come in before them, Numb. xxvii, and also in Allusion to a Custom much in Use among the *Jews* in those Times, viz. their laying on of Hands upon those whom they appointed to any particular Office or Employment: For thus their Elders, and the Members of their Sanhedrim are said to be chose. Agreeably to this, when the Apostles met together at *Jerusalem*, they ordain'd the seven Deacons by laying their Hands on them; *Acts* vi. So likewise *Paul* ordain'd *Timothy*, and he is said to have receiv'd the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of *Paul's* Hands. In like manner *Paul* and *Barnabas* are mentioned,



as having ordain'd Elders in every Church, *Acts* xxiv. The Fact is, the Succession of Officers in the Christian Church will, if trac'd up to the Fountain Head, be found to have had its Beginning from the Apostles themselves, as might easily be made out from the Testimonies of the Fathers, if occasion required — The learned Bishop *Stillington*, in his Treatise stil'd *Irenicum*, says, that this Custom of laying on of Hands upon those design'd for any publick Employment, *being so generally in Use among the Jews in the Time when the Apostles were sent forth with Authority for gathering and settling Churches, we find them accordingly making Use of this, either for the more solemn Invocation of the Presence of God upon those Persons, or for the Designation and Appointment of them to any peculiar Service or Function. For we have no Ground to think that the Apostles had any peculiar Command for laying on their Hands upon Persons in Prayer over them, or Ordination of them: But the Thing itself being enjoin'd them, viz. the setting apart some Persons for the peculiar Attendance upon the Necessities of the Churches by them planted, they took up and made use of a laudable*

*Rite*

*Rite and Custom then in Use upon such Occasions.*

19. From this Practice of the Apostles, and first Fathers of the Christian Church, may we draw an Observation, which will be of Service to us, as it carries along with it a direct Confutation of one Sett of those Principles on which a certain Sect amongst us have built their System of Divinity. For the Apostles laying their Hands upon those whom they appointed Rulers and Pastors of the Church, plainly gives us to understand, that it is necessary, that those, who are to be admitted to officiate in it, should be *outwardly* ordain'd, as well as *inwardly* call'd. If Ordination, by the laying on of Hands, was an useleſs Institution, and consequently of no Significancy, what could be the Reason of the Apostles ordaining *Titus, Timothy,* &c. and those others in a regular Order of Succession? Those, whom the Apostles thus *ordain'd*, must be allow'd to have, previously to their Ordination, as much of the Spirit's Illumination, and divine Graces, as any Number of Men amongst us at this time of Day dare pretend to; and yet for all this, they must be ordain'd, we see, before they be permitted to preach the Gospel,

OR to perform the other Offices of Churchmen. An undeniable Argument of the Expediency, if not of the Necessity of this Rite, or particular Method of admitting Persons into the Ministry of the Church ; that is, this Practice of the Apostles, and of their immediate Successors, shews us it is the Will of Christ ( for who can be supposed to know his Will, either in relation to the Government of the Church, or to the Appointment of her Ministers, better than they ) that there be a fix'd, standing Order of Men, to admitt and reject to and from the Ministry all such Persons, as upon Examination appear to be fit or unfit for this important Business ; and therefore without such a previous Ordination as this, Men must not presume to serve in God's House, or to give their Attendance in Quality of Officers, on religious Matters in publick Assemblies, whatsoever Gifts, Illuminations, &c. they make Pretences to, or actually conceit themselves to be possess'd of : And it is not difficult to conceive, how soon, and with what Facility, a strong Fancy, or warm Imagination, may work itself into a Persuasion, that it is *really* under the immediate Acti-

on and Impression of some superior invisi-  
 ble Being. This Practice of the Apostles is,  
 we think, of Weight enough to overturn all  
 the Arguments they can bring in favour of  
 the Self-sufficiency of their admir'd inward  
 Light. Can any, at this distance of  
 Time, pretend to know the Mind of Christ  
 better than those who were constantly with  
 him? And must not the Apostles, and their  
 Successors, be allow'd equally good Judges  
 with any Body of Men in this Age, of the  
 several Conditions and Qualifications requisite  
 to constitute the proper Character of Church-  
 men? None surely can deny this. And with  
 thinking Men this will have its Weight.

“ When every other Office of Trust and  
 “ Power, says a judicious Writer, whether  
 “ in a civil or military Capacity, is conveyed  
 “ unto Men by some Form of Admission,  
 “ and solemn Investiture, 'tis incongruous  
 “ to think, that those great Offices of send-  
 “ ing up the Prayers of the People, of  
 “ administering the Word and Sacraments,  
 “ of blessing the Congregation, of absolving  
 “ the Penitent, of ejecting the Criminal, &c.  
 “ should be left to the Discretion of every  
 “ one, that either has Presumption enough

“ to assume, or Abilities enough to perform  
 “ it.” See *Comber on Ordination*.

20. The same Qualifications which are necessary to Men's Entrance into the Offices of Church-men, must likewise be necessary to their Continuance in them. For it may be ask'd, What gives Men a Right to an Admission into the Ministry? The Answer, we presume, is, the having such Qualifications as the Governors of the Church, or those entrusted with the Power of Ordination, think necessary for Men *related in such particular manner to the Church*, to have. Consequently those Qualifications are consider'd as necessary to the due Performance, and proper Discharge of the Duties of such Offices; and if so, then equally necessary to Men's Continuance in, as they were at first to their Admission into them. The next Question then is, What are those Qualifications? and who are to be Judges of them? As to the Qualifications themselves, they are *expressly* set down by St. Paul in his Epistles to *Titus* and *Timothy*: In his first Epistle to *Timothy*, Chap. iii. ver. 2. speaking of a Bishop, he has these Words: *A Bishop must be blameless; the Husband of one Wife; vigilant, sober,*

*ber,*

ber, of good Behaviour, given to Hospitality; apt to teach, not given to Wine; no Striker; not greedy of filthy Lucre; but patient, not a Brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own House, having his Children in Subjection with all Gravity, (for if a Man knows not how to rule his own House, how shall he take Care of the Church of God?) And in his second Epistle, the second Chapter, and fifteenth Verse, speaking to *Timothy*, he exhorts him thus: Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a Workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. The same Qualifications, almost in the very same Words, he requires those should have whom *Titus* was to ordain, with this Addition indeed made to them, that a Bishop should hold fast the faithful Word, as he had been taught, that he may be able, by sound Doctrine, both to exhort and convince the Gain-sayers. From which two Passages it evidently appears, that a Bishop must be a Person of such a Life and Conversation, and so watchful over his Morals and Conduct, as not to give Offence thereby to any of those whom he is appointed to rule over; or what may have a Tendency to bring his Office into

Con-

Contempt: And also one of that Learning, and of those Abilities, as will enable him to satisfy the Sceptick, and convince the Infidel. Surely, of all Men, ought Ministers to be *always ready to give an Answer to every Man that asketh them a Reason of the Hope that is in them with Meekness and Fear.* And therefore a good natural Capacity, or Understanding, well fraught with Learning, and other suitable Improvements, is, (whatever some Men may pretend to the contrary) of excellent Use and Service, and, under that Notion, not to be overlooked in the Choice of a Minister of the Gospel. *St. Paul* reckons *Wisdom and Knowledge* in the first Rank of the Gifts of God; and when he comes to give us a Description of the Properties of a true Bishop, or Governor of the Church, he requires, as we just now observed, this, as one necessary Qualification, *that he be apt to teach, and able by sound Doctrine, &c.* Who are to be Judges of those Qualifications, is the next Thing that demands our Consideration; or, in other Words, In whom is the Power of Ordination lodg'd? We answer, strictly speaking, it resides with the Governors of the Church. This we learn from *St. Paul's* Com-

mand to *Timothy*, not to lay Hands suddenly, upon any Man; which Charge, directly, and in plain, positive Terms, proves, that the Apostles and their Successors had a Right to ordain those Bishops and Deacons, whom they found properly qualified to take the Care and Management of this important Trust upon themselves; and if so, then a Right to judge, and finally determine, of Men's Abilities and Fitness for those Offices: For if those Words of *St. Paul* did not necessarily imply a Power to reject the Unworthy, and such as have not the Qualifications requisite for the proper Execution of Ecclesiastical Offices, this Injunction would have been such an Inconsistency in him, as we cannot in Justice to his Character, suppose *St. Paul* guilty of: And if the Charge implies a Power to reject the Unworthy, so consequently to admit the Worthy. Of which Worthiness or Unworthiness therefore Church-Officers themselves must be left Judges. Besides, it may be truly affirm'd, that not one among a thousand of the lower Sort of People knows who has, and who has not, Learning and Abilities proper to defend Religion against the Attacks of its common Enemies: And if those who  
are



