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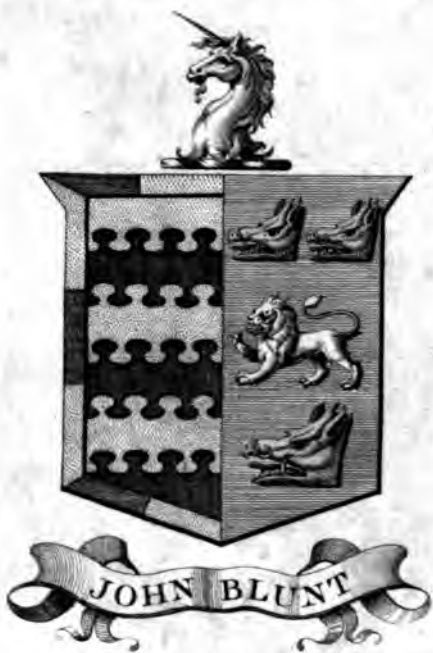
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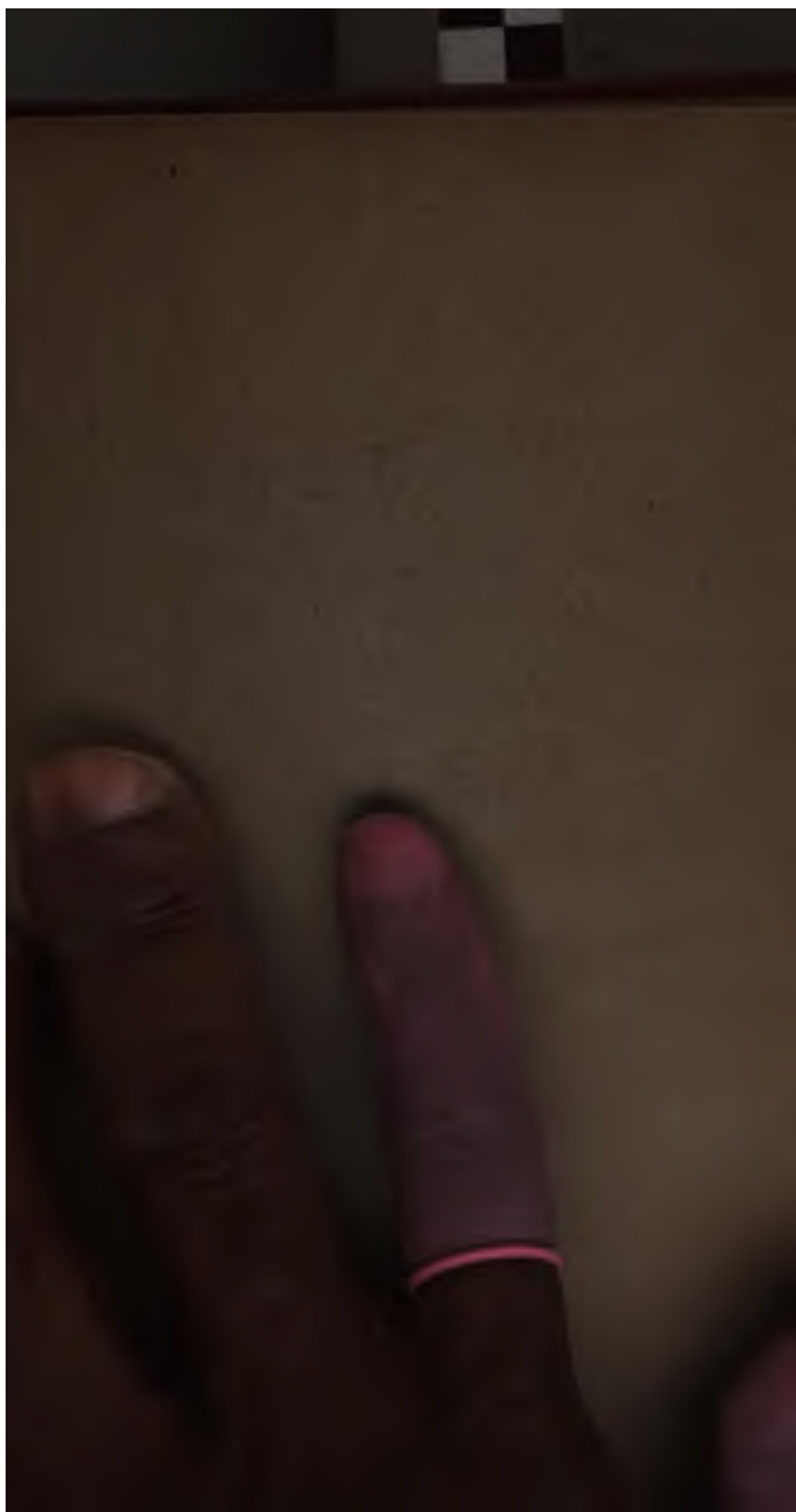
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A N
A D D R E S S
T O

Protestants of all Persuasions ;

MORE ESPECIALLY THE

MAGISTRACY and CLERGY ;

FOR THE PROMOTION OF

VIRTUE and CHARITY.

IN TWO PARTS.

By WILLIAM PENN, A PROTESTANT.

Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue ; and to virtue, knowledge ; and to knowledge, temperance ; and to temperance, patience ; and to patience, godliness ; and to godliness, brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things, is blind, and cannot see far off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. 2 PET. i. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

Published in the Year 1679.

Vol. IV.

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T H E

P R E F A C E.*

THE acceptance this address has found with all sorts of people, to whose hands it has come, who value religion for the sake of piety, more than out of interest or formality, hath brought it a second time to publick view.

It was writ in the year 1679, as a Christian expedient for peace and safety: but our animosities were then too great, to consider of the best means to obtain them; which stood, and does, and will ever stand, in 'a thorough reformation of hearts and lives:' else God, that cannot lie, in the ways of his providence, will undoubtedly meet with us, as he has often done and yet will do, to our great confusion, if we do not speedily repent and forsake those courses by which he is provoked against us. The design of the author was that of Christianity, to mend the spirits and lives of men, by shewing the 'odiousness of sin, 'the vanity of self, and the beauty of virtue,' with the lamentable consequences that never fail to attend the one, and the advantages that always follow the other, wheresoever they are entertained, both to private persons and governments, to church and state. In which, as he went to the bottom, and dealt plainly with every party, so he did it without any animosity to their persons; and shews he laboured their reforma-

* *Note,* This Preface was first put to a second edition of this book.

tion, affectionately, truly and thoroughly, both by letting them see the snares they have fallen by, and how to get out of them.

Three words may be said to comprehend this whole treatise: VICE, PRESUMPTION, and VIOLENCE; for under them is comprised the matter he strikes at, from first to last. They have their agreeable contraries, VIRTUE, HUMILITY, and CHARITY, if not UNITY. But we cannot come at them while the other stand in the way.

He has exposed *vice* in its deformities, and pointed to us the inevitable and dismal effects of it, in those countries where it has prevailed: a seasonable and informing lecture for our own times; which he chiefly refers to the civil magistrate, whose duty therein he shews and presses, with the next and proper means to suppress it; to wit, by a due execution of our just laws upon the present vicious livers, and a better education of our youth; that by preserving them from the infections of vice, the next generation at least may have some better pretence to virtue.

He is very close, and perhaps sharp, upon presumption in religion. This he detects likewise, and the many mischiefs it has done to Christian fellowship, and civil society too, by setting up *men's opinions* for *articles of faith*, and *ties of religious communion*; mistaking the nature of true faith, and debasing morality, in its work and weight in religion; and subjecting reason and truth to the results of human authority: whereby it has happened, that people have not had the witness in themselves for what they have embraced, nor their own convictions to warrant their conformity or profession; but an ancestor, a minister, their education, for the best reason and proof of their confession. And such as could not frame themselves to an easy compliance, but suffered inquiry to take place of authority, and would not allow an *ipse dixit*, or a constable's staff, for a sufficient resolution of their scruples, have suffered deeply in their persons or estates.

Not

P R E F A C E.

Not that I would have church-society, or authority, to be despised; they that do so, are much in the wrong: let every thing have its due place and just share; parents, education, church-power, &c. But let them have no more. Let God have his part, who is sovereign of the conscience, and to whom every knee must bow: and they that bow in point of religion, without the convictions of his spirit, are rather idolaters than believers; to be sure they are merely formalists, and guilty of that implicit faith and blind obedience, which at other times we make so great a fault, and a sufficient reason of separation.

Violence, which is the last word, and that takes up the last part of this discourse, to which the *presumption* before expressed naturally tends, is that *coercive power*, used by those who are the strongest party, to impose their opinions and formalities upon the rest, at the hazard of their lives or estates that refuse to conform; though they dissent out of pure conscience to God: the breaches, ruin and destruction that have followed upon penal laws for religion, as they rise from creed-making, and the impatience of men to bear dissent from their own opinions, are become the scandal of Christianity all over the world. These two words, *presumption* and *violence*, are more immediately referred to the *clergy of all persuasions*, every-where; though their hearers are invited to examine themselves, how far they lie under the guilt hereof, or are touched with a disposition to entertain the spirit that leads to persecution about religion. Nor does the author charge it upon *every one* of the clergy: but the faulty are reprehended, and the ignorant instructed, and the guiltless commended and confirmed in their moderation. And what is said of this kind of the clergy, may be yet as reasonably said of the laity: for though it is true that the civil officers that often prove the most violent executioners of penal laws for religion, are from among them; yet it is as true, that from among them also are found the most *temperate* and *merciful spirits*, that will least touch with *cruelty*, and are the most sensible

of the miseries of the *persecuted*, and express the greatest compassion for them, and from whom, at last, the best part of their relief comes. But to avoid comparisons, and do what we can to be wholly upon the healing and truly reforming hand, it is greatly to be wished that the *practice of piety* were the main end and scope of men, the subject of their care and emulation; and that their hatred were to things, not to persons; to sin, and not to sinners. If we were as captious at our own actions, as we are at other people's faiths, we should live better lives, and they would live better by us: for so holiness and peace would be promoted. O that we could but once be persuaded to think of "working out our own salvation!" It is not *knowing*, but *doing*, that recommends us to God, gives us peace, and fits us for heaven. That were the ready way "to make our great calling and election sure." And what are we called to, but to holiness, to godliness, to purity? which makes us fit to see God, and that fits us for heaven, "For without holiness, no man," says the apostle, "shall see the Lord." He did not say without *tongues*, without *philosophy*, or without being an able *disputant*, a *critick*, a *formalist*, we should not see the Lord; but without *holiness*: for it is the peculiar privilege of the "pure in heart, to see God;" who is also "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; without recompensing it with tribulation and wrath." Let us then humble ourselves to his voice, bow to his will, and set ourselves to love his law, and keep his commandments. We may remember who it was that said, "I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandments are exceeding broad." There is a glory, a comfort, a treasure in them not to be equalled; but known only to those that do observe them. For "Wisdom leads her children in the ways of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment, and causes them that love her to inherit substance, and she fills their treasure." Riches and honour, and length of days are in her hands, and are the portion she often bestows upon her children: what, then, have we

we to do, but to hearken to her voice, and turn at her reproof, that we may live? The spirit of wisdom will be upon us; yea, the spirit of God and of glory will rest upon us. An ornament, a dignity, above that of earthly crowns and diadems. There were hopes of us, if we were but religious in earnest; every one in his own way; not false, cold, and unfaithful to what we pretend. I mean not *exteriors* now, but the holy *fear* of God, which all profess, and none truly have that live without an *awful sense* of his will and omnipresence. It is this that would teach us *humility*, and that would bring us to divine charity, till *unity* comes; which certainly would be very pleasant to God, very exemplary to the world, and honourable for religion, as well as comfortable for ourselves: for religion at heart would exercise our eyes more within than without, at home than abroad; and to conquer our sins and selves, would be a satisfaction transcending that of victory over the arguments and persons of our adversaries. Have we *faith*? Let us add then to our faith, *virtue*, or it is good for nothing; and to our virtue, *knowledge*, that it may be the more useful; and to knowledge, *temperance*, that we may not be conceited; and to temperance, *patience*, lest we faint by the way; and to patience *godliness*, that we may be devoutly religious; and to godliness, *brotherly kindness*, that our zeal do not over-run love and fellowship; and to brotherly kindness, *charity*, the top of all virtues and graces; without which, religion is a cypher, a bubble, an apparition at most; no solid or valid thing. *Charity* is comprehensive of all right love. It reaches to God, to our neighbour, and ourselves, both inwardly and outwardly: it reaches to heaven, as well as to the ends of the earth. It loves all, and acts towards all upon a principle of love; yea it *is* that love. "Charity," says the apostle, "suffers long and is kind:" charity envieth not: charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself

‡ Cor. xiii. 5, 6, 7, 8.

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“ unseemly,

“ unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth : beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never fails.” Men are too often the worse for their wit, for their learning, aye for their religion too, if charity does not humble and sanctify them. “ Ye know not of what spirit ye are,” said the blessed Saviour of the world, to some of his *overzealous* disciples. There is a *false*, as well as a *true* zeal, and by their fruits we shall know them. *True* zeal is against *sin*, and shown best upon a man’s self, his own life and conduct : it is tempered with wisdom, and will not outshoot the mark, especially towards others. But *false* zeal is nothing but *passion* in the name of religion. It is impatient, froward, angry, and revengeful. It can slander, quarrel, beat, plunder, and kill too, and all for God’s sake ! alas ! their zeal is the excuse of their choler ; and, for the most part, those that are captivated with it, are worse livers than those they so evilly treat ; and, at best, shew most busy and concerned about the *outside* of religion. David was zealous, but not after this sort ; for though he tells us that his “ Zeal for God’s house had eaten him up,” yet he never said it had eaten up his *neighbours*. That furious zeal is strictly forbidden by Christ, the great Lord of the Christian religion.

It will therefore do us no hurt, if we try our own spirits, and see with what spirits we profess religion, and act for it. They that act not *from* religion, can never act rightly *for* religion ; their spirits must be wrong ; let their zeal swell as big as mountains, their faith can never remove one : they build upon the sand, and the fall of their building will be, at last, as terrible to themselves, as their ignorant zeal made it formerly burdensome to others.

Well then, where shall we pitch the nature and business of religion, under the various notions and shapes we find it wears among men, and that plainly and
intelli-

intelligibly? And with our answer to this, let us conclude this preface.

Religion, in the judgment of this author, is ‘Living up to what a man knows of the mind of God; and attending diligently upon that light in himself, which gives him that knowledge of his duty.’

This is the gift of God by Christ, that “enlightens every man that comes into the world.” This is the talent that men are instructed with, to improve to the saving of their souls. And the apostle tells us, that “whatsoever may be known of God, is manifest in them, by this light,” because “whatever makes manifest is light.” Peruse John i. 9. chap. iii. 21. Rom. i. 19. Ephes. v. 13, 14. He that knows and acquaints himself with this holy light in himself, that comes by Christ, the great light of the world, and brings his deeds and thoughts to it, and squares his desires and will according to the manifestations and directions of it, will approve himself a disciple of Christ, a lover of religion, and therefore a religious man indeed: the nature and end of religion being our conformity to the will of God, which the apostle expounds to be our “sanctification;” and that cannot be, till we receive this holy *leaven* in ourselves, by which the whole lump of man comes to be leavened; man, in *body, soul, and spirit*; man, *throughout*; man to be a *new* man: for so the apostolical doctrine instructs us, “that as we have long borne the image of the earthly, so we may come to bear the image of the heavenly man, the Lord from heaven;” and, like him, to be heavenly-minded. And truly, that is the man I would choose to associate myself with, and the church, society, or people, whose communion I would prefer, that are followers and children of this light of Jesus; who, destitute of pompous worship, and of tedious and difficult creeds, resolve all into an humble and daily watch and obedience to this light of Christ in the conscience, both as to their worship to God, and conversation among men, whatever the unjust unthinking world is pleased to judge of them.

I shall

I shall detain the reader no longer from the book itself. He will find *virtue* and *charity* the great tendency of it. And though it may be objected by some, that much of the service of it is over, because the 'current of persecution is stopped;' they are under a great mistake: the service of it is not over; would it were: for debauchery of all sorts was never more impudent and epidemical; and as great uncharitableness still appears among people. Their hands are in some measure stopped or diverted, but their tongues are not, for they were never more on fire against one another; and we know, "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." They do not only whisper, but rail and threaten one another; and, to be sure, religion must be much of the ensign of their animosity: therefore till vice be suppressed, and education be better provided for, and presumption and violence extinguished, that so virtue, humility, and charity may prevail among us, this treatise will be serviceable: however, we are not to measure our duty by success: but if it shall please Almighty God to favour the honest purpose of the author with his blessing, that it may have those desirable effects where it comes, the author will exceedingly rejoice, and God shall have the glory of this, as of all other the services of his people; who is worthy for ever!

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T H E

AUTHOR'S PREMONITION.

READER,

GREAT books seldom find readers; and it may be the times may render this such: for the motion of affairs is so swift, that action treads hard upon the heels of writing, and there is little time left to read: besides, people had rather converse with the living than the dead; and such all books are to men in business. This reflection at first daunted me, the tract being grown thus under my hand: but believing what I have writ to be both true and useful to our yet so much needed civil and ecclesiastical reformation, and taking encouragement by the kind reception of some former essays and addresses I made, I resolved to let it go; but with this care, that by prefixing contents, thou mayest readily turn to that part which may more immediately concern thee, or best suit and answer thy inquiry.

T H E

T H E
C O N T E N T S

P A R T I.

§. 1. **T**HE introduction. Five great and crying evils of the times, under the correction of the civil magistrates.

§. 2. Of the sin of drunkenness.

§. 3. Of the sin of whoredom and fornication.

§. 4. Of the evil of luxury, and excess in apparel, in living, in furniture.

§. 5. Of the evil of gaming.

§. 6. Of the horrid sin of oaths, cursing and blasphemy.

§. 7. Of the sin of profaneness.

§. 8. An address to the magistrates for redress of those evils.

The first motive to this address, viz. the preservation of the government: examples of kingdoms, nations and people exalted by the practice of virtue, and overthrown by vice.

§. 9. The second motive to this address, viz. the benefit of posterity.

§. 10. The third and last motive to this address, viz. the glory of God.

P A R T II.

§. 1. **F**IVE capital evils that relate to the ecclesiastical state of these kingdoms.

§. 2. Of the first capital evil, viz. Opinions passing for faith.

§. 3.

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§. 3. Of the second evil. A misunderstanding of the nature of the gospel faith, and mistakes about it.

§. 4. Of the third evil, viz. A debasing of the true value of morality under the pretence of higher things, mistaking the very end of Christ's coming.

§. 5. Of the fourth evil, viz. preferring human authority above reason and truth.

§. 6. Of the fifth evil, propagation of faith by force. Of the nature, difference, and limits of civil and ecclesiastical authority.

An appendix of the causes and cure of persecution.

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P A R T I.

S E C T. I.

The I N T R O D U C T I O N.

My friends and countrymen,

IF you believe that there is a God, and that he is holy, just and good; that he made us; that we owe ourselves to him, and that he is not careless of us, but the constant observer of our thoughts and actions; and that as he is the rewarder of them that fear, love, and obey him, so he is the severe punisher of all such as transgress his law, and break his righteous commandments; if, I say, you believe these things, and not only that there is a final day of reckoning, but that God, even in this world, recompenses his judgments upon the wicked, and visits nations with his hot displeasure because of their impiety; which
hath

16 AN ADDRESS TO PROTESTANTS.

shall seek the sensible experience and free confession of all ages, that I brought to us of these kingdoms to reform your consciences, and take a true view of our sinners, since divine reprobation, for aught we see, is full at the door. And, for the Lord's sake, let us have a care in the coming of it, since "God will not be mocked;"^a and that our miscarriage in such an inquiry will be, as only our own infelicity, so of infinite moment to us. I must needs be plain and earnest here; for if we miscarry in the search, we shall certainly miscarry in the cure. Sin gives the deadliest of all wounds to mankind; but, with grief I say it, for it is true, there is no wound so slightly healed. We rather seek our ease, than our security; like those fools, that love the pleasantest, not the safest potions. It is ill at all times to flatter a man's self; but it is most dangerous about repentance. Something men would keep, something men would hide; and yet they have to do with that "searcher of hearts,"^b from whom it is impossible they should hide any thing. This folly increases our account, endangers our cure, and makes our condition desperate, if not irrecoverable.

O England, my native country! Come to judgment! Bring thy deeds to the true light; see whether they are "wrought in God or no."^c Put not off thyself with hay, straw, and stubble; for they will burn, and the fire is at the door, that will consume them. He is coming, whose reward is with him, and will give every one according to his works.^d Let us therefore examine ourselves, try ourselves, prove our ownelves, whether Christ be in us or not;^e if his spirit, his nature, his meekness, his patience, his great self-denial, dwell in us: if not, we are reprobates; yet under the *reproofs* of the Almighty, the charge and guilt of sin; and his witness in our own consciences sends up evidence to heaven against us every day:

^a Gal. vi. 7. 8. ^b Jer. xvii. 10. ^c John iii. 21. ^d Rev. xxii. 12. ^e 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

this

this I justly fear and take to be our case. Let us therefore strictly look into our conversations, and with an impartial eye take a just view of those sins, that most severely cry to the great judge against us. And they appear to me to be of two sorts; the one relating more particularly to the *state*, and the other to the *church*, if I may without offence use that distinction; for my witness is with God, I intend not provocation to any, but the edification of all.

Those impieties that relate more particularly to the state to correct, are DRUNKENNESS; WHOREDOMS and FORNICATION; LUXURY or EXCESS, in APPAREL, in FURNITURE, and in LIVING; PROFUSE GAMING; and finally, OATHS, BLASPHEMY and PROFANESS: these swarm in our streets, these are a scandal to our profession, and cry aloud to heaven, and provoke divine wrath against us.

S E C T. II.

Of the sin of drunkenness.

Drunkenness, or excess in drinking, is not only a violation of God's law, but of our own natures: it doth, of all other sins, rob us of our reason, deface the impressions of virtue, and extinguish the remembrance of God's mercies and our own duty: it fits men for that which they would abhor, if sober. The incest, murder, robberies, fires, and other villainies, that have been done in drunken fits, make drunkenness a common enemy to human society. It renders men unfit for trust or business; it tells secrets, betrays friendship, disposes men to be trepanned and cheated: finally, it spoils health, weakens human race, and, above all, provokes the just God to anger, who cried thus of old against those that were guilty of it; ^f "Wo to the drunkards of Ephraim! the drunkards of Ephraim

^f Isa. xxviii. 1, 2, 3. Amos vi. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

" shall be trodden under feet : they have erred through
 " wine, and through strong drink are out of the way ;
 " the priest and the prophet have erred through
 " strong drink, they err in vision, they stumble in
 " judgment." Again, " Wo unto them that are
 " mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to min-
 " gle strong drink. Wo unto them that rise up early
 " in the morning, that they may follow strong drink ;
 " that continue unto night, till wine inflame them :
 " and the harp, and the viol, the tabret and the pipe,
 " and wine are in their feasts ; but they regard not the
 " work of the Lord, neither consider the operations of
 " his hands. Therefore hell hath enlarged herself,
 " and opened her mouth without measure, and their
 " glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he
 " that rejoices, shall descend into it."

Yet, you will bear me witness, I do not wrong the
 present humour of too many in this nation, and those
 not of the lowest quality, in saying, that it is too often
 the beginning and top of their friendship : it is their
 common diversion and entertainment. I might safely
 say, the *poor* of England could be maintained by their
excess. O ! hath the God of heaven given men plenty
 for such ends ? Or will this kind of improvement of
 their worldly talent give them peace in the day of
 judgment ? But that people should do this without
 shame, nay, glory in it too, is greatly to be lamented ;
 for it is not only palate or appetite, but an unnatural
 vanity of conquest, excites not a few ; as if it were
 matter of triumph to drown a man's reason, and to
 degrade him to the beast.

Let us hear, upon the whole matter, the sentence
 pronounced against them by the wise man.* " Who
 " hath woe ? who hath sorrow, who hath contentions ?
 " who hath babbling ? who hath wounds without
 " cause ? who hath redness of eyes ? They that tarry
 " long at the wine, they that go to seek mixed wine.
 " Look not thou upon the wine, when it is red, when

* Prov. xxiii. 29, 30, 31, 32, 33.

“ it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself
 “ aright ; at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth
 “ like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange
 “ women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.”

Here is much of the mischiefs of drunkenness in a little, and of the excess and wantonness of the drunkard. But, alas ! did ever any age come near ours, when the very tasting of the several sorts of wine (that are liberally drank of at many tables) is enough to dis-temper a temperate head? But that such excesses should be endured by Christian governments, while the backs of the poor are almost naked, and their bellies miserably pinched with hunger, is almost as great a shame to our pretences to policy, as those (I fear) we unwarrantably make to religion. O ! that we were fit to receive that heavenly exhortation of the apostle, “ Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess ; but be “ filled with the spirit,” (which, God knows, is mocked at ! he goes on) “ speaking to yourselves,” (not in lampoons nor obscene songs, that excite lust, but) “ in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, “ singing and making melody in your heart to the “ Lord ; giving thanks always for all things unto “ God and the Father, in the name of our Lord “ Jesus Christ.”

S E C T. III.

Of the sin of whoredom and fornication.

THE next crying sin is that of *whoredom* and *fornication*. From one of the cleanest people under heaven, I fear, we are become one of the most unchaste, at least in and about London. The French have sufficiently revenged themselves upon us, by the loose manners they have brought amongst us, of which this makes a great part. But I must needs say, to their credit, but our reproach, they keep their wits in their debaucheries ; whilst we, by over-doing them,

in the imitation of them, lose both. What is become of the ancient education of the kingdom? Our integrity, gravity and manhood, which gave our men so great reputation in the world? Is it not turned into swearing and drinking, fiddling and dancing, fine clothes, a duel and a wench? Their profanés must pass for wit, and their base crafts be called policy.

But where is that retired breeding, which made our women as famous for their *virtue*, as they were always held for their *beauty*? Alas! there hath been a sort of industry used to subdue their native modesty, as if it were ill breeding to have it; and arts practised to make them hardy against their own blushes, and master their shy and bashful disposition (so peculiar to chastity) into an unconverted confidence: as if to be insensible of ill were their perfection, and to be tame at all things a virtue. Strange! that *sobriety* should be turned into *levity*! and *lust* called *love*! and wantonness, *good-humour*! to introduce which, nothing has been so pernicious as the use of *plays* and *romances* amongst us, where the warm and uneven passions of our youth, easily transported beyond the government of their reason, have been moved and excited to try that in earnest, which they have heard or seen in jest.

But which way soever this ungodly latitude came in, certain it is, that what forty years ago was not fit to be named in conversation. is now practised without any scruple. *Marriage*, which is God's ordinance, and as lovely to chaste minds as lawful, is now grown a dull thing, old and clownish, kept up only for issue, and that because the law will have it so; a sort of formality, not yet thought fit to be abrogated: so that what was once ordained of God for many other helps and comforts, and permitted by the holy apostle to prevent lust, " (better marry than burn) " is by the extravagant growth of vice turned to quite the contrary. For some men, and (which is worse) some women too, have said, ' They could love their wives and husbands, ' if they were *not* their wives and husbands ;' though that
that

that be the true reason why they ought to love them. It is, in short, to say, if they were in that condition in which they ought *not* to love them, they *could* love them; but being in that condition in which they *ought* to love them, they declare they *cannot* love them: yet, alas! they must be called Christians, and children of God: what a shame is this; and what scandal to society? But, for God's sake, let this impiety be laid to heart! let not the marriage-bed be so horribly defiled; let not our virgins be so basely abused: it destroys honour, fortitude, health: it pollutes houses, and makes the issue of the nation spurious: it occasions great unkindnesses, rents, confusions and divisions in families, between husband and wife, parents and children, masters, mistresses, and servants: it spots their name: but, above all, the poor children are unhappy, that wear an ignominy they never deserved. It sine, it teaches young men to slight marriage, and married men to break their contracts. If religion were not interested in it, yet the very breed of the nation is visibly injured by it: good horse-men are more nice and careful in their steeds: the policy of these kingdoms is concerned in preventing the mischiefs, that follow such licentious practices.

But if we will consider the share that religion has both in virginity and in marriage, we shall find many severe sentences past upon the violaters of them.^b "Thou shalt not commit adultery," saith God. "The adulterer shall be put to death,"^c saith the same God. "I will be a swift witness against the adulterer," saith the Lord.^d "Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate persons, nor abusers of themselves with mankind."^e And the holy apostle gives the reason,^f "The body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body:

^b Exod. xx. 14. ^c Lev. xx. 10. ^d Mal. iii. 5. ^e 1 Cor. vi. 9. 13. 15. 18, 19, 20. ^f Ch. iii. 17.

“ know ye not,” saith he, “ that your bodies are the
 “ members of Christ? Shall I then take the members
 “ of Christ, and make them the members of an har-
 “ lot? God forbid! flee fornication: he that com-
 “ mitteth fornication, sinneth against his own body.
 “ What?” saith he, “ know ye not, your body is the
 “ temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which
 “ ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For
 “ ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God
 “ in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.
 “ If any man defile the temple of God, him shall
 “ God destroy.” O can men profess to believe these
 things, and lead that wretched life they live! But yet
 again hear this man of God: “ But fornication, and
 “ all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once
 “ named amongst you, as becometh saints; neither
 “ filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are
 “ not convenient; but rather giving of thanks. For
 “ this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean
 “ person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath
 “ any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of
 “ God. Let no man deceive you with vain words;
 “ for because of these things cometh the wrath of
 “ God upon the children of disobedience: be not ye
 “ therefore partakers with them, and have no fellow-
 “ ship with the unfruitful works of darkness; but
 “ rather reprove them: see then, that ye walk cir-
 “ cumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the
 “ time, because the days are evil.”^a I shall conclude
 with these two passages; the first is this, “ Marriage
 “ is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled; but
 “ whoremongers and adulterers God will judge!”^b
 This is the other, “ But the fearful and unbelieving,
 “ and the abominable, and murderers, and whore-
 “ mongers, and forcerers, and idolaters, and all liars,
 “ shall have their part in the lake which burneth with
 “ fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”^c
 This alone ought to deter all people, who have any

^a Eph. v. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 15, 16. ^b Heb. xiii. 4. ^c Rev. xxi. 8.
respect

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respect for holy scripture, and do believe the mind of God to be declared therein. Let then both cities, courts, towns and houses, be swept of such iniquity; let the law have its course upon those immoral transgressors; let not God be provoked to destroy us, and let all such turn to God by unfeigned repentance; that sobriety, chastity, and virtuous conversation, may return again among us. So shall we escape the wrath, that for this, with other enormities, is ready to break out yet farther against us.

S E C T. IV.

Of the sin of luxury, or excess in living.