are set apart to defend the Faith, be not able to do it, the People will soon have no Faith left to defend. But this hath been largely shewn in *Prop. 3. Sect. 3.* — “Certainly says a fine  
 “Writer, no Care can be too great in the  
 “Choice of fit Persons to be entrusted  
 “with such an arduous Work (as explain-  
 “ing the Duties of Religion, and enforcing  
 “the Observance of them upon Mankind;)   
 “nor in the Prevention of busy Intruders  
 “from taking to themselves any Part in  
 “the sacred Ministry of God’s Church.  
 “They who have already labour’d in the  
 “Gospel with approv’d Commendation, are  
 “certainly, in the Nature of Things, the  
 “fittest Judges what Qualities and Manners,  
 “what Furniture of Learning, or what Suf-  
 “ficiency of natural Talents will best en-  
 “able others to follow them in the same  
 “glorious Tract, with like Probabilities of  
 “Success, and with an equal Measure of de-  
 “serv’d Applause. Preaching would be er-  
 “rant Babling, an Ordinance neither fit for  
 “the *Institution* of God, nor the *Observance*  
 “of *Man*; if from the Impulse of his own  
 “private Fancy, every one were permitted  
 “to vent in the Church the Crudities of

“ his sickly Heart, or more sickly Brain,  
 “ This were an Absurdity, and a Mischief  
 “ which the God of Order, and the Man of  
 “ Sense, must alike abhor and nauseate.  
 “ And to give all their Due, it is pretty  
 “ generally now exploded.”

21. Further ; if the Right of appointing the Officers or Ministers of the Church belong'd not to her Governors, but to the Laity, then could not those Governors have a Power of expelling such of their Body as acted in Violation of the Trust arising to them from the End of their Office, and who employ that Power, and those Means put into their Hands to be exercis'd for the Church's Good, in Opposition to it, and in Prejudice to her Interests : Because in whomsoever the Right of Admission is lodg'd, with those, of Course, is the Right of Expulsion lodg'd also ; and without the Exercise of this Power in her Officers, the Church as a Society cannot subsist.

22. But tho' we reject the absolute Necessity, yet we contend for the Fitness and Expediency of the People's Consent and Approbation being given to those Persons who are to be ordained their Ministers : For betwixt these there is a wide and material Difference.

Difference. It is indeed but reasonable, that the People, whose Interest, both as to this and the other World, is so much concerned in the just and prudent Administration of Ecclesiastical Affairs; and who are oblig'd to contribute, in a decent, honourable Way, to the Maintenance of their Ministers, it is but reasonable, we say, they should be consulted and their Advice taken, before such Officers are appointed over them. And accordingly we find the Apostles, after they had call'd the Multitude of Disciples to them, giving out their Orders to them, to look out from among them seven Men, whom, say they, we may appoint and set over this Business; which when they had done, the Apostles are said to have pray'd, and then to have laid their Hands on them. And this, we find, to have been generally the Practice in all Ages since the Christian Church had a Being. " At all Ordinations, says " the learned Doctor *Carve* in his *Primi-* " *tive Christianity*, especially of superior Offi- " cers, the People of the Place were always " present, and ratify'd the Action with their " Approbation and Consent. And indeed " it cannot be deny'd but that the People, in

“ some Places especially, were very much  
 “ considered in this Affair, it being seldom or  
 “ never done without their Presence or Suffrage.  
 “ To this End the Bishop was wont, be-  
 “ fore every Ordination, to *propound* and *pub-*  
 “ *lish* the Names of those who were to  
 “ have holy Orders conferr’d upon them,  
 “ that so the People, who best knew  
 “ their Lives and Conversations, might inter-  
 “ pose if they had any thing material to  
 “ object against it. By which means the  
 “ Unworthy were discovered and rejected,  
 “ the Deserving honoured and admitted, the  
 “ Ordination became legitimate and satis-  
 “ factory, having past the common Vote  
 “ and Suffrage, without any Exception being  
 “ made against it, as *Cyprian* speaks.  
 “ Hence the Clergy, of what Order soever,  
 “ were said *prædicari*, to be *propounded* and  
 “ *publish’d*. And this Way seem’d so fit  
 “ and reasonable, that *Severus* the Emperor  
 “ ( a wise and prudent Prince ) in Imitation  
 “ of the Christians, established it in the  
 “ Disposal of civil Offices.”

23. Bishop *Burnet*, in his History of the  
 Reformation, likewise tells us, “ that the  
 “ Apostles chose Bishops and Pastors by an

“ ex-

“ extraordinary Gift of discerning Spirits, and  
 “ propos'd them to the Approbation of the  
 “ People, yet they left no Rules to make  
 “ this Practice necessary. In the Times of  
 “ Persecution, the Clergy being maintained  
 “ by the Oblations of the People, they were  
 “ chosen by them: But when the Emperors  
 “ became Christians, the Town-Councils  
 “ and eminent Men took the Elections out  
 “ of the Hands of the Rabble. And the  
 “ Tumults in popular Elections were such,  
 “ that it was necessary to regulate them.  
 “ In some Places the Clergy, and in others  
 “ the Bishops of the Province made this  
 “ Choice. The Emperors reserv'd the Con-  
 “ firmation of the Elections in the great  
 “ Sees to themselves.” It is not difficult  
 to assign, and with some Exactness, the dif-  
 ferent Causes of those several Changes which  
 from Time to Time happened in regard to  
 those Elections.

24. And be it further observ'd in Vindi-  
 cation of the Form of Procedure now in  
 Use with our Bishops, that as it is impossi-  
 ble, in the present Circumstances of Things,  
 for the Governors of the Church, to whom,  
 we have prov'd, the Right of Ordination be-

longs, should have a personal Knowledge of the Character of those who offer themselves for Orders, so is it fitting, that they have an Account of their Morals and manner of Life transmitted to them, under proper Testimonials, from those among whom they last resided ; that is, it is proper they should have the People's Consent and Allowance. But tho' we contend for this as the fittest and most equitable Method of appointing Church-Officers, yet we maintain, that the Neglect of it, or that the Want of such Consent, does not render their Ordination a Nullity, or of none Effect.

25. There are some, who, tho' willing to allow the Apostles to have been Officers of the Christian Church, and their Labours of eminent Service in Men's Conversions to Christianity, yet maintain that the Office of Ministers died with their Persons, and that every Man now was left at full Liberty to be his own Priest in holy Things. An Opinion so absurd and extravagant, and withall so contrary to Fact, and the Practicē of the primitive Church, that it is scarce conceivable how Men at first came to give into the Belief of it, much more  
that

that any should be employed in the Propagation of it. For if the Work of a Minister be as necessary in one Age of the World as it is in another, the Office must be so likewise. And if there be an equal Necessity for the Continuance of the Office down from the first Beginnings of Things to the final Conclusion of them, then must the Office be continued to that Period of Time: Because as Necessity constitutes the Office, and if this Necessity always remains the same, then the Office must do so likewise: But the Necessity ever continues the same; therefore, &c. That the Work, and consequently the Office of a Minister, is, at all Times, in all Places, and under all given Circumstances, equally necessary in the World, appears abundantly evident from hence; that Prayers and Thanksgivings, with all the several distinct Acts and Properties of publick Worship, are the constant, proper Duties of rational dependent Beings, and consequently ought not to be neglected, or postpon'd to other Considerations of less Importance. And that the right and decent Performance of those Duties requires an Order of Men set apart for this Business, has been

been fully prov'd above. Besides, agreeably to what we took Notice of in another Place, the Ignorant and Illiterate, ( of whom is the far greater Part of Mankind ) want the Instruction of others in the great Affair of Religion, and in Order to be let into an affecting Knowledge of the momentous Concerns of another World. These are Things of everlasting Necessity, and indispensibly incumbent upon Men as Men. And therefore if Scripture was silent as to this Point, the Necessity of the Case plainly shews, that there must be always a Church with proper Officers in it to the End of the World. If we look into Christianity, and direct our Enquiry into the Nature and Design of the Precepts, Statutes, and Ordinances of it, we shall find, that Men, considered in the Capacity of Christians, are under the same Necessities in respect of Instruction, and consequently have equal Occasions with any other Denominations of Men for a standing, ordinary Ministry in the Church. If the Author of this Dispensation did himself make Choice of an Order of Men to preach the Gospel ; to convert Unbelievers to the Christian Faith ; to explain its Doctrines,



trines, and administer its Sacraments: And if the Gospel must be preach'd; if Persons must be admitted Members of his Church by Baptism, and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper celebrated, till the End of the World; then must there be a Body of Men appointed to perform those and the like Rites, Offices, &c. Because the Performance of them was by his particular Appointment appropriated to such a Body of Men in Distinction from, and Exclusion of, all others.

26. Had we no express Declaration therefore from Christ himself of the Continuance of the ministerial Office to the End of the World, yet from the Nature and Design of Religion in general, and of Christianity in particular, we might with Certainty conclude that it was to last so long. And our Saviour hath as good as in plain, direct Terms told us so, by saying, that he would be with the Apostles and their Successors, as an Aid and Support to help them in the Discharge of their Office, until his second coming to judge the World.

27. Lastly; a Ministry was actually appointed by the Apostles themselves, for so  
we

we read, Acts xiv. 23. *And when they had ordained them Elders in every Church, and had pray'd with Fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believ'd.* And proper Orders are given for appointing others to perform the like Offices with them in the Church, that is, for continuing the Succession, as appears from 2 Tim. ii. 2. *And the Things which thou hast heard of me among many Witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others also.* And from Titus, i. 5. *For this Cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set it Order the Things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City, as I had appointed thee.* From which common Practice of the Apostles, we may be assur'd (however differently from them some Persons now-a-days may think, who, it seems, conceit themselves to be wiser, and to understand the Will both of Christ and his Apostles better than they; ) we may be assured, we say, their Opinion was, that the Offices of Church-men were not temporary, and to die with their Persons: But, on the contrary, it was the Will of the Author of this Religion, that there should be a Succession of such Officers,

Officers, vested with the same necessary Powers of explaining the Doctrines of Christianity, and of enforcing the Duties of it, to the End of the World.

28. We have shewn in Part the first, *Seet.* the third, and *Prop.* first, that the Legislative Power of the Church resided both in Clergy and Laity ; and that all Rites, Customs, and Ordinances respecting Matters of Religion, and necessary to the decent, regular Performance of publick Worship, were agreed upon, and consented to, by both *con-jointly*. But it deserves to be considered in this Place, that the Apostles constantly as-sum'd to themselves a full and absolute Power in the drawing up, and forming, as well *Rules of Conduct* to be observed by the first Christians towards their proper Pastors, and likewise towards one another ; as also of making all sorts of Laws relating to the Government of the Churches founded by them, and to the Faith and Practice of their respective Members. And this they generally did without consulting their Flock, or taking their Advice in such Cases as those. Agreeably to this, we find St. *Paul*, in many of his Epistles, exercising such an Authority,

rity, in Matters regarding both the Doctrines and Discipline of those Churches under his Care and Direction : And *ſo*, ſays he, *ordain I in all Churches*. The Reaſons for which Conduct in the Apoſtles we take to be theſe.

29. *Fiſt*, In all Changes of Religion, where the Change is from one Religion to another eſſentially different, both in the *Credenda* and *Agenda* of it, as was the Caſe at the Time of Men's Conversion from Paganism to Chriſtianity, in a Change, we ſay, of this Nature, the Means and Inſtruments of ſuch Change, that is, the Apoſtles, and other inſpired Perſons call'd up at different Times to this important Work, muſt be allowed to have a more perfect Knowledge of the Nature and Genius of the Chriſtian Religion, as alſo what particular Form of Government, and what kind of Discipline would beſt ſuit a Church of this Complexion, than their Converts could be ſuppoſed to have had. A Religion, which had the Completion of ſuch a Number of Prophecies, and the Working of ſo many Miracles in its Favour, ſoon convinced the firſt Chriſtians of the divine Extraction of its Author :

thor : And because they had not Leisure, nor perhaps ( which was the most likely of the two ) Capacity, to examine into the peculiar Tendency of those Doctrines and religious Opinions, into the Nature of those Duties, as likewise into the Grounds of their Obligation, which the Apostles taught and enforc'd as necessary both to be believed and practis'd, so were they under a Necessity of leaving those things to the Care and Management of the Apostles, whose Judgment they rely'd on, as they had good Reason so to do, and constantly paid a most willing Obedience to all their Determinations.

30. *Secondly*, The Apostles always acting by the Guidance, and under the Direction, of the Holy Ghost, the Faith and Practice of the first Christians, *as to those and all other Points*, had a firm and solid Foundation to rest on. The Apostles being led by the infallible Spirit of God into the Knowledge of all necessary Truths ; and therefore obeying their Orders, and manifesting a willing Compliance with, and regard to, their Decisions, was no other than obeying the Orders, and paying a Regard to the unerring Dictates of the Holy Spirit. But those

Gifts

Gifts and Illuminations, so eminently illustrious both in the Words and Writings, in the Lives and Actions, of the Propagators of the Christian Faith, ceasing at the further spreading of it, with them ceased also the Reason, and consequently the Right, of the Apostles Successors, in making ecclesiastical Laws, whether respecting the Government of the Church, or the Faith and Morals of her Members, exclusively of the Knowledge, or independently on the Consent, of the Laity, after the Settlement of Christianity in all those Places where it was first received. And the Laity being more at Liberty, and having better Opportunities of enquiring into the Grounds and Reasons of their Faith; of discovering its superior Excellency to all other Religions, wheresoever and by whomsoever embrac'd; of finding out what particular Mode of Worship (if one Mode be preferable to another) was either prescrib'd by, or what appeared to be most acceptable to Christ, its Founder; of judging what Form of ecclesiastical Polity would make most for the Peace and Unity of the Church; would render its Influences more extensive; and which was best suited

to answer the Ends of its Institution; as Men, we say, began to have Leisure to make those Enquiries, and were furnished with proper Helps and Assistances for that Purpose, so, in Proportion to those their Abilities, were their Obligations to make a proper Use of them, and to form their Judgment, and afterwards their Practice, conformably to the Result of such Enquiries; for it is demonstrative “that Religion is  
 “no further valuable, or of Service to Men,  
 “than as it is founded in Conviction and  
 “Choice.” Agreeably to which *Tertullian* says, *that to use Force in religious Matters is no Property of true Religion, to which Men must be led by Choice, and not by Violence.* The Successors of the Apostles therefore not having, like them, the Advantages of Inspiration, or a Super-natural Assistance from *the Father of Light*, a Distinction, properly speaking, ought to be made betwixt the one and the other, with Respect to Legislation. Because to argue from the Practice and common Method of Proceeding, as to this, and other Particulars, in the Apostles, and other *gifted* Teachers, to what ought to be the Practice of their Successors in the Church, is to put the Decrees of fallible Men

upon a Level with those of the infallible Spirit of God himself ; and consequently, tho' many Things were enacted by the Apostles, and first Officers of the Christian Church, without the Concurrence of the Laity, yet it does by no means follow from thence, that the Ministers and Officers of Christ's Church have a Right to assume any Powers of this Sort, or to act after such a Manner, nor that any of their Successors from that Time ever had. An Author, we have somewhere met with, and whose Words, as near as we can remember them, are to this Effect, says, " The Determinations of  
 " the Apostles are allowed to be Obligatory,  
 " for that very Reason that their Writings  
 " are allowed to be the Rule of Faith to  
 " all Christians, *viz.* for that immediate  
 " Inspiration of the Holy Spirit which they  
 " were so eminently endow'd with ; which  
 " Circumstance makes a very wide Difference  
 " betwixt the Apostles and their Successors."