THE third crying sin of this land, is great *luxury* and *voluptuousness*, and that in several respects: in apparel, in furniture, in feasting: in these things there is great excess. An excess is the immoderate use of any thing. That which is lawful in itself, may be abused in the use of it. What is more allowable, yet what is more abused, than clothes and victuals? The end of apparel is to cover nakedness, keep people warm, distinguish sexes; but the end is perverted. It is now used more for ornament, for pride, for lust; to beget esteem, and to draw respect to the person that wears it, than any real benefit: a mean, an effeminate, a wretched way to honour; yet such is the folly of the age, that few things are more revered. It opens doors, gets access, obtains dispatches, carries away the cap and the knee from most other pretences. The truth is, this vanity abuses the reason of just respect; for true quality, if plain, is not to be known among fine clothes. But it does not only confound all *reasonable distinction*, and those *civil degrees* that are among people, but it begets *pride*: they think themselves somebody, if they are fine; plain clothes must give them the way and the wall, and keep the distance too. It introduces effeminacy, and excites to wantonness;

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it provokes to prodigality, and leads people to idleness. But there is a sort of madness in it too; for it is not so much the apparel, as the *trimming*; not the clothes, but the *cut*, the *mode*, the *figure*, that prevails: and as often as this changes, clothes grow useless, that are not half worn out. This is an iniquity against the good of the government, as well as against God and his creatures; and there is so strong a temptation in it, that not a few turn *naught to be fine*, as well as that the *fine turn naught*. In short, there is no good, no advantage, prudence or conveniency in this excess: the law of God and of the land rebuke it: the third chapter of Isaiah is almost intirely employed against it,* in which God does not only rebuke the “Haughty looks, the
“wanton eyes, and enticing mein and behaviour of
“the women of those times;” but declares his resolution too, “that he would take away the bravery of
“their ornaments, chains, bracelets, rings, jewels,
“and changeable suits of apparel, and that their
“perfume should be turned into a stink; and instead
“of a girdle there should be a rent, and instead of
“well-set hair, baldness; and instead of a stomacher,
“a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of
“beauty. Thy men,” said God, “shall fall by the
“sword, and thy mighty in the war; and her gates
“shall lament and mourn; she being desolate, shall
“sit upon the ground.”

This was also the sin of Tyrus, as we may see, Ezek. xxvii. For pomp and pride she excelled in those days: she boasted in her splendour and sumptuous living; her buildings were lofty, her furniture stately, her apparel costly, but her end was trouble, and her destruction very great. And God expressly threatens by his prophet Zephaniah; “I will punish the princes and the
“kings children, and all that are clothed with strange
“apparel.” What is this *strange apparel*? Is it *new fashions*? Then we are guilty with a witness. Or is it *the fashions of strange countries*? It is still our own

* Isa. iii.

case. We have been more careful to receive the law from *France* for our clothes, than from *Christ* for our conversation; and so prevalent is the humour of that country with us, and powerful the ascendant it hath over us, that we seem to be Frenchmen living in England. But in this, as also in all other things, the *Christian religion excels*, and that for the good of *civil society*. It reproveth this excess, limits the vain mind of man, and teaches that decent plainness, which becomes the providence and gravity of civil government.

Hear the language of the holy apostles, whose doctrine we all pretend to believe: "I will therefore," saith Paul, "that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or gold, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." The same doctrine is repeated by the apostle Peter, speaking to the Christian women, to whom he wrote, "Let not your adorning be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price: for after this manner in the old time, the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves." Would to God I could say for the women of our age, that they trusted in God too, and adorned themselves with no other ornaments, than what agreed with the modest and humble plainness of those Christian times!

But the laws of the land, as well as the Christian law, reprove this excess. They only want to be refreshed and enforced by the care of our superiors: were they strictly put in execution, it would not only prevent much mischief, and increase the wealth of the kingdom, but make private men in a little time

1 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10. 1 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4, 5.

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thank the just and seasonable severity of the government. For it would help to keep them within compass, to preserve (which is the one way to increase) their estate; to enlarge their trade, provide better for their children, and open their hands more liberally to the poor: and this, I am sure, God requires at our hands.

What I have said against excess in apparel, is also applicable to excess in furniture: for as finery is more valued than clothes, so is the furniture than the house. It is a most inexcusable superfluity, to bestow an estate to line walls, dress cabinets, embroider beds, with an hundred other unprofitable pieces of state, such as massy plate, rich china, costly pictures, sculpture, fret-work, inlayings, and painted windows, of no use in the earth, only for show and sight: the interest of which money, so ill employed, might probably maintain the poor of the nation.—‘ O Lord God! hast thou
‘ given us plenty, and should we see others want?
‘ Should we clothe our dead walls, and let thy poor
‘ go naked? Can we feed our eyes with these objects,
‘ and not feed the hungry with bread, and spend our
‘ money upon lifeless pictures, but shut up our bowels
‘ to thy living image, the poor and needy of the
‘ earth? Rebuke this evil mind, and bring down the
‘ pride of all flesh, O Lord! for thy name’s sake.’

The last excess is that of *feasting* and *voluptuousness*, immoderate eating and drinking, with that strain of mirth and jollity, which is the mode and practice of the times. Dives is almost got into every family, especially of those of note and estate; and it is want of wealth, and not of will, that the greatest part of the nation is not guilty: they mostly sin to their ability, and that is sad. But the sin of voluptuousness is swelled to that bulk, that there are more *receipts* for *eating* and *drinking*, than there are *precepts* of *life* in the *old* and *new* law. The book of cookery has outgrown the *bible*, and I fear is read oftener; to be sure, it is more in use. In this art the lust of the
flesh

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flesh is deeply concerned; there is not so much care of the stomach, as of the palate, of health, as pleasure: it is the taste, the gust, the relish, that makes the victuals go down; therefore the *sauce* is preferred before the *meat*. Twelve pennyworth of flesh, with five shillings of cookery, may happen to make a fashionable dish; plain beef, mutton, or any other thing, is become dull food: but by that time its natural relish is lost in the crowd of the cook's ingredients, and the meat sufficiently disguised to the eaters, it passes under a *French* name for a *rare dish*. But there is one thing in this impiety more than ordinarily condemnable; it destroys hospitality, and wrongs the poor: for that expence, which is now flung away upon a vicious palate, upon a French soup, or sauce, in former times afforded several dishes of substantial victuals; which did not only feed strangers or neighbours, but the poor, who have now little more than (what the dogs had then) empty dishes to lick. This is abusing the providence of God, tyrannizing over the creatures made for man's use, and sacrificing their poor lives, not to our lives, but to our lust. It is against such as these "the creation groans," and from whose intemperance it "cries to be delivered," Rom. viii. 21, 22.

God, in all ages, had a controversy with voluptuous men, and the testimonies of sacred records are strong and numerous against them: I will mention a few of them. Voluptuousness was the sin of the old world: "They were eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, pleasing the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, until the day of the flood." This also was the condition of Sodom; Christ himself has expressed it in these words: "In the days of Lot they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them

! Gen. vi. Mat. xxiv. 37, 38, 39.
28, 29.

* Gen. xix. Luke xvii.

"all."

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“ all.” The prophet Ezekiel has it in these words, speaking to Jerufalem, “ Behold, this was the iniquity of thy fister Sodom, pride, fulnefs of bread, and abundance of idlenefs, was in her and her daughters: neither did ſhe ſtrengthen the hand of the poor and needy; and they were haughty, and committed fornication before me; therefore I took them away, as I ſaw good.” And it is very remarkable, that the voluptuoufnefs of the Iſraelites was joined with their idolatry. It is ſaid, that when Moſes was in the mount, the people, impatient of his ſtay, “ Sat down to eat and drink, and roſe up to play.” They had got a calf of gold, and were dancing about it; but it was a diſmal ball, and they paid dear for their junket, for ſeveral thouſands were ſlain; and it is ſaid, that “ God plagued the people.” Job’s children had as ill ſucceſs in their feſtivals; “ They went from houſe to houſe, eating and drinking; and a tempeſt roſe, and ſmote the four corners of the houſe, and it fell and killed them.” But moſt expreſs is that complaint of God, by the mouth of the prophet Amos, againſt the voluptuous Jews: “ Ye that put ſo far away the evil day, and cauſe the ſeat of violence to come near; that lie upon beds of ivory, and ſtretch themſelves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and calves out of the miſt of the ſtall: that chant the ſound of the viol, and invent to themſelves inſtruments of muſick, like David: that drink bowls of wine, and anoint themſelves with the chief ointments; but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joſeph. Therefore now ſhall they go captive with the firſt that go captive, and the banquet of them that ſtretched themſelves ſhall be removed. And I will turn your feaſts into mourning, and all your ſongs into lamentation; and I will make the end thereof a bitter day.”

¶ Ezech. xvi. 49. 56. ¶ Exod. xxxii. 28. * Job. i. 19.
 ¶ Amos vi. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and Chap. viii. 20.

I ſhall

I shall sum up these excesses, and conclude the instances, with the story of Dives, more commonly known, than reverently believed, at least considered: it is delivered to us, by the great Lord of truth, in these words. “ There was a certain rich man, which
 “ was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared
 “ sumptuously every day. And there was a certain
 “ beggar, named Lazarus, * which was laid at his
 “ gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the
 “ crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table:
 “ moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And
 “ it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was car-
 “ ried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom. The
 “ rich man also died, and was buried: and in hell he
 “ lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abra-
 “ ham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he
 “ cried, and said, father Abraham, have mercy upon
 “ me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of
 “ his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am
 “ tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son,
 “ remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy
 “ good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but
 “ now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And
 “ besides all this, between us and you there is a great
 “ gulph fixed, so that they which would pass from
 “ hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us,
 “ that would come from thence.”

This great passage comprehends the state of men in both worlds: it shews to us what that life is in this world, which leads to misery in the next, and what to happiness. No sensual man, no voluptuous person, nor those that deck themselves with delicate apparel, and fare sumptuously every day, that love their back and their belly more than God and the poor, shall be received into Abraham’s bosom, or dwell in blessedness for ever. Let none deceive themselves, the jealous God will not be mocked. * “ If you sow to the

* Luke xvi. 19. 26. * Gal. vi. 8.

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“flesh, ye shall reap corruption; but if you sow to the spirit, ye shall reap life everlasting.”

They that live in pleasures, “Kill the just;”^b they crucify the just witness in themselves: such treasure up wrath against the day of wrath. ^c “Wo, anguish and tribulation to every soul that doth evil, whether Jew or Gentile, professor or profane, Christian or infidel:” for the Dives’s under all these names must be turned into hell: but such as, through patience and well doing, wait for immortality, as poor Lazarus did, after all their poverty, neglect, and hunger, shall receive “Glory, honour, and eternal life.”^d And truly it is some comfort to the miserable in this world, that they shall not live always in it, and that they have to do with a God, who is “no respecter of persons.” This judge is impartial; the poor are upon even terms with the rich; and it will not be quality, but integrity; not riches, but righteousness, which will recommend us to him. No wonder then, if the prophet Jeremiah, in the name of God, charged the ancient Jews not to go into “the house of feasting;”^e and that Ecclesiastes hath said, “It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting,” since so many evils follow it. But there is one feast, that even Christ himself allows us; though I have little reason to believe it will be imitated, when I consider the natural averseness that is, even among professed Christians, to his self-denying precepts and example. “Thou,” said Jesus,^f “When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends or thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen nor thy rich neighbours, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee.” (This would beget feasting, the thing to be avoided; no such matter.) “But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they *cannot* recompense thee; but thou

^b James v. 5, 6. ^c Rom. ii. 8, 9. ^d Rom. ii. 7. ^e Eccles. vii. 2.
^f Luke xiv. 12, 13, 14.

“ shalt

" shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." There are few that strive to obey this counsel; there is so little of fashion, or of interest in it. What! persons of *quality* feast the *poor*, carve for the *maimed*, and feed the *blind*? It is too mean, too ignominious! If they have the bones, the scraps, the crumbs, it is well. No, no; this doctrine is too like him that taught it, to be practised by them that are so unlike him. They that follow him in these things, must " take up the cross, " despise the shame, and *sow in* " *hope*:" but because there is an everlasting recompence for those that do, I fervently desire of God, that it would please him to put it into the minds of both magistrates and people to " love mercy, do " justice, walk humbly with the Lord," and meekly " and charitably towards all men. I beseech you, in the tender bowels of a Christian man, to consider of the present conjuncture: * is this a time for feasts and revels, plays and pastimes, when the very wrath of God seems to hang by a slender thread over our heads? O! let your moderation be known unto all men, now the Lord is so near at hand, so very near indeed.

And I do humbly pray the supreme authority of this land, to put a speedy check to these exorbitances, to discountenance these excesses, by the revival of the good old laws of the land, and in making of such *new* ones, as may be thought convenient to prevent such pride and prodigality. For I think I may, both with modesty and truth, affirm, if the very unnecessary expences of most ranks or degrees in this kingdom could be brought into one publick purse, they would arise to three times more money, than either is given, or is requisite, to the maintenance of the poor that are in it: and whether this be a thing practicable or no, it matters not, though I believe it is; the very preventing of that excess which

* Mic. vi. 5, 6, 7, 8. Col. iii. 14.

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is amongst us, would be pleasing to Almighty God, and one way or other beneficial to the whole.

S E C T. V.

Of the evil of gaming.

IT may not be improper for me here to follow this head of excess with the sin of *gaming*; an invention of much mischief in the world, and therefore inconsistent both with Christianity and civil government. The evils that attend it are neither small nor few. It is, first, a great enemy to business, and that just care that people ought to have for the discharge of their respective capacities in their civil affairs. Next, it is one of the greatest thieves to mens estates: many brave families have been ruined by a gamester. That which hath been got by the care and prudence of a father, it may be, hath been lost in one night by the extravagant humour of a son: but that the reward of virtue should be the stake of folly, and the painful acquett of worthy ancestors exposed to the chance and hazard of the die, is such impiety to God's providence, ingratitude to parents, injury to their own families, and disgrace to the government, that I conceive it may very well deserve the care of our superiors to prevent that extravagancy for the future, by the execution of the laws in being against it. Thirdly, It is a great consumer of time. They who are addicted to gaming, are generally the most idle and useless people in any government: and give me leave to say, that men are accountable to the government for their time: there ought to be no idleness in the land; for that end Bridewells are provided. Of many other sins people are weary; but of this never, unless to sleep or eat, or for want of money to play. We are commanded to "redeem the time, because the days are evil;"^a but these people chuse rather to lose

^a Ephes. v. 16.

their

their time, and *fall into* the evil they should avoid. A gamester and a Christian, are as opposite as a saint and a sinner; for the Christian looks to God in the increase of his estate, but the gamester to skill and chance; and there is no more of God in his mind, than there is in his game: and it cannot be otherwise. Fourthly, Therefore gaming deserves to be suppressed, because it has been the occasion of breach of friendship, quarrels, bloodshed and murder: if we ought to shun the occasions of evil, to be sure we ought not to indulge them.

The last mischief that belongs to gaming (which I shall mention at this time) is the horrid oaths and passionate imprecations used by the generality of gamesters; but because they are not confined to gaming, but run through the whole conversation of men, they may very well challenge a place among those "crying sins," that I found myself obliged in conscience to complain of, to such as have power in their hands to punish and suppress them.

S E C T. VI.

Of the horrid sin of oaths, cursing, and blasphemies:

I HAVE therefore reserved to speak of oaths, curses and blasphemies till last, because I take them to be the most provoking sin. The other enormities of drunkenness, whoredom, excess, &c. do more immediately relate to ourselves; and are therefore sins against God, because they are a transgression of that order, which he placed in the nature of things: but oaths and blasphemies must be referred to God himself; they are sins committed more immediately against his *being*, his *name*, and the majesty and dignity of his *nature*. It is horrible to hear how he is called upon about every thing, be it never so trivial; yea, about nothing, and worse than nothing. He is summoned at their games, their sports, their obscenities,

in their drunkenness, whoredoms, murders, rapines, and treachery. There is a generation that cannot *speake* without him, though they can *live* without him. They would make him a voucher of all their falshood, and a witness for their lies, as often as they would be believed. But I tremble to remember, with what presumption some men, when transported into rage, invoke him to damn those they are angry with, yea, themselves too; and how impiously they send him at their pleasure upon the errands of their vengeance. Can there be greater blasphemy, than to dare so much as to think, that the holy, wise, and just God should be the executioner of their passion and fury, and the avenger of their malice and corrupt interests? And it is observable, that if in any thing they are crossed or disappointed, they fall a swearing, cursing, damning, blaspheming; as if the name of God should make them satisfaction; or that it were a sort of ease to them, to deliver themselves of a burden of oaths.

But that which aggravates this evil, is the impudence of the people that commit it: they are not contented to use it at home, and at ale-houses and taverns abroad; but in the open streets, markets, and fairs; in the most notorious places of commerce and traffick; to the dishonour of God, the grief and offence of sober men, and the bad example of those that are not so. But this shameful impiety ends not here; it has not only prevailed with the populace, the kennel, the vulgar; but the men of quality, the gentry, and the nobles of the realm, to whom God in his providence hath been more propitious, placing them at the distance of example and imitation to the multitude; even those that ought to be the heads of our tribes, the leaders of the people; whose virtue should at least keep pace with their quality, are guilty of this impious and base custom, and too many of them more concerned in it, than the meanest of the people. And to carry this practice to the utmost height of that mischief it seems capable of doing, too many, God knows, of those in authority use it; even the men, that by
law

law should suppress it! and if men of office and power, that ought, in their several trusts, to be a terror to evil-doers, were so, methinks they should not suffer the name of the God of the nation (whom they pretend to worship) to be so profanely used and blasphemed; and, least of all, that *they* should be the men *themselves*, who commit the enormities that they should punish. To say truth, and with grief of soul I speak it, so universal is this contagion in the kingdom, that not only the elder sort and youth, but the children are infected: the boys of seven years old, that in my time did not think upon an oath, are now full of their *God-damn-you's* and *God-damn-me's* at their sports and plays! and the women of our nation, especially those of any rank, who by a reserved education, and the modesty of the sex, were scarcely ever heard to curse, even what they did not like, (much less to swear upon ordinary occasions) are, some of them, grown hardy enough to do both. At whose door must all these mischiefs lie? I beseech God to put it into the hearts of our superiors, to use their utmost diligence to rebuke and suppress this and the like impieties!

We profess ourselves to be Christians, followers of that Jesus, "in whose mouth no guile was ever found:" what precept did he ever give us, what example hath he left us, to countenance this practice? It is true, he charged his disciples "not to swear at all;" but we cannot think ourselves to obey him, when we swear at *every thing*: pray consider the great difference there is betwixt Christ and such Christians. Christ is Lord of a more perfect law than that which came by Moses, which admits of oaths in some cases; but they were few, and must be kept upon great penalties: this new law of Jesus takes away oaths, by taking away the cause and need of them, namely, falsehood and distrust; and by planting plainness, truth, and integrity in the natures of men, which make them such faithful disciples to him, and so entirely brethren to one another, that there seems no farther use for oaths among men under that qualification.

“Ye have heard of old time,” saith Christ Jesus, “Thou shalt not *for swear* thyself, but perform thy vows unto the Lord:” this was not swearing at *pleasure*, nor swearing *vainly*; this was thus far good, it was the perfection of the law. So it was, “not to kill, nor to commit adultery:” but Christ Jesus carries it higher: ‘Thou must not be *angry*: thou must not look upon a woman to *lust* after her: thou must not swear *at all*:¹ thou must not do that which was allowed or dispensed with under the law: for what the law could not do, through weakness, I am come to do: therefore let your communication, your *speech*, (for so the word should be rendered) be yea, yea, and nay, nay: speak the truth, by saying, yea, yea, or nay, nay; yes, yes, or no, no; for what is more, or imports more, than this, or rises higher, or goes farther, than this plainness and simplicity, is both needless and evil in a Christian; for it cometh of evil.’ This is the doctrine of Jesus. Certainly then there can be no agreement between him and the *swearing, damning* Christians of this age, who are so far from obeying him, whose name they take, that they are not come to the righteousness of the law, that condemns all vain swearing; but lie under the heavy judgment of the Lord for the breach of his third commandment,² “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his name in vain.” It is esteemed a profanation of things set apart for divine worship, to employ them in our common and ordinary services; and is it not profanation with a vengeance, to suffer the name of the great God to be prostituted at every turn by lewd and debauched people? Can we be so careful of our own names, and so careless of God’s? Is it possible, that we can be more tender of ourselves, than concerned for him? For him, I say, who made us, and gives us life, breath, and being; to whom we owe

¹ Mat. v.² Exod. xx. 7.

ourselves,

ourselves, and all that we are? but that men, to right themselves, upon every little affront, should expose their lives to the utmost peril, and not find in their heart so much as to rebuke the indignities daily put upon heaven, is an ill proof of zeal and religion.

But as insensible as such are of their duty, God is not wanting to his own glory: he has forbidden these things; let men disobey at their peril.¹ “Ye shall not swear by my name falsely,” saith God, “neither shalt thou *profane* the name of thy God; I am the Lord.” Hear, O ye swearers, the judgment that God has denounced against you!² “Every one that *swearerth* shall be cut off.” How cut off? From God.—Again, “The land is full of adulteries; and because of swearing the land mourneth: Behold! the whirlwind of the Lord shall heavily fall upon the head of the wicked.”

S E C T. VII.

Of the Sin of Profaneness.

TO this I shall add a brief reflection upon that pernicious sin of profaneness, so near of kin to oaths and blasphemy. Such is the degeneracy of the age we are fallen into, that profaneness does not only go unpunished, but boldly lays claim to wit, and fills the conversation of too many of those that think themselves raised above the genius of the vulgar. He is reputed formal, that will not be rude to sacred things; and a man insipid, of no sense or salt, who cannot jeer devotion: and, which is strange, they make the *bible* a sort of common-place; but it is for mockery, not for piety. The phrases they use, are picked to abuse that holy book; and the profaneness is placed to the account of wit. But truly, if men must rally religion at the peril of passing else for fools, and abuse

¹ Jer. xxiii. 10, 19.² Zech. v. 3.

scripture to purge themselves from the sin of reverencing it, there is here an unhappiness in being conscientious; and, on the side of this world, the temptation to be profane is stronger than the encouragement to be virtuous. For this is my soul grieved, that men should use their wit to abuse him that gave it them; and that, though there is more to be said *for* religion, than there can be said *against* it, both with respect to its reasonableness and usefulness, and that the hazard of being irreligious is incomparably greater on the part of these Atheistical scoffers, than of men professing to fear God, and believe another world, they shall yet be so constant and obstinate in their loose and lewd conversation? But if the profaning of the least thing that was dedicated to the worship of God in the times of the law, was so heinous a sin, what should we say, when men stick not to profane the name of God himself, and scoff at his *revealed will*, so much greater than either temple or altar, or those rites belonging unto them! God Almighty give his strong rebuke to this extravagant spirit!

And to you all, that live in the practice of these open and crying sins I have at this time insisted upon, this I say unto you, in the fear of God; ‘Repent of the evil of your doings!’ bring not down the farther judgments of God upon this land; they may be the affliction of many, but in the end they will be your punishment: ye shall pay the reckoning of their sufferings in the other world, and God will charge you with the calamity that they shall endure! remember, before it is too late. Dreadful things are denounced against the wicked; therefore go not on to gratify your hearts lusts, and to forget the living God: for this shall be the end of such works, that God will certainly bring you to judgment:” “And who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appears?” No *fish* can stand in his presence. Consider that awakening saying of the apostle, “That the *righteous*

* Eccles. xi. 9. • Mal. iii. 2. † Pet. iii. 12.

“scarcely

“scarcely are saved;” and if so, “Where shall the “*ungodly*, where shall the wretched *sinner* appear?” How shall *such* be able to hold up their heads in the day of his wrath, in the hour of his judgment, at that great time of inquisition, when a final reckoning shall be past, and all must render an account of the deeds they have done, and receive the reward due unto them? Therefore, “while it is to-day, harden not your “hearts against God and his law:” flatter not yourselves: to be Christians, ye must be like Christ: and if ye will be saved from wrath, ye must be redeemed from sin; for “the wages of sin is death:”^p what we sow, we must reap. Increase not therefore guilt upon your consciences, by rebelling against the *light*, that shines in them, &c. But lay your impieties to heart, mourn with true contrition of soul, and yet love righteousness and hate iniquity, and ye will prevent the civil magistrate, and probably avert the indignation of God that hangs over the nation. You cannot say you do not *know* your duty, but you do not *do* it: the light is come, and shines in you; and the grace appears daily to you, and in you, against the very imaginations and motions to evil; and you are self-condemned in your excesses of all sorts; and if your hearts condemn you, God will not justify you:^q therefore bring your deeds to the true light with which Christ has enlightened you, and examine if they are wrought in God or no; and begin a cordial reformation, which stands in the “*spirit* of reformation.”

S E C T. VIII.

An address to the civil magistrate for redress.

HAVING thus ended my reflections upon the five great crying sins of the kingdom, and my reproof of the actors and promoters of them; give me

^p Rom. viii. 11. 14. Gal. vi. 7. ^q John i. 9. iii. 21.

leave to make my humble and Christian address to you that are in authority. And, in the first place, I beseech you to remember, that though ye are as Gods on earth, yet ye shall die like men: that ye are encompassed with like passions, and are subject to sin. Such therefore of you, as may be concerned in any of these enormities (to whatever degree of guilt it be) I beg you, in the name of God, to "search yourselves," and to be just to your own souls. O! let the mercies and providences of God constrain you to unfeigned repentance! turn to the Lord, love righteousness, hate oppression, and he will turn to you, and love you and bless you.

In the next place, be pleased to consider your commission, and examine the extent of your authority; you will find that God and the government have empowered you to punish these impieties: and it is so far from being a crime, that it is your duty. This is not troubling men for faith, nor perplexing people for tenderness of conscience; for there can be no pretence of conscience to be drunk, to whore, to be voluptuous, to game, swear, curse, blaspheme and profane; no such matter. These are sins against nature, and against government, as well as against the written laws of God. They lay the axe to the root of human society, and are the common enemies of mankind. It was to prevent these enormities, that government was instituted; and shall government indulge that which it is instituted to correct? This were to render magistracy useless, and the bearing of the sword vain: there would be then no such thing in government as "a terror to evil-doers:" but every one would do that which he thought right in his own eyes. God Almighty defend us from this sort of anarchy!

There are three great reasons, which enforce my supplication. The first is, 'The preservation of the government;' which, by such improvidence and debauchery, is like to be greatly weakened, if not destroyed. The industry, wealth, health, and authority of the nation, are deeply concerned in the speedy and exemplary

plary punishment of these extravagancies. This is the voice of interest, for the common good of the whole society; rulers and ruled.

But there is an higher voice, unto which Christian men ought to have regard, and that is, the "Voice of God," who requires us to fear him, and obey his righteous commandments, at the peril of making him our enemy, whom we should make our common friend and protector: for upon his goodness depends our very natural and civil comforts. So that it is our interest to be good; and it is none of the least arguments for religion, that the piety and practice of it is the peace and prosperity of government; and, consequently, that vice, the enemy of religion, is, at the same time, the enemy of human society. What then should be more concerned for the preservation of virtue, than government; that, in its abstract and true sense, is not only *founded* upon virtue, but, without the *preservation* of virtue, it is impossible to maintain the best constitution that can be made? And however some particular men may prosper that are wicked, and several private good men miscarry in the things of this world, in which sense things may be said "to happen alike to all, to the righteous as to the wicked;" yet I dare boldly affirm, and challenge any man to the truth thereof, that in the many volumes of the history of all the ages and kingdoms of the world, there is not one instance to be found, where the hand of God was against a *righteous* nation, or where the hand of God was not against an *unrighteous* nation, first or last? Nor where a just government *perished*, or an unjust government long *prospered*? Kingdoms are rarely as short-lived as men, yet they also have a time to die: but as temperance giveth health to men, so virtue gives time to kingdoms; and as vice brings men betimes to their grave, so nations to their ruin.

It is the reason given by God himself for the destruction of the old world. We have that example before our eyes, that a whole world has perished for its sin, "its forgetfulness of God, and their duty to him;
" one

“one family only excepted.” Gen. vi. That is the reason which God renders for casting out the people of those countries, that he gave into the hands of the children of Israel; “they were full of uncleanness, adulteries, fornication, and other impieties.” And though he is sovereign Lord of the world, and may dispose of the kingdoms therein as pleaseth him (for he that gives, can take away; and he that builds, can cast down; and mankind is but a tenant at will, to receive or surrender at his Lord’s good pleasure) yet he useth not that prerogative to justify his gift of those countries to the Jews; but, at the end of his prohibition of unlawful marriages and lusts, he charges them in these words; “Defile not yourselves in any of these things; for in all these the nations are defiled, which I cast out before you: and the land is defiled; therefore do I visit the iniquities thereof upon it; and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you; that the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you.”

So Saul’s disobedience was his destruction, and his sin made way for David’s title, “Saul died,” saith the sacred story, “for his transgression:” this made the Philistines conquerors; his own sin beat him, and killed him. Saul died for his transgression: then if he had not sinned he had lived; he had beaten his enemies, and kept the kingdom? Yes, the place implies it. This, then, should deter men, but kings especially, who have so much to lose here, and so much to answer for hereafter. But what was Saul’s sin? It was, first, “Not keeping, but disobeying, the word of the Lord,” both as it came by the mouth of Samuel, God’s prophet, and as it spoke the mind of God to him in his own conscience: for Moses had said before

’ Levit. xviii. 24, 25, 26, 28.

“ that

“ that the word of God was nigh, in the heart,” and in God’s name commanded the children of Israel to obey and do it. In short, he refused the counsel of God, and God for his counsellor: for, in the next place, he betakes himself “ to one that had a familiar spirit for advice,” saith the story: “ He enquired not of the Lord; therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David.” There are too many people troubled with *familiar spirits*; it were well if they were *less* familiar with them: had Saul trusted in God, he needed not to have been driven to that strait. He that was made king by God’s appointment, and endued with a *good spirit*, so basely to degenerate, as to run to a witch for counsel, could not but miscarry. To this darkness and extremity iniquity will bring men: and truly, a wo follows all such persons; answerable to that expression of God by the prophet; “ Wo unto them that take counsel, and not of me.” “ When Saul,” saith the place, “ was little in his own eyes, God honoured him; he made him head and king of the tribes of Israel:” but when Saul grew proud, God deserted him, and for his disobedience destroyed him. And what befel the family of Saul, in some after-ages befel both kings and people, and worse: for their land was invaded, first by the Ægyptians, then by the Chaldeans and Babylonians: their temple was rifled, their treasure taken, and their kings, princes, nobles, artificers, and mighty men of valour, yea all, save the poorest of the people, were killed, or carried away captive, by the king of Babylon. The reason rendered is this: “ Because the kings did that which was evil in the sight of God, and stiffened their necks, and hardened their hearts from turning unto the Lord God of Israel;” and because the chief of the priests and of the people transgressed very much after the abominations of the heathen. *And when God sent his messengers to reprove and warn them, and that out of his great compassion, they

* 1 Sam. xv. 17. † 2 Kings xxiv. 14. ‡ 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14.

wickedly mocked his messengers, despised his words, and misused his prophets, till his wrath came upon them, and overthrew them.

I will here end my instances out of sacred story: and let us now briefly consider what the histories of *other* places will tell us, that we may observe some proportion of agreement in the providence of God throughout the world.

The first empire had Nimrod's strength, and the wisdom of the Chaldeans, to establish it; and whilst their prudence and sobriety lasted, they prospered. No sooner came voluptuousness, than the empire decayed; and was at last, by the base effeminacies of Sardanapalus, in whom that race ended, transferred to another family. It was the policy of an Assyrian king, in order to subdue the strength of Babylon, then under good discipline, not to invade it with force, but to debauch it. Wherefore he sent in players, musicians, cooks, harlots, &c. and by those means introducing corruption of manners, there was little more to do, than to take it. Nebuchadnezzar, by his virtue and industry, seen in the siege of Tyre, and in many enterprizes, recovered and enlarged the empire; and it seems his discipline (those times considered) was so excellent, that it was praised in scripture. But when he grew proud and foolish, forgetting that providence that had shewn itself so kind to him, he became a beast, and grazed among beasts; till God, whom he had forgotten, had restored him the heart of a man and his throne together.