31. *Lastly*, If the first Christians embrac'd their Religion upon good Grounds ; if the Gospel met with such a Belief and Regard from the Professors of it as was due to the Excellency of its Doctrines, the Justness of its Re-  
 pre-



presentations, the Reasonableness of its Precepts, and the Veracity of its Vouchers, that is, the Testimonies of the Apostles ; if the Evidences of Conviction were so clear and conspicuous, and withall so strong and cogent, that fair and ingenuous Minds might with Safety acquiesce in, and firmly adhere to : Then those same good Grounds and Reasons which dispos'd the first Converts to receive the Gospel, and made it a necessary Duty in them to embrace the Christian Faith, when set before them in such favourable Lights, and under those affecting Circumstances ; those same good Grounds and Reasons, we say, which pav'd the Way to this happy Effect, will also justify their Obedience to all such Rules and Precepts, to such Rites and Ceremonies, and other Circumstantials of publick Worship, as the Apostles thought proper for the Service of the Christian Church, and which her Necessities at those particular Junctures called for and demanded ; of which Necessities, and of the properest Methods of providing for them, the Apostles must, on all Hands, be allow'd the best and most competent Judges. But the Obedience paid, at the first Conversions from

Heathenism to Christianity, to all such Orders of the Apostles as related both to Matters of Doctrine and Discipline, could never give the subsequent Governors of this Church a Right to the same implicit Obedience from her Lay-Members, much less a Right to make Laws independently on their Consent. Because Circumstances ceasing, or altering from what they were, the Reasons, upon which the Apostles and other inspired Persons Conduct, in respect of Legislation, was founded, chang'd, or rather ceas'd with them.

32. But tho' Church-men have not, either from the Reasons of Things, which are by God's Appointment, and, in this Sense, Manifestations of his Will, or from the express Declarations of Christ and his Apostles, a Right to make Laws; whether we consider them as relating to the *Credenda* or *Agenda* in Religion, and so consequently to the fixing the Terms of Admission into the Christian Church; or to the Administration of the Word and Sacraments, and the more orderly Performance of divine Worship; tho' Church-men, we say, have no Right to make Provisions of this kind which shall bind the Laity independently on their Consent; yet

is it a Part of the general Law of Equity, as well as a Maxim founded on common Usage among all Professions in Life, *viz.* that they be consulted, and their Advice taken in Things immediately belonging to their Province; and that they have a principal Hand in drawing up Propositions, and in reducing them into some sort of Form and Method, which, when minutely considered with all their attendant Circumstances, and mutually agreed upon both by Clergy and Laity, are to be enacted into Law. Because it is universally allowed, that every one, *cæteris paribus*, is a better Judge of his own Profession, and of the Duties of it, and what Means are requisite for the careful Discharge of them, than one that is a Stranger to it, or but little conversant in it, is. And upon this Presumption are all Kinds of Proceedings in the World generally regulated. But for his greater Satisfaction, let the Reader turn back to the Proposition just now refer'd to.

33. That the Christian Church, from the very forming of it, had a Ministry to preach the Doctrines, to explain the Will, and administer the Sacraments of its Founder;

that the Power also of taking others into this Ministry, and so of continuing the Succession, belong'd to her Officers, have both of them been already shewn : It has been likewise made out above, that the Right of making all Sorts of ecclesiastical Laws relating to Matters of Faith and Practice, to Order and Discipline ; as also of appointing all such Rites and Ceremonies as are necessary to the decent, orderly Performance of the several distinct Parts of publick Worship ; that the Right, we say, of making those Provisions belongs to all the Members of this religious Society, as well Laity as Clergy. We shall now go on to enumerate some other Powers, Rights, &c. of this Society, as they are to be found in the Writings of the New Testament.

34. Our Saviour speaking to his Disciples of Offences, that they must happen, denounces the Woe of those by whom they do come, in saying, it had been better for such Men they had never been born. He afterwards turns his Discourse from the Person offending to the Person offended, and declares what is the Duty of Man under that particular Circumstance. For tho'  
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his Words were not personally directed, that is, were not directed to any certain Persons then present with him, yet they must be allowed to be spoken, if not to those of that Character, yet in Reference to such as should one Time or other come under that Character or Consideration : Our Saviour, we say, turning himself from one to the other, speaks thus ; *Moreover, if thy Brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his Fault between thee and him alone : If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy Brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the Mouth of two or three Witnesses every Word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church : But if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be to thee as an Heathen Man and a Publican.* These Words, says the learned Bishop *Stillingfleet*, have been pressed into the Service of all the several sorts of Churches erected, and in use among Christians, as well to vindicate the Lawfulness, as the Necessity of their own particular Form of Church-Government. Tho' others, so far from thinking any one individual Form to

contained in them, or by Consequence to be deduced from them, do on the contrary maintain, that they have no Relation at all to Matters of ecclesiastical Policy, but consequently concern Men only in their private Capacity. The best Way to come at the true Meaning and Importance of them, is to take a View of them in the Order in which they stand, as also the Connection of them both with what went before, and with what follow'd them. In this Light we shall proceed to consider them.

35. Our Saviour begins this Chapter with addressing himself to his Disciples *distinctly* from the Multitude ; to those he constantly kept with him, during the whole Time of his Ministry upon Earth, that they might hear the Doctrines and see the Works which he had done amongst them, the better to manifest both the one and the other to the World, to which Work he knew they should be called in due Time, as being Eye-Witnesses, and consequently the best Vouchers of Facts of this Nature. It was to those, with whom the grand *Deposit* of our Faith was to be entrusted, that he spoke ; those chosen Instruments for propagating the Faith.

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both among *Jews* and Gentiles, and consequently those, to whom the Government of the Churches, founded by them, should be in due Time committed. And therefore the Rules of Behaviour he here lays down, the Doctrines he delivers, and the Duties he explains, seem not to be, (and upon strict Enquiry will be really found not to be so) seem not to be, we say, so much design'd for their Use, as for the Use of those who, in Times to come, should be plac'd under their Care and Direction.

36. But to come to an Explanation of the Words themselves. The whole Chapter may be considered, as we before observ'd, either as a Sermon drawn out into Rules of Behaviour for the Disciples themselves, or to be preach'd and enforced by them, or their Successors in that Office, for the Service of those that should be converted to the Christian Faith. But that the Charge, here given, principally respected, and was in Truth intended for those Churches that were to be form'd by them, will seem, we presume, extremely probable from the Reasons that shall hereafter be assigned. The Person *offended* was required to go to the Person  
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who committed the Offence ; to tell him of it ; and what Injury he had done him, either in regard to his Person, his Character, or his Property. And if the Party *offending* refus'd to hear him, that is, if he could not, or, rather would not, be convinced that he was in a Fault, and so consequently not express a proper Abhorrence of it, *then was he to take one or two more with him, &c. and if he neglected to hear them, &c.* then the Offence enlarg'd itself, and became more general. And for this plain Reason, that every Crime, tho' committed but against one single Individual, is, in some Sense, a Crime committed against the whole human Species, particularly against that part of the Species, combin'd into such particular Body or Society, of which the *offending* and *offended* Persons are Members ; because it is a Breach of some Part or Parts of that general Law, by the Observance of which the whole human Species, and consequently that particular Society, is preserv'd and made happy ; and who, in Proportion to their greater or less Deviations from it, must be proportionably more or less miserable. Those Remonstrances proving ineffectual, the injured Person



Person is directed to proceed a Step further, and the Accufation is order'd to be laid before the Church; and if he neglects to hear the Church, he is to be counted as an Heathen Man and a Publican. And thus, for the Reason before given, it comes, that the Offence, tho' originally of a private Nature, yet by being openly reprov'd, but still obstinately persisted in, the Offence, we say, becomes general, and in some Degree affects all those under whose Notice or Cognizance it happens to fall: And so what was only a particular Offence, comes to be gradually chang'd into a publick Scandal. The great Difficulty here is supposed to lie in coming at the true Meaning of the Word *Church*; that by it cannot be meant the *Jewish* Sanhedrim, is, we presume, evident from hence, that Our Saviour would never, as a certain great Writer justly observes upon this Passage, have sent his Disciples to those whom he knew would treat them with the most implacable Spite and Hatred. The Word *Church* therefore in this Place must mean, we think, the Church that was to be gathered by the Apostles after Christ's Ascension up into Heaven, or those Assemblies of

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of Christians that should meet together publicly to profess their Faith in a crucified Saviour. Whatever the Word *ἐκκλησία* may be made to signify in some Authors, yet is it all along in the New Testament constantly used in this Sense, that is, for a Number of Christians united into a Body, or assembled together, upon a religious Account, as is abundantly evident from a Multitude of Places in the Epistles. Can we think therefore that it should signify one Thing in one Place of Scripture, and another Thing in another? Or, that it should have distinct and different Senses or Meanings? This would be such an Inconsistency as we dare not, as we cannot, in Justice, fix either upon Christ, or his Apostles. But to proceed to the next succeeding Verse. *Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.* Who sees not, that sees any thing at all, that these Words do not necessarily refer to the Powers of Excommunication and Absolution as now practis'd and in Use in the Christian Church? Or, to speak more properly, that the Exercise of those Powers in the Church

Church does not necessarily take their Rise and first Institution from thence? Words, so plain, that no Comment can possibly make them plainer, are not applicable to any but to the Officers of the Christian Church. They are of the same Significancy, and of equal Importance with those, he left with his Disciples immediately before his Ascension, when he gave them their Commission to preach the Gospel. John xx. ver. 21, 22, 23. *Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said thus, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whosoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever Sins ye retain, they are retained.* Consequently, if these latter Words be spoke to the Disciples in the Character of Apostles, or Officers of the Christian Church to be form'd by them, so must the former likewise, that is, those we have been now explaining must fall under the same Consideration also; because they have the same natural Import or Meaning with them, as is obvious to the meanest Capacity.