He, dying, left Evil-Merodach heir to his crown, his conduct, nor the heart to consider what God
 e by him: in his time pride and luxury in-
 but came not to its full pitch, till the reign of
 r, who did not only, as Nebuchadnezzar,
 die a beast. In him we have the exact exam-
 . dissolute and miserable prince: he thought to
 himself against heaven and earth: dissolved in
 he worshipped no other God: his story may
 well conclude, that God and man desert those
 that

that desert *themselves*, and neglect the *means* of their own *preservation*. The city was taken before he knew it, and the sword almost in his bowels, before he believed it; his sensuality had wrapt him in such a desperate security. But he fell not by the hand of one like himself; for God, who had determined the end, prepared the means. Cyrus and his Persians were the men: the people were poor, inhabiting a barren country; but hardy, and of sober manners. Cyrus God had endued with excellent natural qualities, cultivated (as story tells us) by the care of four of the most temperate, just, and wise persons of those times. This was he, whom God honoured with the name of his "shepherd," and who was the executioner of his vengeance upon the Assyrians. While he reigned, all was well; but after he and his virtuous companions deceased, their children fell into the vices of the Assyrians; and though they reigned from the Indus to the Hellespont, they soon became the conquest of the Greeks.

Never was there a greater instance given of the weakness of pomp and luxury, than in the resistance made at Thermopolæ, where three hundred virtuous Spartans encountered the vast army of Xerxes, consisting of no less than seventeen hundred thousand men. In short, the defeats of Salamine and Platea, the expeditions of Xenophon with Cyrus the younger, almost into Babylon, and the wars of Agesilaus into Asia, made it evident, that Greece wanted only union, and an head, to make herself mistress of that vast empire.

At last comes Alexander of Macedon, with the best disciplined people that was then known: the dispute was short, where steel was against gold, sobriety against luxury, and men against men that were turned women. Thus the Persians, prepared by their own vices, God delivered into the hands of the Greeks, who as much excelled them in their virtue, as they were short of their dominion and wealth. But this lasted not long; for Alexander, who died young, survived his virtue and reputation, by falling into those vices of the
nations

The Vandals in Africa soon became effeminate and lewd, which brought upon themselves speedy ruin. The Goths set up a powerful kingdom in Spain and part of France, and by the sobriety of their manners, it flourished near four hundred years, but its end was not unlike the rest. Two corrupt princes, Vuitza and Roderic, by their dissolute example debauched the people, infomuch that men ran an hazard to be virtuous: this made their destruction easy to those whom God sent against them; which were the Moors, occasioned by the last of these kings dishonouring Count Juliano's daughter. In the time of his calamity, in vain did he expect the aid of those that had been the flatterers and the companions of his vices: his security (the effect of his luxury) was his ruin. For whilst he thought he had nobody to subdue but his own people, by abusing them he cut off his own arms, and made himself an easy prey to his real enemies: and so he perished with his posterity, that had been the cause of the mischief which befel that great kingdom. However, so it came to pass, that the remainder of the Goths, mixing with the ancient Spaniards (to that day distinct) recovered the liberty and reputation of the kingdom by an entire reformation of manners, and a virtue in conversation as admirable, as the vices by which their fathers had fallen were abominable. But the present impoverished state of Spain can tell us, they have not continued that virtuous conduct of their ancestors; the increase of their vices having decayed their strength, and lessened their people and their commerce.

But why should we overlook our own country? that whether we consider the invasion of the Romans, Saxons, or Normans, it is certain the neglect of virtue and good discipline, and the present inhabitants giving themselves up to ease and pleasure, was the cause (if Gildas the Briton, and Andrew Horn may be credited) of their overthrow: for as the first bitterly inveighed against the looseness of the Britons, threatening them with all those miseries that afterwards followed;

lowed; so the last tells us, ‘ that the Britons having
 “ forgotten God, and being overwhelmed with luxury
 ‘ and vice, it pleased God to give the land to a poor
 ‘ people of the northern parts of Germany, called
 ‘ Saxons, that were of plain and honest manners.’
 God is unchangeable in the course of his providence,
 as to these things: the like causes produce the like
 effects, as every tree doth naturally produce its own
 fruits. It is true, God is not careless of the world;
 ‘ He feeds the young ravens, clothes the lillies, takes
 ‘ care of sparrows, and of us, so as not an hair of our
 ‘ heads falls to the ground without his providence;’
 but if men despise his law, hate to be reformed, spend
 their time and estate in luxury, and persist to work
 wickedness, he will visit them in his wrath, and con-
 sume them in his sore displeasure. To conclude, wars,
 bloodshed, fires, plunders, wastings, ravishments, fla-
 very, and the like, are the miseries that follow immo-
 ralities, the common mischiefs of irreligion, the neg-
 lect of good discipline and government.

Nothing weakens kingdoms like vice; it does not
 only displease heaven, but disable them. All we have
 said, proves it: but above all, the iniquity and vo-
 luptuousness of the Jews, God’s chosen, who from be-
 ing the most prudent, pious and victorious people,
 made themselves a prey to all their neighbours. Their
 vice had prepared them to be the conquest of the first
 pretender; and thus from freemen they became slaves.
 Is God asleep, or does he change? Shall not the same
 sins have the like punishment? At least, shall they
 not be punished? Can we believe there is a God, and
 not believe that he is the rewarder, as of the deeds of
 private men, so of the works of government? Ought we
 to think him careful of the lesser, and careless of the
 greater? This were to suppose he minded sparrows
 more than men, and that he took more notice of pri-
 vate persons than of states. But let not our superiors
 deceive themselves, neither put the evil day afar off;
 they are greatly accountable to God for these kingdoms.
 If every poor soul must account for the employment

30 AN ADDRESS TO PROTESTANTS.

of the small talent he has received from God, can we think that those high stewards of God, the great governors of the world, that so often account with all others, must never come to a reckoning themselves? Yes, there is a final sessions, a general assize, and a great term once for all, where he will judge among the judges, who is righteous in all his ways. There private men will answer only for themselves, but rulers for the people, as well as for themselves. The disparity that is here, will not be observed there; and the greatness of such persons as shall be then found tardy, will be so far from extenuating their guilt, that it will sling weight in the scale against them. Therefore give me leave, I do beseech you, to be earnest in my humble address to you: why should ye not, when none are so much concerned in the good intention of it? Thus much for the first reason of my supplication.

S E C T. IX.

Of the second motive to this address.

MY second reason urging me to this humble and earnest address, is the benefit of posterity. I would think that there are few people so vicious, as to care to see their children so; and yet to me it seems a plain case, that as *we leave* the government, *they will find* it: if some effectual course be not taken, what with neglect, and what with example, impiety, and the miseries that follow it, will be entailed upon our children. Certainly, it were better the world ended with us, than that we should transmit our vices, or sow those evil seeds in our day, that will ripen to their ruin, and fill our country with miseries after we are gone; thereby exposing it to the curse of God, and violence of our neighbours. But it is an infelicity we ought to bewail, that men are apt to prefer the base pleasures of their present extravagancies, to all endeavours after a future benefit; which, besides the

AN ADDRESS TO PROTESTANTS. 51

the guilt they draw upon themselves, our poor posterity must be greatly injured thereby, who will find those debts and incumbrances harder to pay, than all the rest we can leave them under. Upon this occasion I shall take the freedom to say something of 'Education.'

The truth is, we are so much out of order in the education of our youth, that I wish I could say that we had only the sin of neglect to answer for. I fear, the care has been rather to educate them in a way of such vanity, as ends in great inconveniencies here, and must needs find "vexation of spirit" hereafter. Our universities have made more loose, than learned; and what extravagancy is begun there, is usually perfected abroad, or at our inns of court at home; that now and then afford us a few able lawyers; but the generality are like the man of old, who returned home "Seven times worse than he went out." The genius of this nation is not inferior to any in the world; it is industrious, it is wise, it is honest, it is valiant, yet soft and merciful. And, without partiality, we have men that have excelled in every worthy qualification. But, I must needs say, it has been more owing to the goodness of God, in the disposition of our natures, than the prudence and care of those who have had the charge of their education. It was the saying of a wise man, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." This is proved to us every day; but it is in the wrong way, in the way of idleness, wantonness, and impurity of manners. It is worth while, and high time, to make the experiment the other way; to try what the suppression of vice, and the encouragement of virtue, will do: in this our superiors must begin, and give their example, as well as shew their power. There is scarcely any one thing, that so much needs the wisdom of the nation in the contrivance of a new law,

Prov. xxi. i. 6.

INTERESTS OF PROTESTANTS.

... 'our youth,' whether we consider
... our manners, the good life,
... the government. There is such an
... country may do, in the practice of
... the present conjuncture will
... of the thing more welcome to
... of the Jesuits is the greatest in the
... and empire," is so far from being
... Protestantism with it were; it is our
... than our scruple: it may be, some
... of the same mind, being much eclipsed
... of this great interest. They first
... about the time of the reformation, and ap-
... themselves, with all conceivable industry, to fe-
... papacy against the progress of it.
... attempt they ventured so much farther than any
... predecessors in the church, that they have
... merit, the great ministers and go-
... of the chair for some of the last ages. Indeed,
... almost engrossed the whole power of church
... to themselves in several principalities and
... To them all other orders seem but small
... their great politicians, their philosophers,
... historians, and mathematicians, are generally
... among this society; so that we scarce see any
... thing of note come out from men of that religion,
... which is not subscribed E. S. J. The fame and ap-
... of their extraordinary learning, and the arts
... they have to recommend it, have made their order the
... of most princes and men of quality of that reli-
... for the education of their children; in whom they
... carefully intilled, with their instructions and
... principles, that peculiar respect to their own society,
... which hath greatly served to the advancement of it,
... when they have grown to age and power.

But that which above all other stratagems hath pre-
... to extend their dominion in the Roman church,

* Note, The Jesuits interest is the greatest in the Roman Church.

has

has been their erecting of schools, where they have colleges, for the 'Free education of youth:' the very doing of it gratis makes it look like charity with the poor, that have little to give; and with the rich, that seldom love to part with money, to be sure it is no objection. Thus obliging the parents, they next fall to making themselves grateful with the children: and here they exercise not a little skill. They strictly survey and observe the divers humours and dispositions of their scholars, and take great care not to baulk their capacity by cross or unsuitable studies: but when once they are fixed, every youth according to his genius, it is not easy to be believed what pains they take to allure them to their studies; how they will tempt them with childish rewards, and excite them to their book by raising an emulation among them: so that to *excel*, is more than a rod; and *victory*, than any chastisement whatever. By these arts they fit all capacities with suitable study, and cultivate them to the pitch of learning they are capable of; and all with that obligation upon the youth to love them, that from thence-forward they become partial devotees to the advancement of the honour and interest of that order. To conclude, they have got into their hands the education of the generality of the youth of the Romish religion in every country, from the king to the peasant; and being masters of them when boys, they grow governors and confessors to them when they are men; so that all seem to have fallen into their hands: and being but one entire interest throughout the world, and maintaining a most punctual correspondence, they must needs have the knowledge and disposal of the affairs of states and kingdoms, by that share they have in the counsels of princes, and that great reliance that is upon their judgment and ability. This, if we regard only the Romish religion, shews great wit, design and industry: but if we consider well how formidable these arts render them to protestant kingdoms, it will become us to use our utmost prudence to secure ourselves. And there seems not to me a more effect-

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tual remedy, than a 'wise and virtuous education of our youth.' In order to it, let us use methods not inferior to theirs, but for better ends: let us employ our skill to improve the childrens natural abilities, to excite them to virtue, and endear the truest interest of their own country to them. I will briefly set down what at present occurs to me, as a good way of education.

First, Let care be taken 'to breed up youth in morality:' virtue prepares the mind, helps the understanding, and gives industry to compass what is desired. I would have no books used in schools, in which there may be the least indecency. There were, and not without reason, ancient canons against the reading of such heathen authors; and not a few learned and sober men have rebuked that practice amongst us. It is an affront to Christianity, yea, to our natures, to fetch our wit, or our manners from them. It were well if some tracts of moral virtues, and invectives against vice, were written in those languages we would have youth to learn; for in such discourses they might obtain good manners with the languages; whereas by preferring in schools Heathen authors, our youth has learned base obscenities, and a corrupt conversation.

II. In the next place, I would propose some of the more obvious and easier parts of the mathematicks, and the knowledge of plants and natural bodies; to be composed on purpose, after a familiar manner, that they may be instructed in the knowledge of nature, and learn things, at the same time they learn words: it is a most reproveable ignorance, that we know not our own natures, the world we are of and in, the parts that compose it, and their nature and service, their sympathies and antipathies. *Nature* is an excellent book, easy, useful, pleasant and profitable; but how few, alas! are learned either in the *Macrocosm*, or their *Microcosm*? I wish this were better understood; it would be both our honour and advantage.

III. The

III. The last sort of books which I would recommend, and are, in my opinion, most suitable to their maturity of age and understanding, are such as relate to the histories and transactions of our own kingdoms; the interest of the true Protestant religion and civil policy among us. But because there are very few (if any) of these discourses extant, it were worth the care of our superiors, and an act deserving praise, that some skilful, sober, and judicious men were set to work for the composition of some small tracts of this nature; and, as an appendix to the whole, that there might be a summary of the most virtuous and infamous actions of former times, with the rewards and punishments they have received from God and just government; that, by the power of example, they may be deterred from vice, and provoked to an honest emulation of the virtues and reputation of the ancients.

IV. In the fourth place, 'Cross not the genius of your youth,' but match their talents well; for if you do not suit their studies to their understanding, it will be drawing up hill, going against the grain, or swimming against the tide: that which will be gained, will be little; and with so much labour and time too, as will not quit cost. It should be greatly the care of those who have the charge of youth, to make the ways of learning easy and chearful; which leadeth me to my last observation upon this head.

V. Let all honest arts be used by masters of schools to provoke their youth to learning, without much fierceness or beating: for that sort of education has nothing of that free and generous disposition in it, which might be raised and improved in youth by more gentle and reasonable methods. They that are taught to obey only for base fear, make fear, and not reason, the rule of their obedience; and this grows up in too many with their age, that they turn mere mercenaries, and only worship violence. In short, make instruction *easy*, correction *reasonable*: convince them of their miscarriage with *mildness*, then *pardon* them; and, finally, excite them to amendment by *smiles* and *fa-*

your. This awakens the noble part, and excites youth to perform that; which may ingratiate them with their tutors; who, if they at any time commit an error, should rather shew themselves affectionately *sorry* for them, than bitterly *angry*. Plato, being greatly displeas'd with his servant, and going about to correct him, gave the wand to one that stood by, saying; 'Do thou beat him, for I am *angry*.' Chastisement should be us'd with reason and reluctancy: a discreet and cool hand may direct the blow right, and hit the mark, when men of fury rather ease their passion, than mend their youth; 'especially, if the correction exceed the fault; for that hardens. This very brutishness is more injurious to the nature of our youth, than usually their instruction is beneficial.

Upon the whole matter, I take the freedom to say, That if we would *preserve* our government, we must *endear* it to the people. To do this, besides the necessity of present just and wise things, we must secure the youth: and this is not to be done, but by the amendment of the way of their education, and that with all conceivable speed and diligence. I say, the government is highly oblig'd: it is a sort of trustee for the youth of the kingdom, who, though now minors, yet will have the government when we are gone. Therefore depress vice, and cherish virtue, that, through good education, they may become good; which will truly render them happy in this world, and a good way fitted for that which is to come. If this be done, they will owe more to your memories for their education, than for their estates.

S E C T. X.

Of the third and last motive for this address.

MY third and last reason for this serious supplication to the civil magistrate is so great, that I find difficulty to express it: it is the glory of that God that
that

that made us; that hath so often delivered us, and doth so plentifully provide for us; who "sent his Son into the world to save us," and waits every day to be good and gracious to us. But he hath so particularly, and with that transcendency, set the marks of his favour upon you, both in your restoration and protection, as scarce any age can parallel. O! let a steady virtue be the return of these mercies, and a pious care to retrieve and encourage morality, which is the very basis of our religion and government, be the humble token of your gratitude: it is your office; you do but comply with the 'reason of your own institution:' God expects it, and good men beseech it from you. There is much in your power at this time, to make this the 'Island of peace and lasting tranquillity.' Lose not, I beseech you, the present opportunity: revive the laws against these gross iniquities: terrify all evil-doers, and cherish them that do well: provide for the poor, that their stock may not be abused, nor their cries pierce heaven against you, because of neglect; that God may yet vouchsafe to spare us.

"Your sins," said God of old, "have withheld good things from you: It is *righteousness* that exalts a nation; but *sin* is the reproach of any people." Would ye prosper? then please God; and if ye will please him, ye must put away the wicked from amongst you; at least from power, and offices in the government: they that would rule others, should be just themselves, and of good lives. It was both his complaint, and the cause of his judgment, in former ages: "There are found *wicked* men among my people; they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men: as a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich; they are waxen fat, they shine. They overpass (or *overlook*) the deeds of the wicked; they judge not the cause of the fatherless; yet they prosper." These were no small folk, but men of power; such as got largely by the government, and employed their authority

to enrich themselves, and not to relieve the oppressed. I must needs say, and can with great truth, that *mis-government* is the occasion, though the *devil* be the cause, of that mischief and ruin that attend nations.

What kingdoms hath God destroyed, and cities turned into rubbish, because of national evils; too much occasioned by the remissness of magistrates? The slack hand that the rulers of Israel held over the manners of that unhappy people, made way for their unsubjected passions and corrupt affections to break out into the vilest impieties: but if men shall be left to their own licentiousness, to commit sin with greediness, and with impunity despise the laws of God and men, all I can say is this: God, who is jealous of his glory, the great avenger of his law upon rebellious nations, will withhold his mercies, and hasten his judgments upon ours.

“Hear the word of the Lord,” saith the prophet Hosea,* “ye children of Israel; for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land: by swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood touches blood; therefore shall the land mourn.” And by the prophet Malachi God threatens that people thus:† “I will come near to you, and I will be a swift witness against forcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and such as fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts.” Yea, to that degree was that magistracy degenerated, that they thought it a vain thing to serve God, and keep his commandments. ‘They called the proud *bappy*; yea, they that worked wickedness were *set up*, they were advanced to places of *honour* and *trust*, and they that tempted God, were delivered: but the word of the Lord was unto them a reproach; they had no delight in it: they made a mock at sin, laid snares for the innocent, and (like us) made men offenders for a word;’ for a good word, a word of *reproof*, or an harmless *opinion*. Well, but what followed? “Shall

* Hosea iv. 1, 2, 3.

† Mal. iii. 5.

“ I not visit for these things, saith the Lord, shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?” O that magistrates would hear this! God as truly speaks to *us* by the scripture *now*, as he did by them that writ it *then* to the *Jews*. Truly, it is our very case; the same impieties are daily found amongst us: certainly God is offended, his spirit grieved, and heaven is set against us. For the Lord’s sake do your duty in this present conjuncture, and mistake not your measures: let every thing have its due weight and place with you; that is the way to succeed. Ye are now warmly concerned in the discovery and prosecution of a *Jesuitical plot*; a design, it seems, to destroy the king, blow up your religion, and wrest the government out of your hands: in this, doubtless ye do well; and all just care to preserve the peace of the kingdom from such mischievous conspiracies, is most commendable in you, and deserves and draws all due acknowledgments from honest and *English* minds: but, I beseech you, let *God* have a share in your concern; remember *him*, as well as *yourselves*. You confess this great discovery is only owing to his goodness; shall we be then more zealous for our own safety, than for his glory; who, when all is done, must save us, or we are lost? Let us make him our friend, who is stronger than the combinations of all our enemies; and guard ourselves against that which can only bring their evil devices to pass, (alas!) our *sin*. That is their strength, and the poison of their arrows; let us confess and forsake it; let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that it may not “grind us to powder.” And truly, if our hearts were not harder than adamants, this testimony he has given us of his care over us, notwithstanding all our repeated provocations given to him, should break us into deep contrition. O let his long suffering prevail upon us to unfeigned repentance! then shall we stand clear men before God; and if so, he will quickly make our enemies to flee before us.

If there be any truth in sacred history, any credit to be given to Christian religion, or the experience of
ages

ages, this that I say of God and Government is true : and it is our duty, yea, our interest, the truest and easiest way to safety. God has decreed, " that nation " and kingdom that will not serve him, shall perish, " yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." Isaiah lx. 12. " But great is their peace, that love thy law : " it shall go well with the righteous ; but it shall go " ill with the wicked : " Upon them God hath threatened to rain snares, difficulties, perplexities ; they shall not know which way to turn themselves. I am not against the use of *means* : men have not wisdom and power for nothing : but then let them use them in the *fear* and *name* of God : " Cursed is he that " putteth his strength in man, and his confidence in " the arm of flesh." * And in another place, " Wo " to them that go down to Egypt for help, and stay " on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are " many ; and in horsemen, because they are very " strong : but they look not to the Holy One of Is- " rael, neither seek the Lord." It was his reproof to the nation that professed him, that they should seek to the *stratagems*, and rely upon the *strength*, of heathen nations, rather than upon *faith* in *him*, the living God : and the reason he gives in the third verse is great, viz. " The Egyptians are *men*, and not *God* ; and their " horses *flesh*, and not *spirit* : when the Lord shall " stretch out his *hand*, both he that helpeth shall fall, " and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all " shall fall together." If, then, the hand of God be so much stronger than man, for the Lord's sake let us lay hold of it ; let *that* fight our battles, and decide the controversy : " He that trusteth in the Lord, shall " never be confounded." It was the saying of a great king, and a great conqueror, " By thee I have leap- " ed over a wall, by thee I have run through a troop," &c. Psal. xviii. 19. Who preserved the Israelites from Pharaoh's fury, threw down the walls of Jericho, when the priests blew the rams-horns, and gave Gideon

* Isa. xxxi. 1, 2.

his mighty victories; with more of the like kind. And we must not think that God is *altered*, or faith is in itself *weakened*, that no wonders are reserved for the latter and Christian ages. The truth is, faith (generally speaking) is lost, and that holy confidence now-a-days is esteemed presumption: it is become a principle, that "such things are not to be expected;" so that we shut up, or bar from ourselves, the true and most powerful way of deliverance. Let us not betake ourselves to the common arts and stratagems of nations, incredulous of the strength of the God of Israel, who is the God of true Christians too. O! that our faith may be greater than our arms! no matter for the strength of our enemies, if *God* be our strength: and truly, it is vain to acknowledge a Providence in human things, and not to confide in him, and rely upon him, that provides for us. "I was young" said David, "and now I am old; but I never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread:" It shall go well with the righteous. Therefore fear God, put away the evil that provokes him, and trust not in man, but in the living God, and it shall yet go well with England.

What noble feats did the ancients do by faith! and shall *Christians* have less than *Jews* had? Is not God *the same*? Yes; he is *unchangeable*: but, alas! *we* are not the same; that is our mischief. Christ did not many *mighty works* in some places, because they *believed* him *not*: if our confidence be not in *God*, our hopes will prove vain, and our success will fail us. We shall but have *men* of our side, not *God*; *flesh*, and not *spirit*: and if we should be so unhappy as to make *this* our strength, both the helpers and helped will fall together. But let Nineveh teach us better things, and may *her* zealous king be the example of *ours*; and let all the people say amen! the suitability of which story to our present occasion makes me chuse to end this first part of my address with it.

“ For

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“ For word came unto the king of Nineveh ; yet
“ forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. And
“ he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from
“ him, and covered him with sack-cloth, and sat in
“ ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and pub-
“ lished through Nineveh, (by the decree of the king
“ and his nobles) saying, let neither man nor beast,
“ herd nor flock, taste any thing; let them not feed,
“ nor drink water. But let man and beast be covered
“ with sack-cloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea,
“ let them turn every one from his *evil way*, and from
“ the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell,
“ if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his
“ fierce anger, that we perish not. And God saw
“ their works, that they turned from their *evil way*;
“ and God repented from the evil that he said that
“ he would do unto them, and he did it not.” Jonah
ii. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

O GOD! thou that workest wonders in the earth,
whose power cannot be controuled, in whose
hands are the souls of men, and the spirits of all
flesh, who canst turn them in a moment: turn thou
the hearts of king and people unto thee, and one
unto another. Do thou proclaim a *fast* from *sin*
throughout these sinful kingdoms: let wickedness
and oppression find no place among us: turn away
thy fierce wrath, wipe away our reproach, and love
us freely, O God! for thy dear Son's sake.

T H E

S E C O N D P A R T .

S E C T. I.

Five capital evils that relate to the ecclesiastical state of these kingdoms.

HAVING finished the first part of my address relating to the immoralities of the times, and left it with the civil magistrate, as, in conscience, I found myself obliged to do; whose peculiar charge it is, and I earnestly and humbly desire and pray that it may be his great care, effectually to rebuke them; I shall betake myself to the second part of this address, that more immediately concerns us as professed Christians and Protestants. But before I begin, I desire to premise, and do with much sincerity declare, that I intend not the reproach of any person or party: I am weary with seeing so much of it in the world: it gains nothing, that is worth keeping; but often hardens, what it is our duty to endeavour to soften and win. But if, without offence, I may speak the truth, that which, to the best of my understanding, tends to the present settlement and future felicity of my poor country, I shall, by God's help, deliver myself with the modesty, plainness and integrity, that becomes a Christian, a Protestant, and an Englishman.

Those capital sins and errors that relate to the ecclesiastical state, or church-capacity, of these kingdoms, and which are so inconsistent with Christian religion
and

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and purest Protestantcy, and that, above all, displease Almighty God, are,

First, Making *OPINIONS articles* of *faith*, at least giving them the *reputation* of *faith*, and making them the *bond* of *Christian society*.

Secondly, Mistaking the *nature* of TRUE FAITH, and taking that for *faith* which is not *gospel-faith*.

Thirdly, Debasing the true *value* of MORALITY, under pretence of *higher things*, mistaking much of the *end* of *Christ's coming*.

Fourthly, Preferring *human authority* above REASON and TRUTH.

Fifthly, Propagating *faith* by FORCE, and imposing religion by *worldly compulsion*.

These I take to be the church-evils, that have too much and too long prevailed even in these parts of the reformed world: and though the Roman church hath chiefly transcended other societies in these errors, and may, in a sense, be said to be the mother of them, she from whom they took birth, by whom they were brought forth, and have been propagated in Christendom, yet there hath not been that integrity to the nature of Christianity, and first reason of reformation from the papacy in our own country, as had been and is our duty to conserve.

S E C T. II.

Of opinions passing for faith.

FIRST, that opinions pass for faith, and are made articles of faith, and are enjoined to be embraced as the bond of communion.

That this is so, let us take the most impartial view we can, and we shall find it to be true, both of the national and many other select societies. That I may be understood in the signification of the word *opinions*,
I ex-

I explain it thus: "Opinions are all those propositions, or conclusions, made by men doctrines of faith and articles of communion, which either are not expressly laid down in scripture, or not so evidently deducible from scripture, as to leave no occasion of doubt of the truth of them in their minds who sincerely and reverently believe the text: or, lastly, such as have no new or credible revelation to vouch them."

That this is our case, let the several confessions of faith, published by almost every party in England, be perused, and you will find such propositions translated into doctrines of faith and articles of communion; as are, first, not only *not expressed* in scripture, but, perhaps not well deducible *from* scripture: and if one party may be but believed against another, we can want no evidence to prove what we say. And, in the next place, such as are, though not expressed, yet, it may be, deducible as to the matter of them, are either carried so high, spun so fine, or so disguised by barbarous school terms, that they are rather a bone of contention, than a bond of concord to religious societies. Yet this has been the unhappiness even of this kingdom, after all the light of reformation, which God hath graciously sent amongst us, 'Men are to be received or rejected for denying or owning of such propositions.' Wilt thou be a Presbyterian? Embrace and keep the covenant, subscribe the Westminster-confession and directory: and so on to the end of every society that grounds communion upon conformity to such propositions and articles of faith.

What a stir have we had in England about the word, *Ἐπίσκοπος*! He that says it signifies an higher office than *Πρεσβύτερος*, shall have no part or fellowship with us: on the other hand, they that will debase *Ἐπίσκοπος* to *Πρεσβύτερος*, and turn levellers or degraders of episcopal dignity, shall be excommunicated, silenced, punished. Is not this plain fact? Can any deny it, that love truth more than a party? The fire kindled by this contention, hath warmed the hands of violence: it had been well if men had entertained equal zeal against im-

piety, and been but half as much enemies to sin, as they have been against one another on such accounts.

If we look a little back, we shall find, that the debate of *free-will* and *unconditional reprobation* filled this kingdom with uncharitableness and division. In the arch-episcopacy of Abbot (reputed in himself a good man) whosoever held, 'that Christ so died for all men, that all men might be saved, (if they would accept the means) and that none were absolutely decreed to eternal reprobation,' was reputed an heretick, and excommunicated, as an enemy to the free-grace of God; which, it seems, at that time of day, lay in being *narrow*.

In the reign of archbishop Laud the tide turned: and those that held an *absolute election* and *reprobation*, without regard had to the good or evil actions of men, and asserted, that Christ only died for the *elect*, and not for *all*, must be discountenanced, displaced, and pointed at as men out of fashion, though at the same time conscientious, sober, and (at worst) mistaken; and to be pitied, rather than persecuted; and informed, not destroyed.

This controversy begat the Synod of Dort: he that reads the epistles of that judicious man J. Hales, of Eton College, upon the matter and conduct of that assembly, will find cause of being sad at heart; too many of them talking of religion without the spirit of it: men, perhaps, learned in books, but few of the sticklers gave any great testimony of their proficiency in that science, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated. This flame, kindled between Arminius and Episcopius, &c. for the Remonstrants, and Gomarus, Sibrandus, &c. for the Predestinarians, distracted Holland not a little, and had an ill influence upon the affairs of England, at least so far as concerned the church. But the mournfullest part of that history is the ill usage Martinus Crocius, the bishop of Landaff, and others had; who, though they were acknowledged to be sound in the faith of those things, which generally followed the judgment

judgment of Calvin, as to the main points controverted, yet if at any time they appeared moderate in their behaviour, gentle in their words, and for accommodation in some particulars, with the remonstrants, or free-willers; Gomarus and his followers, not observing the gravity due to the assembly, the rules of debate, and least of all the meekness of Christian communion, fell foul of their brethren, reproached their tenderness, and began to fix treachery upon their sober endeavours of accommodation; as if they intended to execute, as well as maintain, their reprobation, and blow up their friends, rather than not destroy their adversaries.

But if we will rise higher in our enquiry, and view the mischiefs of earlier times, flowing from this practice, the fourth and fifth centuries after Christ will furnish us with instances enough. We cannot possibly forget the heavy life some men made about the observation of *Easter day*, as if their eternal happiness had been in jeopardy: for so far were they denenerated from the love and meekness of Christianity, that about keeping of a day, which perhaps was no part, but, to be sure, no essential part, of the Christian religion, they fell to pieces; reproached, reviled, hated, and persecuted one another. 'A DAY' was more to them, than 'Christ,' who was the Lord and end of days; and 'victory over brethren,' sweeter than the 'Peace and concord of the church,' the great command of Jesus, whom they called Lord.