37. The two Verses following this seem also strongly to confirm the Truth of the Account which we here give. *Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree upon Earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.* These Words necessarily refer to the Christian Church, which, tho' not fully then in Being, yet the Foundation of it being laid by our Saviour himself, it kept gradually forming, and proceeding on in its Progress to greater Degrees of Perfection, till it was finally completed by the Apostles. These Words the Church of *England* has adopted into her Service, by inserting them into, and making them a part of, the publick Forms, which she hath appointed to be us'd when Men assemble together upon those great and solemn Occasions.

38. The concluding Words of the Charge, *Let him be to thee as an Heathen Man and a Publican,* cannot, according to some Men's Explanation of them, be understood to mean, that the Offender should be summoned to  
appear

appear before the Heathen Courts of Judicature, and to be try'd there : Because this Practice in Christians, the Apostle, in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, absolutely condemns, and severely chides all those who were guilty of it ; Chap. vi. ver. 1. *Dare any of you, having a Matter against another, go to Law before the Unjust, and not before the Saints ?* And ver. 5, 6, of the same Chapter ; *I speak to your Shame ; Is it so, that there is not a wise Man among you ? No not one that shall be able to judge between his Brethren ? But Brother goeth to Law with Brother, and that before the Unbelievers.* The plain Sense of the Words, *let him be to thee as an Heathen Man and a Publican*, is this: Set a Mark of Infamy upon such a Person, and avoid him as thou wouldst one of the most notorious of Sinners ; and have no more Dealings, no other Intercourse, or Correspondence with him, than thou wouldst with an Heathen, or Publican, when engag'd in their idolatrous and wicked Practices.

39. The whole Drift of our Saviour's Discourse, and the Process of his Argumentation, seems to be this. He begins with addressing himself to his Disciples in the *Quality*

lity of Officers of the Christian Church, which was to be gathered by them after his Departure from them into Heaven. *If thy Brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his Fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy Brother.* If it should be objected, that the Words, according to the Order in which they stand, and in their most obvious Signification, cannot imply, or so much as relate to, any Offence committed against the future Rulers and Pastors of the Christian Church, but that the Offence, here spoken of, is of a less general Nature and Concernment, or, an Offence committed, carried on, and persisted in, by one private Man against another: In answer to this, let it be considered, that every Offence committed by any of the Members of the Christian Church, is, strictly speaking, in some sort a Crime or Offence against the proper Minister or Governor of that particular Church; just as in civil Matters, a Breach of the Law in any one Instance, is a Breach of, or rather a Rebellion against that Authority by which the Law was enacted, and therefore, in this View, will necessarily subject the Transgressor to the Displeasure

pleasure of the Person or Persons vested with that Authority. The Person offending is, we see, to be admonished privately of his Fault; and exhorted to leave and abandon it; *and if he will hear thee*, that is, if he be convinced of his Error, and, upon such Conviction, is resolv'd to forsake it, the injur'd Person is then said to have gained his Brother; that is, to have sav'd him from that Punishment, or from those Effects of God's Displeasure, to which, by his wilfully persisting in his Obstinacy, he had rendered himself justly liable, either in this Life, or in the next. *But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, &c.* that is, reprove him more openly, and in the Presence of two or three select Friends, who, after painting the Consequences of his Crime in the liveliest Colours, and placing them before him in the strongest and most glaring Light, who, after giving such an affecting Representation of them, we say, may probably reclaim him from a Course of Life which necessarily leads up to them, that is, which leads on to those Consequences. *And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church; and if he neglects to*

*bear the Church, let him be to thee as a Heathen Man and a Publican*; that is, lay the Matter before the whole Body or Society of Christians of which he is a Member, and, if after all those Admonitions and Reproofs, given with an Intent to work a Change in him, he continues still the same, and seems resolutely bent to go on in his old Way, *then let him be to thee as an Heathen Man and a Publican*; that is, excommunicate him, or cast him out of the Society as no longer worthy to continue a Member in it, and have no further Intercourse with him than with a Heathen or a Publican. This seems to be the proper and genuine Sense of our Saviour's Words in this remarkable Passage.

40. But notwithstanding all those Signs of Obstinacy and Refractoriness on the Offender's Part, if by some Means or other he afterwards comes to be possess'd with a just and affecting Sense of the Heinousness of his Offence, the Scandal he has created to all religious, piously-disposed Persons by his wilful Continuance in it, and shews, by all the Ways and Methods in his Power to shew it, a proper Dislike and Abhorrence of his past Behaviour, and is willing to give all the Satisfaction in his Power,  
and



and to submit to such Censures as the Church requires in Cases of this Nature, then is she, under such Circumstances of Conviction, and upon those Signs of Repentance and Amendment, then, we say, the Church is obliged to take him into her Society again, and he stands equally entitled, with any other of her Members, to all the Benefits of her Communion, provided his Sorrow and Reformation be both sincere and real. For, to use the Words of the Apostle, this Power (as all Sorts and Degrees of ecclesiastical Power, when properly applied, will be ever found to have,) was given for Edification, and not for Destruction. We conclude therefore, that Excommunication, or the Power of expelling disorderly, irregular Persons out of the Church's Communion, was instituted by Christ himself.

41. But supposing this Explanation of the Words of our Saviour not to be the right one, and consequently, that it could not be inferr'd from them that Excommunication was a Power vested in the Church by Christ; yet so much, we presume, may be inferr'd from them, *viz.* that it was lawful for the Church to make Use of this expulsive Power or Faculty: For if private, or particular Persons are not only

allow'd the Liberty, but, strictly commanded to shun those who have offended them, or have given just Cause of Offence, so may large Bodies, or Associations of Men, avoid those who break the Rules, and consequently disturb the Peace of those Societies, or act contrary to the End, and against the Intention of such Associations of Men.

42. That Christ design'd the Teachers, and Propagators of his Religion, should be subsisted by the Laity, fully appears from the Directions he gave both to the Twelve, and Seventy, when he sent them out, at different Times, and gave them Authority to preach the Gospel. See *Mat. Chap. x. Ver. 9, 10, &c.* *Luke, Chap. ix. Ver. 3.* also *Luke x. 1, 2, 3, 4.* *Provide neither Gold, nor Silver, nor Bras in your Purses; nor Scrip for your Journey; neither two Coats, neither Shoes, nor yet Staves, &c.* And the Reason he gives why they should not make any such Provision, is, *Because the Workman is worthy of his Meat.* St. Paul, speaking of the Maintenance that should be assign'd for the Officers of the Christian Church, commands the *Galatians*, to whom he wrote, that *they should communicate to their Teachers in all good Things.* And if they are oblig'd to

do this, then must the Ministers of this Church derive from hence a Right to a certain Share in all the good Things the Laity possess: For, agreeably to an Observation we have more than once made, if there be an Obligation to pay on the one Hand, there must be a proportionable Right to demand on the other. If we turn to the ninth *Chapter* of *St. Paul's* first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, we shall find him setting down, in the 13th and 14th *Verses*, the Practice of the *Old Testament* as a Pattern to the *New*. *Do ye not know*, says he, *that they which minister about holy Things, live of the Things of the Temple? and they which wait at the Altar, are Partakers with the Altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.* And tho' he declares in the *Verses* immediately following, that it was not his Custom, nor indeed his Desire, to exact Contributions of them, being willing to be as little burthensome as possible to them, yet in several of his Epistles to other Churches he both requires, and insists, that they make Collections for the Subsistence of those Officers who ministred amongst them: And this he does in a Way which plainly shews that they

had a Right to them ; otherwise, one of his Art and Address would have applied himself to them upon this Occasion in a different Manner. And the Passage before cited plainly establishes their Property in them.

43. There have been Writers, who from those Words of *St. Paul* would infer, that the Law of Tithes was still in Force under the Gospel, and ever to remain obligatory upon all such as should embrace it. But the Apostle only fetches his Proof from one of *Moses's* Institutions, to confirm the Equity and Reasonableness of providing, in some Way or other, for the Ministers of Christ's Religion, and not to prove the particular Way in which it is to be done, or the *Modus* of making this Provision. And if we look into the History of the first Ages of Christianity, we shall find the Professors of it living upon the Alms and charitable Contributions of the People, and not laying any sort of a Claim to a Tenth for their Subsistence : Tho' upon a little Reflection it will be own'd, that, supposing Tithes, or any other fixt, standing Provision, to be, upon the Whole, the properest Maintenance that could be assigned for the Use of a Christian Clergy ; yet, till the

the Conversion from Paganism to Christianity was become general, and it, that is, Christianity, the established Religion, they could not in Justice be insisted upon by the Officers of it ; as being in many Nations, to whom *this Doctrine* was preached, in the Hands of the Priests of the establish'd Religion of such Nation or Nations. And be it further considered, that since the Apostles, and their immediate Successors, were oblig'd to preach the Gospel to all Nations, Tithes or any other settled Provision became, as a certain Writer justly observes, an improper Maintenance for them, as being incompatible with their wandering, unfixt State of Life ; which is one Reason, that Tithes, supposing them under the Gospel to be due *divino Jure*, as we really believe them not to be, they would not, we say, under those Circumstances, be insisted on, but rather, if offered, refus'd. When indeed Christianity came to be of popular, general Belief, and so consequently the national Religion, by being erected into an Establishment, the Legislature, or supreme Power of the Nation, usually provided for the Clergy's Maintenance by way of Tithes ; a Custom in Use

(however they might come by it) among other Nations besides the *Jews*. But to put the Matter out of all Dispute. Since Christianity (as we shall shew presently) composes a Society both free and independent on the Civil, it can be united to the State upon no other Terms or Conditions but those delivered in the fourth Section. One of which is, that the Legislature have a Right to appropriate such a Share of the national Property for the Maintenance of Church-men, as should, in Reason, be thought fit for Persons *so circumstanced*, and what their Office in Life, and relation to Society, seem to lay an equitable Claim to. But tho' a divine Right to Tithes cannot be deduc'd from those Words of the Apostle, yet they afford a very good Argument for proving the Justice and Lawfulness of providing in this Way or Manner for Church-Officers.

44. For every Thing delivered in Scripture, was given, and left upon Record, for our Profit and Advantage, either here or hereafter: The Facts there related; the Cases stated; the Suppositions of Things and Persons made; the Motives offered, and Reasons assign'd; and the Examples propos'd, or referr'd to; were all and each of them design'd, either

either to serve by way of Imitation, for general Rules of Conduct ; or to restrain from Vice and Wickedness, by way of Reproof and Correction ; or, in the Way of Exhortation, Advice and Emulation, to engage Men to, and to support them in, the Pursuits of universal Charity and Benevolence ; and to pay a strict, impartial Regard to the Good of the Whole, in all Cases, where thro' an untoward, perverse Mixture of Causes, it and private Interest happen to clash and interfere. We find also some Instructions there given, and Precepts enjoin'd, and Duties enforced, concern Men as Men, the Observance of which being of universal Usefulness and Expediency, are fit for universal Imitation. Others relate to particular Bodies of Men, or to particular Customs, Practices and Institutions in Use amongst them, which ceasing, the Usefulness of those Instructions, Precepts, &c. and consequently their Obligation, ceases at the same Time. The Usefulness of the one being general, were intended for Men in general ; the Usefulness of the other being limited to particular Times, Places, and Persons, when they lose this Usefulness, they have no further Force, or they oblige no longer. Thus for Instance, Religi-

on being absolutely necessary both to Man's present and future Happiness, and Religion not being able to subsist, or to have its proper Weight and Influence with Mankind, without a Church with Ministers to officiate in it, and to attend wholly upon the Duties of their Function; and there being no sufficient Motive for Persons to enter into that Office, without a suitable Provision being made for their easy and comfortable Continuance in it; therefore whatever Rules, God, as a wise and good Being, shall be pleased to lay down concerning such Maintenance, and the Mode or Manner in which it is to be administered, is and will be, as being of a general Nature and Significancy, both universally lawful and proper to be imitated by all Nations who believe and worship a God.

¶ 45. But tho' we assert both the Lawfulness and Expediency, we are yet far from contending for the absolute Necessity of providing in one particular Manner for the Officers of Christ's Church: Means, equally conducive to the same End, are equally valuable, and, under that Consideration, equally fit to be chose. And upon Supposition, that any other Method of providing for Churchmen,



men, than by Way of Tithes, appears less burthenfome to the Laity, and in every Reſpect as convenient for the Clergy, nothing hinders, that we can ſee, but that the Legislature, if ſo diſpos'd, may make Choice of it. For being Trustees and Guardians of the Peoples Property, they are obliged to diſpoſe of that Part of it which is neceſſary to ſerve the Purpoſes of Religion, and conſequently the Ends of civil Government, in a Way beſt conſiſtent with, and moſt advantageous to, the Eaſe and Quiet of the Subject. What we maintain then is only this, that a good Argument may be drawn from thence in Vindication of thoſe Laws and Acts of State which give the Clergy a Right to Tithes, as the proper Means of a Maintenance for them.

46. We ſhould not, we own, have dwelt ſo long upon this Article, had we not, by Chance, met with a Book entitled the *Comedian*, or; *Philoſophical Enquirer*, (Number the ſeventh, Page the tenth) in which are to be found theſe remarkable Words, *viz.* that all preaching for Hire is, according to the *Dispensation of the Goſpel*, *Iniquity*; and Page the 20th, that the receiving of Tithes

*is inconsistent with the Laws of the Gospel.*

Positions contrary both to Reason and Fact; and which, we think, are sufficiently exploded by what has been said above. A Maintenance for religious Officers in general is due by divine Right, but the particular Manner of raising it is left to Men's Discretion. Tithes seem to be neither enjoined nor forbidden by the Laws of the Gospel; and therefore may or may not be appointed by human Authority, as to such Authority this Way of providing for the Ministers of Christ shall seem either expedient or not expedient.

47. We are now able to give an Answer to those who ask, how are the Legislature to proceed in settling a Maintenance upon the Officers of the Christian Church? Are they ty'd down to one certain Method of doing it? Or does it depend on their Wills to provide for them in *this*, or *that*, or any *other* Way? We observ'd before in regard to the *Jewish* Church, that God himself first form'd it; drew out their whole Scheme of ecclesiastical Policy; instituted their Priesthood; prescrib'd the Whole of their religious Service; mark'd out, for the Levites,

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all their several Rights, Dues, Offerings, &c. and afterwards united this religious Society to the State. But this was not the Case of the Christian Church; it was left (as we shall shew immediately) independent on the civil Power, and consequently at Liberty to unite itself to all the various Forms of civil Government in the World, upon such Terms and Considerations as should be mutually agreed upon betwixt the governing Parts of those distinct, independent Societies; one of which Terms or Conditions was, that it should be in the Choice of the supreme Power of every Nation to settle the Clergy's Maintenance in such particular Manner, as, all things considered, appear'd best upon the Whole, that is, most suitable to the one to pay, and for the other to receive.

48. Before we proceed any further, it is proper to observe, that, among other Instructions given by our Saviour in his Charge to the Apostles, is the following one, *freely ye have received, freely give*: From whence a certain Sect, or Profession of Christians amongst us, have concluded, that the Gospel ought to be preached, and the other Offices of Church-men perform'd, gratuitously, or without

without any Recompence being made them in Return; and consequently that Tithes, or any other fixt, settled Provision appropriated for the Maintenance of a Christian Clergy, are not only an useless, but an unlawful Institution, and contrary to the exprefs Order and Command of Christ their Master. But to begin with an Exposition of the Words.