But the remarkable and tragical story of Alexander bishop of Alexandria, and Arius his priest, in their known debate about the 'Nature and existence of the Son of God,' with the lamentable consequences thereof, (as all writers upon that subject have related) witnesseth to the truth of what I say. The bishop's curiosity, and the strictness of Arius; the presumption of the one to expound beyond the evidence and simplicity of the text, and the captious humour of the other, that would not abate the bishop any thing for his age, or the rank he held in the church, but logically ex-

acted the utmost farthing of the reckoning from his old pastor; first began the fray: which as it became the perplexity of church and state for some ages, so it raged to blood; and those that had been persecuted like sheep by the heathen not long before, turned wolves against each other, and made sport for the infidels, doing their work to their own destruction. Nay, so much more Christian was Themistius the philosopher, that he, in his oration, called *CONSUL*, commended the emperor Jovianus for his moderation, and advised him to give that liberty of conscience, which professed Christians refused to allow each other; who seemed to think they never did God better service, than in sacrificing one another for religion, even as soon as ever they had escaped the heathen's shambles.

Did we duly reflect upon the unnatural heats, divisions, and excommunications among them, the many councils that were called, the strong and tedious debates held, the translations of sees, the anathemas, the banishments, wars, sackings, fires and bloodshed that followed this unnatural division, that sprang from so nice a controversy, one would verily believe no less, than that religion itself had been in the utmost hazard; that Judaism or Paganism were over-running Christianity; and not that all this stir had been made about an *Iota*. For the whole question was, whether *Homonisia*, or *Homoiousia*, should be received for faith? In which the difference is but the single letter *I*: certainly, we must do violence to our understanding, if we can think that these men were followers of that Jesus that "loved his enemies, and gave his blood for the world," who hated their brethren, and shed one another's blood for *opinions*: the heathen philosophers never were so barbarous to one another, but maintained a better understanding and behaviour in their differences.

But how easily might all these confusions have been prevented, if their faith about Christ had been delivered in the words of the *scripture*; since all sides pretend to believe the *text*? and why should any man presume

fume to be wiser, or plainer in matters of faith, than the Holy Ghost? It is strange, that God and Christ should be wanting to express or discover their own mind; or that the words used by the Holy Ghost should have that shortness, ambiguity, or obliquity in them, that *our* frail capacities should be needed to make them more easy, proper and intelligible. But that we should scarcely deliver any one article of faith in *scripture-terms*, and yet make such acts the 'Rule and 'bond of Christian communion,' is, in my judgment, an offence heinous against God and holy scripture, and very injurious to Christian charity and fellowship. Who can express any man's mind so fully, as himself? And shall we allow that liberty to ourselves, and refuse it to God? "The scriptures came not in old time," said the apostle Peter, "by the will of *man*; but holy "men of God spake, as they were moved by the "*Holy Ghost*." Who can speak better, or express the mind of the Holy Ghost plainer, than the *Holy Ghost*? The scripture is the great record of truth, that which all these parties in controversy agree to be 'the declared mind and will of God,' and they unanimously say, it ought to be *believed* and professed as *such*. If this be true, in what language can we so safely and properly declare our belief of those truths, as in the very language of the *scripture*?

And I cannot see how those persons can be excused in the day of God's judgment, who make men heterodox or heretical, for refusing to subscribe their articles of faith that are not in *scripture-terms*, who in the same time offer to declare their belief of God, Christ, spirit, man's lapse or fall, repentance, sanctification, justification, salvation, resurrection, and eternal recompense, in the language of holy scripture? I must say it is preposterous, and a contradiction, that those who desire to deliver their *faith* of truth, in the *language* of truth, shall not be reputed *true believers*, nor their *faith* admitted. This were to say, that therefore their *faith* is not to be received, because it is declared in the *language* of that very *truth*, which is the *object* of that

faith, for which it ought to be received, and which is, on all hands, concluded to be 'our duty to believe.' It seems then, we must not express our belief of God in *his* words, but our *own*; nor is the scripture a creed plain or proper enough to declare a true believer, or an orthodox Christian, without our glosses.

Are not things come to a sad pass, that to refuse any other terms than those the Holy Ghost has given us, and which are confessed to be the 'rule or form of 'sound words,' is to expose a man to the censure of being unsound in the faith, and unfit for Christian communion? Will nothing do but *man's comment* instead of *God's text*? *His consequences* and *conclusions*, in the room of *sacred revelation*? I cannot see how any man can be obliged to *receive*, or *believe*, revealed truths in any *other* language than that of the revelation *itself*; especially if those, that vary the expression, have not the same spirit to lead them in doing so, or that it appears not to me that they have the guidance of that holy spirit. If the Holy Ghost had left *doubts* in scripture, which is yet irreverent to believe, I see not how *men* can resolve them; it is the *work* of that *spirit*. And since men are so apt to err, doubts are better left in *scripture*, than made or left by *us*. But it is to cross that order of prudence and wisdom among men, who chuse to conform their *expressions* to the thing they *believe*. If an honest man hath related a *story* to me, of something he hath seen, and I am to declare my *faith* about it, if I believe the *fact*, I will chuse to deliver it in the *terms* of the *relator*, as being nearest to the truth.

Suppose a father, dying, makes his *last will* and *testament*, and, as he thinks, so plain, that there can be no mistake made by the *executors*, but what is wilful: if they, instead of proving this will, and acting according to the plainness of it, turn *commentators*, make more difficulties than they find, and perplex the whole matter, to the children and legatees, and send them to the *law* for right; will we not esteem such executors *ill* men, and justify those persons concerned in

in their *refusal* of their *paraphrase*? “God hath, at “sundry times, and in diverse manners,” by his prophets, his beloved Son, and his apostles,^a delivered to the world a *declaration* of his blessed *will*; but some have claimed, and taken to themselves, the *keeping, explanation, and use* of it, so as those that chuse to be concluded by the *letter and text* of *Christ’s testament*, in its most *important* points, expose themselves to great prejudice for so doing; for they are excommunicated from all other share in it, than the punishment of the breakers of it; which is part of *their* anathema, who, of all others, are most guilty of *adding, or diminishing*, by undertaking to determine, for others as well as themselves, the *mind and intention* of the Holy Ghost in it.

But if it be true, as true it is, that few have writ of the divine authority of scripture, who do not affirm that the very penmen of it were not only inspired by the Holy Ghost, but so extraordinarily acted by him, as that they were wholly asleep to their own will, desires or affections, like people taken out of themselves; and purely passive, “as clay in the hands of the potter,” to the *revelation, will, and motion* of the *spirit*; and for this end, that nothing, delivered by them, might have the least possibility of mistake, error, or imperfection, but be a “complete declaration of the “will of God to men;” I cannot see which way such men excuse themselves from great presumption, that will, notwithstanding, have the *wording of creeds of communion*, and reject that declaration of faith as insufficient, which is delivered in the very terms of the Holy Ghost; and deny those persons to be members of Christ’s church, that in conscience refuse to subscribe any other draught than that the Lord has given them.

Two things oppose themselves to this practice: ‘the glory of God, and the honour of the scripture;’ in that it naturally draws people from the regard due

^a Heb. i, 1,

to God and the scripture, and begets too much respect for men and their tradition. This was the difficulty Christ met with, and complained of, in his time; they had set up so many rabbies to teach them religion, that the Lord of the true religion could hardly find place amongst them. And what did they do? "They taught for doctrines the traditions of men:" they gave their own and their predecessors apprehensions, constructions, and paraphrases upon scripture, for the mind and will of God, the rule of the people's faith. They were near at this pass in the church of Corinth, when they cried out, "I am for Paul, I am for Apollos, and I am for Cephas," though they had not the same temptation.

And that which followed then, ever will follow in the like case, and that is, distraction; which is the contrary to the second thing that opposeth itself to this practice, and that is, the concord of Christians. For the sake of peace consider it: 'Lo here, and lo there, always followed; one of this mind, and another of that: as many sects, as great men to make and head them.' This was the case of the Jews; and yet I do not hear that they devoured one another about their opinions and commentaries upon scripture; but the Christians have done both; divided and persecuted too. First, they have divided, and that mostly upon the score of opinions about religion. They have not been contented with the expressions of the *Holy Ghost*; they liked their *own* better. And when *they* were set up, in the room of scripture, and in the name of scripture, submission was required, upon pain of worldly punishments. This dissatisfied curiosity, this unwarrantable,—what shall I say? This wanton search, has cost Christendom dear, and poor England dearest of any part of it.

I design not to grate upon any, or to revive old stories, or search old wounds, or give the least just occasion of displeasure to those that are in present power; yet I must needs say, that opinion, on one side or the other, has been the cause of much of that discord,

discord, animosity and confusion that have troubled this kingdom. And it seems to have been the great stratagem of Satan, to prevent the spreading of the 'Glorious gospel of salvation' in the world, by taking men off from the serious pursuit of piety and charity, humility and holy living, peace and concord; and, under pretence of more raised apprehensions, and sublime knowledge of religion, to put them upon introducing curious and doubtful questions, that have given occasion, first for contention, and that for persecution. This was no more uncondemned, than unforeseen of the apostle Paul, who exhorted his beloved son Timothy, 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, 5. "To avoid those that doted about questions;" those men that would be thought skilful, inquisitive searchers after truth, such as love to exercise their faculties, and improve their talents: but let us hear his judgment, "Of which," says he, "cometh strife, railing, surmises, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds." And the truth is, none else love such disputings: they, who seek a daily victory over the world, the flesh and the devil, and press fervently after fellowship with God, and that consolation that ensues such an employment of their time, have very little to lose upon contention about words. I could wish I were able to say, that vain controversy were not our case! but this is not all, the apostle does expressly tell Timothy, that "if any man consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine that is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions," &c. They were such as used "Philosophy, and vain deceit," as he writes to the Colossians, Col. ii. 8. "Beware," says he, "lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit," (that is, draw them away from the simplicity of the gospel, and the wholesome words of Christ) "after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." He used no human wisdom, yet he spake wisdom; but it was in a mystery; though to the humble

humble disciples of Jesus nothing was plainer; but it was "a mystery to the wise men of this world." And truly, they that are not unacquainted with the more degenerate ages of the Greek philosophers, how *philosophy*, once taken for the 'Love of virtue and self-denial,' which they esteemed the *truest wisdom*, and was begun by men of ordinary rank, but great example of life, became little else, than 'an art of wrangling upon a multitude of idle questions,' and so they entertained the apostle Paul at Athens, may very well guess which way apostacy entered among Christians; especially when we consider, that in the third and fourth centuries, the *heathen-philosophers* had the *education of Christian youth*, and that no man had any reputation among the *Christian doctors*, who was not well initiated in the *philosophy, rhetoric, and poetry* of the *Gentiles*. Which made for impurity of language, and laid a foundation for great feuds in the church: CHRIST and his *doctrine* must be proved by *Aristotle* and his *philosophy*. Yes, *Aristotle* must explain *SCRIPTURE*, and by degrees methodize the loose parts of it, and reduce them to formal propositions and axioms; and by the help of such philosophers, the poor *fishermen* were taught to speak *metaphysically*, and grew polite in the *sense of Athens*, who, to say true, were neither guilty of *using* nor *understanding* it. But as the first rules of *philosophy* were few and plain, and consisted in virtuous living; so the *Christian religion* was delivered with much brevity, yet much plainness; suited to the capacity of the young, the ignorant, and the poor; to inform their understandings, subdue their affections, and convert their souls to God, as well as persons of more age, knowledge, and ability.

And truly, when we consider the 'smallness of the writings of the evangelists, the shortness of Christ's sermons, the fewness of the epistles writ by the apostles, and the many and great volumes of commentators and criticks since,' we may justly say, 'the text is almost lost in the *comment*, and truth *hid*, rather than *revealed*, in those heaps of fallible apprehensions.'

' hensions.' Where, by the way, let me say, ' that
 ' the voluminousness of the *books* is no small token of
 ' the unclearness of the *writers*; for the *more evident*,
 ' and *better digested* any matter is, the more *easy* and
 ' *short* it will be in *expressing*.' But after the Christians
 had declined the simplicity of their own religion, and
 grew curious and wanton, ' loving God above all,
 ' their neighbours as themselves, and keeping the
 ' plain commandments of Christ, that relate to good
 ' life, became but ordinary and homely things:'
 their easiness rendered them contemptible: they gave
 but little pleasure to speculative minds; they had no-
 thing in them above ordinary capacities; and it seemed
 hard that men of inquisitive and raised spirits, should
 sit down with the '*lesson of rusticks and peasants*:' phi-
 losophers did not do so; and they would be like other
 nations. It was not enough now to know '*There was*
 '*a G O D*,' and that he was '*but One*, just and good,
 ' the observer of their actions, and the rewarder of
 ' their deeds, and that therefore they should serve
 ' him;' but they must be distinctly informed of his
 nature, and all his attributes, his purposes and his de-
 crees, and the suitableness of them all to the line and
 plummet of their understanding: ' So that God was
 ' to be, what their *conclusions* would allow him to be;
 ' that yet knew not *themselves*.' Nor did it satisfy
 that there was a *Christ*; that this Christ was the Son of
 God; that God so loved mankind, as, beholding them
 in a way of destruction, he sent his son to proclaim
 pardon upon true repentance, and offered a general
 reconciliation to as many as received and embraced his
 testimony; and that to that end he laid down his life
 a ransom, rose and ascended, and gave his good spirit
 to lead his followers, after his example, in the way of
 truth and holiness: but they must search into ' the se-
 ' cret of this relation; how, and after what manner,
 ' he is the Son of God? His nature, power and per-
 ' son must be discussed: they will be satisfied in this,
 ' before they can find in their hearts to believe in him.'
 Next, ' Whether he be the cause, or the effect, of
 ' God's

‘ God’s love? What was that price he paid, and ran-
 ‘ som he gave? And how he died for us? If properly
 ‘ and strictly, or tropically and elegantly, to satisfy
 ‘ the justice of God? and whether God could, or could
 ‘ not, have saved man another way? If this mercy
 ‘ were offered to all, or but some? And whether ac-
 ‘ ceptance and repentance be with the consent of the
 ‘ creature, or by an irresistible grace? What body he
 ‘ rose and ascended with? And what bodies we shall
 ‘ have in the resurrection, in nature, stature, and pro-
 ‘ portion?’ Lastly, What this spirit is, that comes from
 ‘ Christ? If it comes from God also? Whether it be God,
 ‘ or an inferior minister? How it exists? If a person, in
 ‘ what relation, degree, or dignity it stands to the Father
 ‘ and Son?’ With abundance more of this unreason-
 able strain, flowing from the curious, ungoverned,
 and restless minds of men. No man would be used
 by his servant as they treat God. He must wait our
 leisure, before we will believe, receive, and obey him:
 his message is obscure, we do not understand it; he
 must gratify our curiosity; we desire to be better satis-
 fied with it before we believe or deliver it; it comes
 not presently up to mens understandings; it is too ob-
 scurely expressed; we will explain it, and deliver it
 with more caution, clearness and success, than it is de-
 livered to us. Thus God’s revelation hath been scan-
 ned, and his precepts examined, before licensed by
 his creature: man would be wiser than God; more
 wary than the Holy Ghost. Our Lord, it should seem,
 understood not what kind of creature man was; he
 wanted his wisdom to admonish him of the danger;
 or haply he thought not upon that corruption, which
 should befall mankind in these latter ages of the
 world, which might require the abilities of men to
 supply the wants and defects left by the Holy Ghost,
 in the wording of the scripture.—I wrong not this
 practice; I render it not more odious than it is: it is
 an inexcusable piece of presumption, that which de-
 bases the external testimony of God, and draws men
 off from that which is eternal too. It introduces the
 traditions of men, in the room of God’s records, and
 setteth

setteth up their judgments and results for the rule of Christian faith, and canons of Christ's church. This is one of those things that made Rome so hateful, and her yoke intolerable, to our predecessors: pretended deductions from scripture, put in the room of scripture, with a superseas to all dissent upon ever so just a ground of dissatisfaction.

I beseech you, Protestants, by the mercies of God, and love of Jesus Christ, ratified to you in his most precious blood, '*Flee Rome at home:*' look to the enemies of your own house! have a care of this presumption; carry it not too high; lay not stress, where God has laid none, neither use his royal stamp to authorize *your* APPREHENSIONS in the name of *his* INSTITUTIONS.