49. *Freely ye have received, freely give.* Receiv'd! what? not merely the Power of governing Christ's Church, which, as yet, had not a Being; nor the Power of admitting Persons Members of this Church by Baptism; nor of administering the Word and Sacraments; of ejecting the Criminal, &c. which were the fixt, standing Powers in the Church after it had once acquired an Establishment. *But ye have received, the Powers of healing the Sick, of cleansing the Lepers, of raising the Dead, and of casting out Devils.* As ye therefore have freely received these miraculous Powers, freely exercise them, of your own accord, and without Fee or Reward. These were Gifts, we see, of an extraordinary Nature, bestow'd upon extraordinary Persons, and to be used upon extraordinary Occasions, the better to engage

engage both the Heads and Hearts of those to whom *such chosen Instruments* in his Hands were to address themselves. Men who could perform such wonderful Acts as those, would not fail of being listen'd to with Admiration, and heard with an awful reverential sort of a Regard. Facts not lying in the common Road of Events, and out of God's usual Method of proceeding by Means or second Causes, or, which plainly surpass all the Powers of created Beings simply to perform ; Facts, we say, of this extraordinary Nature and Tendency, cannot fail of exciting our Astonishment, and are apt to fix our Attention wholly upon them. And they are generally introduc'd, at certain peculiar Junctures, either for the Repeal of some old Law or Institution, or for the Establishment of a new one.

50. The Words therefore, according to the Dependence which they have upon what goes before, and what follows them, cannot be said to relate, in any Sense, to the future Pastors of Christ's Church ; to the Doctrines they were to preach ; to the Powers to be exercis'd by them ; or to the Rights they should acquire from the Labours of their Functions :

Functions : But they were spoke to Persons then going to be eminently endow'd with Gifts which were not intended to be communicated to any Officers of this Church, after Christianity had once obtained a full and perfect Settlement. And consequently, considering their natural Import and Significancy, nothing can be inferr'd from them, which can any Ways, or in any Degree, affect the standing ordinary Ministry of Christ's Church; or which has any sort of Reference to their Rights, Powers, Privileges, Duties or Obligations, of what Kind or Denomination soever they be.

51. Christianity not only constitutes a Society distinct from the Civil, in the Way that any other Species of Religion does, but the Christian Church is declared to be a Society by the Founder of it. The Title of *Kingdom* given by Christ to his Church, almost in every Page of the four Evangelists in which he speaks of this Church; and the Declaration he is pleas'd to make of the Nature of this Kingdom, and of the Conditions upon which Persons are to be admitted into it, and made Members of it; and the Qualifications those should have who  
were

were to officiate in it ; strongly confirm the Truth of our Position. Let us add to this, that Christ, and in Obedience to his Example, his Apostles, appointed those Ministers ; made a Distinction betwixt them, as plainly appears from the different Commissions he delivered to the Twelve and Seventy ; and vested them with those Powers, and gave them such Instructions, as were necessary for the respective Business each had to do in the Church : From which Conduct of Christ and his Apostles we would draw this Observation, *viz.* that a Number or Collection of Men having certain Officers appointed to preside over them, to teach them their Duty, what they are to do, and what to avoid ; and those Officers having a Power deputed them of admitting others into their Body ; constituting a Difference betwixt those *so admitted* both in respect of their Employment and Power ; giving out Orders ; exercising Discipline ; proceeding by certain Rules, and observing the strictest Regimen themselves ; a number of Men, we say, so combined into a Body, and acting under certain Regulations, are, in the most proper Acceptation of the Word, a Society.

51. And if Christianity composes a Society, the necessary Consequence of this is, that all those Truths, or Propositions, which were drawn out and demonstrated in the second, and in the Beginning of the third Section, are applicable to the Christian Church, supposing none of them can be found (as most, if not all them, may be found) in the New Testament; some of which we shall now take Notice of, as being of great Importance to the right Formation of a proper Union betwixt the two Societies.

52. The Christian Church is declar'd absolutely incapable of the Exercise of temporal Power of any kind, by its great Founder, in those remarkable Words, *My Kingdom is not of this World*. Which Words, as they took their rise from that Question, *art thou the King of the Jews*, put to our Saviour when conven'd before the Roman Governor, and are a direct Answer to it in the Negative; and with which the said chief Governor was so well satisfied, as to go out of the Judgment-Hall, and tell the People there assembled, *I find no Fault in him at all*: Which Words, we say, as they are a full Denial of his being in any Sense



a temporal Prince, do, in their plain, and obvious Meaning, imply the following Truths.

53. *First*, That the Use of all Sorts and Degrees of coercive Power is expressly disclaim'd by Christ himself, and consequently no such Power can belong to those Officers whom he appointed to preside over his Church.

54. *2dly*, That Christ hath a Kingdom, tho' it be not a Kingdom of this World.

55. *3dly*, That as the Subject-Members of any Kingdom are governed by Laws peculiarly fitted to the Nature of such Kingdom, and the particular End of its Appointment; and as in the drawing them up, and in framing them, Care must be used, that those Laws do take in, and correspond to, the several Circumstances of those Members which compose that Kingdom; or, in other Words, since the Means by which every Kingdom is continued, and the Affairs of it administered, are the Sanctions which attend the Observance and Non-observance of its Laws, that is, Rewards and Punishments; so the Sanctions of Christ's Laws are not temporal Rewards and Punishments, not the Rewards and Punishments of this Life; but the Rewards and Punish-

ments of another World, and so consequently of a Nature or Quality corresponding to the Subject who enjoys or suffers them, and to the Place in which they are to be enjoy'd or suffer'd. Christ hath expressly told us, that Rewards and Punishments in another State of Being shall be the necessary, the unavoidable Consequents of Men's observing or neglecting his Laws and Commandments in this; and consequently that the punishing Men for the Breach of those Laws here, or for some Difference in Sentiment relating to any Part or Circumstance in his Religion, is taking the Reins of Government out of his Hands, and acting in his Room, or dispensing Punishments in his Stead, which no Man, or Body of Men can have a Right to do. Under the *Jewish* Dispensation, so perfect was their Policy, as perfect indeed it must be, being drawn up and made by God himself, Rewards and Punishments were dispens'd in exact Proportion to Men's Obedience and Disobedience to God's Laws. And their Religion, which enjoin'd them the Belief of one God only, taught them that temporal Blessings and Afflictions should (and in Fact ever did) follow their

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their Compliance with, and Neglect of, their Maker's Will. The Exhortation to any particular Act was constantly either accompany'd, or else usher'd in, with this or the like Promise, *Do thus and live*; or, *if thou observe to do all these Statutes and Commandments which I have commanded thee, thou shalt do well, or thy Soul shall live*. And the Denunciation or Threatning always runs in this Strain, *the Soul that doth so, or so, shall surely be cut off*. These were the Motives upon which the Obligation to the *Jewish* Religion rested. Now a Kingdom of this Nature, and to be governed in such Manner, did the Followers of Christ at first expect that his should be; their Notion of it was, that it should consist in much outward Pomp and Shew; in a great deal of ritual and ceremonial Observances; and to be administered by Rewards and Punishments of this World. But our Saviour, to convince them before-hand, if they could have been convinc'd by him in a sober rational Way, of the great fundamental Mistake they lay under in this Respect, tells the *Jews*, that *the Law and the Prophets were until John; since that Time the Kingdom is preach'd*. And in another

Place, when it was demanded of him by the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God should come, he answered them, and said, *The Kingdom of God cometh not with Observation; neither shall ye say, Lo here, or Lo there; for behold, the Kingdom of God is within you, or, as it is sometimes rendered, amongst you.*—

That our Saviour absolutely condemned the Use of Force in Matters of Religion, further appears, from that severe Rebuke with which he restrain'd the Zeal of his Disciples, who, *Elias-like*, would have Fire come down from Heaven and consume them, saying, *Ye know not what Manner of Spirit ye are of*, that is; how averse this vindictive, furious Spirit is from the Design and End of my Gospel; for the Son of Man is come, not to destroy, but to save Men's Lives.

55. Every distinct Religion, with the several Acts and Circumstances necessarily attendant on the publick Profession of it, ought to be free and voluntary; and the Reason is, because it is the Will and Intention of the Agent (as we have shewn in the Beginning of the 2d Section) of a Man only, which entitles him to the Approbation or Disapprobation, and consequently to the Favour or Displeasure of others.

others. Consequently, to use either Compulsion or Restraint in Matters of Religion, is altogether incompatible with its Nature, and therefore absolutely unjustifiable. From whence we may gather this Truth, *viz.* that a Religion founded on the last and most perfect Revelation of the Will of God to Mankind, must have this one common Badge, Characteristick, or Quality belonging to it; that is, it must be propagated by such Arguments, and enforced from such Motives, as naturally tend to satisfy the Reason of Men's Minds, and to incline their Wills to an Agreement with them. And therefore, after the Grounds upon which it stands are fully established, and clearly brought to Light, and its superior Excellency to every other Scheme of Religion evidently shewn and demonstrated, not the least Force or Violence is to be used to compel Men to come over to it, but it must be left to their Choice whether they will submit to the Arguments, and consequently embrace the Doctrine founded on them. The great Founder of our Faith, far from obliging (otherwise than by endeavouring to convince them of the Reasonableness of the Thing) his Hearers to be of his Religion, applies himself to their Fa-

culties, and deals with them by Reason and Argument. And tho' he declared nothing but the Truth, which he had both heard and received from his Father; yet he offered it to their Understandings, that it might stand the Test of the severest Scrutiny and Examination. *Which of you* (says he) *convinceth me of Sin* (meaning of Falshood) *and if I speak the Truth, why do ye not believe me?* Whence we see, that our Saviour would not have his Hearers to take what he said upon Trust, but to try and examine those Things, and see whether they were such as Reason might give Men Room to expect in such an extraordinary Interposition of himself. But if after proper Examination made into the Nature, Tendency, and Obligation of each of them, the Doctrines which he promulges, the Precepts which he enjoins, and the Motives he offers, appear both rational and well-grounded, he desires that they would believe him, and act agreeably to such Conviction. A Procedure highly worthy of the Divine Being, as being most suitable to the Nature and Make of the human Mind. And if we direct our Enquiry into the Epistles, and take Notice of the Apostles Conduct as to this Point, we shall find

find them acting by the same common Rule, and observing our Saviour's Method. They constantly exhorted the first Christians to try their Religion, and examine the Doctrine delivered to them, whether it contained the true Faith or not, or was such as became God to propose, and fitting for Persons in their Circumstances to receive. St. Paul, in his 2d Epistle to the *Corinthians*, Chap. xiii. Verse 5. bids them *examine themselves whether they be in the Faith; and prove, says he, your own selves.* And likewise in his first Epistle to the Church of *Thessalonica*, he exhorts them to *prove all Things, and to hold fast that which is good.* St. John, in his first Epistle, Chap. the fourth, Verse the first, begins with addressing himself to the Brethren in this Manner: *Beloved, believe not every Spirit; but try the Spirits whether they be of God: Because* (this is the Reason he gives for their using such Caution) *many false Prophets are gone out into the World.* Which, by the Way, shews that Reason is not to be laid aside (otherwise we must for ever fluctuate in Uncertainties, or else admit every Revelation as true, which puts in its Claim to a Divine Origin and Extraction, and consequently be of that Religion which

which *Chance* has first thrown in our Way;) which shews, we say, that Reason is not to be laid aside in the Choice of a Man's Religion, but consequently must be the best Guide we have to trust to in a Matter of this Importance. And the same Apostle, to guard Mankind as much as possible from being deceived in Cases of this Nature, gives a Mark or Criterion whereby they, and after them all others might distinguish the Spirit of Truth from the Spirit of Error: The Spirit of Error carries on a worldly Interest and Design; and its Doctrines tend to the Advancement of outward Pomp and Grandeur. The *Beroeans* are highly commended by St. *Luke*, and spoken of as noble and generous, for examining attentively the Doctrine which the Apostles preach'd, whether *it were agreeable to the Scriptures: These*, saith he, *were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with Readiness of Mind, and search'd the Scriptures daily whether these Things were so.*

56. From this Manner of propagating the Gospel in the World, both by Christ and his Apostles, it is demonstrable their real Opinion was, that a Man's Religion is so far only valuable



uable and meritorious, as it is founded in Conviction and Choice. And the Reason seems to be, because such Religion is so far a Man's own, or it becomes his Property, as being acquired by the free Use and Exercise of his own rational Powers.

57. And as the Administration of Christ's Kingdom is not carry'd on by temporal Rewards and Punishments, so no Power upon Earth has a Right to sit as Legislator there, or to make Laws which shall affect Men's Salvation or Interest in a future State of Being, and consequently no Right to punish for the Breach or Violation of those Laws here. We demonstrated indeed before, that the civil Magistrate had no Power to interpose in religious Matters antecedently to the Union, any further than what was necessary for the Preservation of the State, that is, than to oblige to the publick Profession of the three great Truths so often mentioned above. For the Province of the Civil Magistrate, agreeably to a former Observation of ours, is, to deter from Vice by present Punishments, and not upon Considerations of future Happiness or Misery, which are the real and genuine Sanctions of Christ's Laws, and only to be exhibited and dispensed  
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in his Kingdom, when the proper Subjects of them arrive there.

58. And if the Church be a Society declared absolutely incapable of the Exercise of temporal Power, by the great Founder of it, then is it absolutely independent on every other Society that moves and acts by this sort of Power for compassing the Ends and Purposes of such Society. For what is it which creates the Dependency of one Thing upon another? Is it not the deriving those Means, and the holding of those Powers of that other, in the Use of one of which, and in the Exercise of the other, such Thing is preserved in Being, and continues to be the same it was? But civil and religious Society pursue the proper Ends of their Institution by distinct and different Means: The Means which civil Society makes Use of, is coercive Power; the Means religious Society employs, the very Reverse of this. Consequently as the two Societies hold nothing in common, so what each of them possesses cannot be derived from the other; since nothing can give another what it has not itself. Whence it will follow, that the two Societies must be reciprocally independent on each other, and so neither of them can have a  
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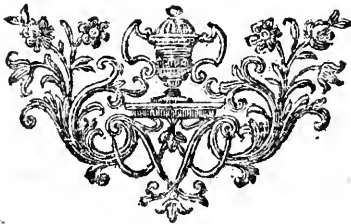
Right to disturb the other in the Use and Enjoyment of its respective Powers.

59. Supposing indeed the Nature and Genius of the Christian Religion, and the Design of its Founder, to be the same that they really are, and we can from thence prove, that it must be independent. We have shewn, in the second Section, that Religion was enjoin'd in order to preserve in Men's Minds a just and affecting Sense of their Dependency upon God, ever productive of suitable and becoming Resolutions to serve and obey him. But it is notorious that he is best serv'd by Acts of Justice and Munificence: Consequently the Design of Religion (the Design God had in constituting it the proper Duty of his rational, sensible Creatures) is to promote present and future Happiness conjointly; but so, or with such Restrictions, that when the Enjoyment of a less Degree of present is incompatible with the Enjoyment of a greater Degree of future Good, the former must give Place to the latter, or a present smaller Good must not be enjoy'd at the Expence of a future greater one. Whence we gather this Truth, that a Religion pretended to be built on the last Revelation of the Will of God to Mankind, must  
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be adapted, in the Nature and Tendency of its Doctrines, Precepts and Institutions, to procure Men all possible Happiness here consistently with their enjoying all possible Happiness hereafter. But it cannot benefit Mankind to such a Degree, or be introductive to those salutary, beneficial Consequences before-mention'd, without being erected into an Establishment, or by entering into an Union with the State, and no proper lasting Union can be made but betwixt two free and independent Bodies; because, as in all Conventions, certain Terms and Conditions, to be reciprocally perform'd, are ever agreed upon betwixt the contracting Parties, so, the dependent Body (if one of ~~them~~ be such) will not be allowed to make its own Terms and Conditions, but consequently such Terms must be drawn up by, and therefore will be made agreeable to, the Will of the independent one: And a Compact, so defective in its Make and Constitution, cannot be supposed to last long. And therefore a Religion coming with those Pretences which the Christian does, of being of such vast Importance to Man's present and future Happiness, must, on that Consideration, if from no other, be independent on the State, and consequently

frequently at Liberty to unite with it upon such Terms as are most agreeable to the Nature of a free Convention, and which seem best adapted to enable it to prosecute the proper Ends of its Institution with more Success, and with greater Facility. We shall close this Section, and with it our second Part, with observing, that the Description of the *Jewish* and Christian Church, with their several Marks and Characters, as given in the Old and New Testament, are entirely conformable to our general Idea of a Church, as explain'd and illustrated in the foregoing Sections of Part the first.

F I N I S.





*N. B.* The foregoing Sheets having already exceeded in Number what we intended they should have done; and the Reader, most likely, being willing to be releas'd from such a long and close Confinement, upon those two Accounts, not to mention a third, which has great Weight with us, we shall put off, for a While, the Enquiry intended to be discuss'd in the Appendix, as mention'd in Article 46th of the first Section, and Page the 67th; of which the Reader may expect an Account shortly in a Set-Treatise by itself. And we do this the more readily, as it has but little Relation to the Subject we have been treating of; and will probably carry the Reader a greater Length than he is aware of, or willing to go.