I do not say, that men are never to express their minds upon any place of scripture to edification: there is a Christian liberty, not to be denied; but never to lay down *articles of faith*, which ever ought to be in the *very language of holy writ*, to avoid temptation and strife. You see how the contrary method hath been the great make-bait in all ages, and the imposition of such opinions the privilege of hypocrites, but the snare of many honest minds; to be sure the sad occasion of feuds and miserable divisions. It was plainly seen, that by the many disputes that rose from hence, mens wits were confounded with their matters; truth was lost, and brotherhood was destroyed. Thus the devil acted the part both of opponent and defendant, and managed the passions of both parties to this end, which was discord. And but too many were ready to persuade themselves, from the miscarriages on both sides, 'That nothing certain could be concluded about religion;' for it so fell out, that whilst men were perpetually wrangling and brawling about some one opinion of religion, the most important points of faith and life were little regarded, unity broken, amity destroyed, and those wounds made, that were never closed but with the extinction of one party; not a 'Good Samaritan' being to be found to heal and close them.

Now

Now it was that a godly man was distinguished from an ungodly by this, ' Let his life have been almost what ' it would, that he seemed to maintain the opinions in ' vogue, and to abhor the doctrine, which, in some ' one or two points, might be reputed heretical, or ' schismatical.'

O that we could but see how many and how great defeats Satan hath given to the work of God in the hearts of men ! what desolations he hath made by this one evil, controversy ; begot of opinion, and used for it ; and how few have contended for the " the faith, " as it was once delivered to the saints !" he must be a man of brass, that could refrain from weeping at these calamities. And truly I must desire to take leave sometimes to bewail this broken condition of Christendom, and to bestow my tears in secret upon these common ruins : and I beseech God Almighty, with a soul sensibly touched with the mischiefs that naturally flow from this practice, to awaken you to a most speedy and serious consideration of your present standing, and amendment of your miscarriage, in this and all other points that may concern your good, and his glory. Put away wrath ! away with clamours ! away with arrogance and impatience ! let that holy spirit of God, which we in common profess to be the " Christian's guide," have the ordering of our understandings in spiritual things, lest ignorance should mistake, interest wrest, or prejudice pervert, the sense of God's book. For as too many are ignorant of the divine truth through their own concupiscence, and vile affections, that carry them away to the desire of other things, and therefore easily mistake about nice or obscure matters ; so there are not a few, who come to search the scriptures with prepossessed minds, that are sorry to meet with a contradiction to their own judgment, instead of being glad to find the truth, and who use their wits to rack out another sense than that which is genuine ; which sort of men use the scripture for its authority, and not its sense of truth.

All

All this while, the head is set at work, not the heart; and that which Christ most insisted upon, is least concerned in this sort of faith and Christianity; and that is, "keeping his commandments." For it is opinion, not obedience; notion, and not regeneration, that such men pursue. This kind of religion leaveth them as bad as it findeth them, and worse; for they have something more to be proud of. Here is a *creed*, indeed, but of what? The *conclusions of men!* and what to do? To prove they believe in Christ, who, it seems, never made them. It had been happy for the world, that there had been no other *creeds*, than what he and his apostles gave and left: and it is not the least argument against their being needful to Christian communion, 'that Christ and his apostles did not think so, who were not wanting to declare the whole counsel of God to the church.'

To conclude: if you desire peace, love truth, seek piety, and hate hypocrisy, lay by all those things called *articles of faith*, and *canons of the church*, that are not to be found in *express terms* in *scripture*, or so plainly authorized by *scripture*, as may, with ease, be discerned by every honest and conscientious person. And in the room of those numerous and disputed opinions, made the bond of external communion, let some 'plain, general and necessary truths be laid down in *scripture terms*, and let them be few;' which leads me to the next point, and that is FAITH, which is generally mistaken in the very nature of it.

S E C T. III.

Of FAITH, and mistakes about it.

THE second mischief that is amongst us, is the 'misunderstanding of the nature of *faith*;' whence it comes to pass, that men take that for faith, which is not; and sit down in a security pernicious to their eternal happiness. I shall briefly say something of what is
not

not faith, before I speak of that which appears to me to be truly and scripturally such.

The faith of our Lord Jesus Christ is not only not believing *mens opinions* and determinations from the sacred text, of which I have so freely delivered myself, but it is not *merely* the belief even of the things contained in scripture to be *true*: for this the devils and hypocrites do, and yet are very *bad believers*: they refuse not the authority of scripture: the devil made use of it to Christ himself; but he would have the *explaining* and *applying* of it: and since he could not hinder the Divine Inspiration, if he may but be allowed the exposition, he hopes to secure his kingdom. Since then the verity and authority of both history and doctrine may be believed by the devil and hypocrites, that are false to their own faith and knowledge, we cannot, without great injustice to the ‘faith of our Lord Jesus Christ,’ which is the ‘faith of all his followers,’ allow, that a mere belief of the verity and authority of the history and doctrine of scripture, is that “true and precious faith, which was the saints victory over the world.”

Faith, then, in the sense of the Holy Ghost, is by the Holy Ghost thus defined: viz. “The evidence of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for.”^b This is general, and runs through all ages; being received of all sorts of Christians as a true definition of faith: but, with leave, I shall express it thus: ‘True faith in God, is entirely *believing* and *trusting* in God, confiding in his *goodness*, resigning up to his *will*, obeying his *commands*, and relying upon his *conduct* and *mercies*, respecting this life and that which is to come.’ For a man cannot be said to *believe* in God, that believes not what he *says* and *requires*: and no man can be said to do that, who does not obey it, and conform to it; for that is believing in God ‘to *do as he says*.’ This is in scripture called the “gift of God;”^d and well it may, for it is super-

^b Heb. xi. 1. ^c Eph. ii. 8. ^d Gal. v. 6.

natural: it crosses the pride, confidence and lust of man: it grows out of the seed of love, sown by God in the heart; at least "it works by love:" and this distinguishes it from the faith of ill men and devils, that though they do believe, they do not "*love God above all,*" but something else *instead* of God, and are full of pride, anger, cruelty, and all manner of wickedness. But this faith that works by love, that divine love which God plants in the heart, it draws and inclines man, and gives him power, to forsake all that displeaseth God: and every such believer becomes an "*ENOCH,*" *translated*, that is, *changed*, from the fashion of this world, the earthly image, the corrupt nature; and is renewed in the likeness of the Son of God, and *walks with God*. "The just shall live by "*faith:*"^e they have in all ages *lived* by this faith; that is, been *sustained, supported, preserved*: the devil within, nor the world without, could never conquer them. They walked not by sight, but by faith, and had regard to the eternal recompence: no visible things prevailed with them to depart from the invisible God, to quench their love, or slacken their obedience to him; the great testimony of their faith in him.

This holy faith excludes no age of the world; the just men, the "*Cornelius's*" in every generation, have had some degree of it: it was more especially the faith of the simpler ages of the world, such as those in which the patriarchs lived, who, having not an outward law, became a "*law to themselves, and did the things contained in the law;*"^f for they believed in God, and, through faith, "*obtained a good report.*"^g But because that it hath pleased God, in order to man's recovery from that grievous lapse disobedience hath cast him into, at sundry times, and in divers manners to appear to the sons of men, first by his prophets, and last of all by his Son; and that these several manifestations have had something peculiar to them, and very remarkable in them, so that they claim a place in our

^e Heb. ii. 4.

^f Rom. ii. 14.

Heb. xi. 39.

^g Heb. i. 1.

creed; it will not be amiss that we briefly consider them.

The first was that of the prophets, in which Moses preceded, by whom the law came to the Jews;^a but grace and truth to mankind by Jesus Christ. The first brought condemnation, the last salvation; the one judgment, the other mercy; which was “glad tidings” indeed. The one did forerun the other, as in order of time, so in nature of dispensation: the law was the gospel *begun*; the gospel was the law *fulfilled*, or *finished*: they cannot be parted.

The decalogue, or ten commandments, were little more than what had been known and practised before; for it seemed but an epitome and transcript of the “law writ in man’s heart by the finger of God:” this is confessed on all hands and in all ages since, as the writings of ancient Gentiles, as well as Jews and Christians, tell us. This, therefore, must needs be a part of our creed; for it relates to that righteousness which is indispensable and immutable: the other part of their constitution, that was peculiar to their politic, typical, and mutable state, the gospel is either unconcerned in it, or else ended it, by the bringing in of a *better hope* and a more *enduring substance*. “But grace and truth came by Jesus Christ:” *grace* is opposed to the condemnation of the law; and *truth*, to shadows. This is the most excellent dispensation; it is ours; and it becomes us to weigh well our interest in it. Take it in other words of the Holy Ghost. “God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son.¹ God so loved the world, that (after all the world’s provocations, by omissions and commissions) he gave his only begotten Son into the world, that the world through him might be saved.”

^a John i. 17. ¹ Heb. i. 1. John iii. 16, 17.

And

And here two things present themselves to our consideration: first, the *person*; who he was, what his authority? Secondly, his *message*, his doctrine, what he taught? Which, though ever so reasonable in itself, depended very much, in its entertainment among the people, upon the truth of his mission and authority, that he was no impostor, but came from God, and was the promised Messiah. This was done two ways; by revelation and by miracles. By *revelation*, to such as were well prepared and inclined; as honest Peter, the woman of Samaria, and those that were moved to believe him from the authority in which he spake, so unlike that of the formal scribes. By *miracles*, to those that, being blinded by ignorance or prejudice, needed to have their *senses* struck with such supernatural evidences; from many of whom this witness came, “that he was the Messiah, the Christ and Son of God.”

In fine, all was done, within the compass of that people among whom he daily conversed, that was needful to prove he was from God, and had *God's message* to declare to the world. Insomuch that when some of his disciples were not so firm in their belief of his authority, as he deserved at their hands, he calls his own works to prove his commission, and convict them of incredulity: “If ye will not believe that the Father is in me, that *he* doth these works by me, believe me for the very *works* sake.”^{*} Thus he argued with the Jews: “Say ye of him the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?” “If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not:” this is reasonable; he that shall *judge* the world, offers to be *tried himself*: he goes on: “But if I do, though ye believe not *me*, believe the *works*, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me.”¹ And he laid the sin of the Jews upon this foot, viz. That they rejected him, after he had made

^{*} John xiv. 10, 11. ¹ John x. 36, 37, 38.

84. AN ADDRESS TO PROTESTANTS.

proof of his divine mission by such *extraordinary works*, as no man among them all could do: which, to give them their due, they do not *deny*, but shamefully *pervert*, and foolishly *abuse*, by attributing them to the power of the *devil*. To which malice and slander he returned this inconfutable answer; “A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand.”—What! Cast out devils by the *prince* of devils? It is a contradiction, and very madness itself.

I have nothing to do now with Atheists, or those that call themselves Theists, but such as own themselves Christians; and shall therefore keep to my task, namely; ‘What of the Christian dispensation is so peculiar and important, as to challenge of right the name of *creed* or *faith*.’ I say then, ‘That the belief of *Jesus* of *Nazareth* to be the *Promised Messiah*, the *Son* and *Christ* of God, come and sent from God to restore and save mankind,’ is the *first*, and was then the *only requisite*, article of faith, without any large confessions, or an heap of principles or opinions, resolved upon after curious and tedious debates by councils and synods: and this may be proved both by example and doctrine.

It is evident from example, as in the case of Peter; who for having believed in his heart, and confessed with his mouth, “That Jesus was the Christ and Son of God,” obtained that signal blessing.^m This made Nathaniel a disciple; “Rabbi,” said he, “Thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel.” It was the like *confession*, that made amends for Thomas’s incredulity, when he was sensibly assured of the resurrection of Jesus, “My Lord and my God!” This was also the substance of Martha’s *confession* of *faith* to Jesus, when he said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me shall never die: believest thou this? She answered, yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world?” She answered

^m Mat. xvi. 16, 17. John i. 49.

him not as to that particular of the resurrection, but in general, ' That he was the Christ, the Messiah, that ' was to come into the world,' and that sufficed. It was a confession not unlike to this, that the blind man made, to whom Christ gave sight, when Jesus said to him, ^a " Dost thou believe on the Son of God? Lord, " said he, I do believe; and he worshipped him." What shall we say of the Centurion, preferred by Christ himself before any in Israel, though a Gentile? ^o Or of the faith of the woman and inhabitants of Samaria, that he was " the Messiah?" ^p or of that importunate woman that cried to Jesus, to cast a devil out of her possessed daughter, and would not be put off, to whom Christ said, ^q " O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt?" To which let me add the faith of the people that brought the sick man of the palsy to Christ, who uncovered the roof to let him down to be touched; the faith of Jairus the ruler; ^r and of that good woman, who pressed through the croud to touch the hem of Christ's garment, to whom Jesus said, ^s " Be of good comfort, daughter, thy faith " has made thee whole:" Also the two blind men that followed him out of the ruler's house, crying, ^t " Thou Son of David have mercy on us;" who, when Jesus had said, " Believe ye that I am able to do " this?" answered, " Yea, Lord;" upon which he touched their eyes, and said, " According to your " faith be it unto you:" Also the blind man near Jericho; ^v the leprous Samaritan that Christ cleansed; ^x and that notable passage of the woman that kissed his feet, and anointed his head; to whom he pronounced this happy sentence; ^y " Thy faith hath saved thee, go " in peace."

I will conclude this with that famous instance of the thief upon the cross, who neither knew, nor had time to make, a large confession like the creeds of these

^a Joh. ix. 35, 38. ^o Mat. viii. 10. ^p John iv. ^q Mat. xv. 25, 28. ^r Mark ii. 4, 5. ^s Mark v. 22. ^t Mat. ix. 20, 21, 22, 27. ^v Luke xviii. 35, 42. ^x Luke xvii. 15, 19. ^y Luke vii. 45, 50.

days; but, it seems, he said enough;² "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." And Jesus said unto him, "Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." By which it is easy to learn that it was the heart, not the mouth; the sincerity, not the words, that made the confession valid.

Nor was this only, in the days of Christ, the effect of his gracious dispensation, or peculiar indulgence; for after-times afford us the like instances. This was the main bent of Peter's sermon; and when the "three thousand believed that he, whom the Jews had crucified, was both Lord and Christ, and repented of their sins, and gladly received his word," they are said to have been "in a state of salvation."³ Thus Cornelius, and his household and kindred, so soon as Peter declared "Jesus to be the Messiah," and that they had believed, "the Holy Ghost fell upon them," and they were received into the Christian communion. But the story of the Eunuch is very pat to our purpose: as he rid in his chariot, he was reading these words out of the prophet Isaiah, viz. "That he was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before the shearers, so opened he not his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth." Philip joined to him, and asked him, "If he understood what he read?" He desired Philip to interpret the mind of the prophet, whether he spoke of himself, or another? Philip upon the place preached to him Jesus: the Eunuch was so well persuaded by the apostle, that coming to a water, he said, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip answered him, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest:" To this the Eunuch replied, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Upon which he was baptized;

² Luke xxiii. 42, 43.

³ Acts ii. 37, 47. Acts x. 24, 48, Acts viii. 27, 37.

and

and it is said, "He went away rejoicing;" which indeed he might well do, that felt the comfort of his faith, the remission of his sin, and the joys of the Holy Ghost, which always follow true faith in Christ.

I will conclude these examples with a passage in the Acts, of Paul at Thessalonica; ^b it is this: "Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath-days reasoned with them out of the scriptures; opening and alledging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus (said he) whom I preach unto you, is Christ. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few." Thus we may plainly see, that they were baptized into the faith of Jesus, and not into numerous opinions; and that this one confession, from true faith in the heart, was the ground and principle of their church-fellowship. Then God's church was at peace; she throve; there were then no snares of words made to catch men of conscience with. Then not many words, but much integrity; now much talk, and little truth: many *articles*, but "O ye of little faith!"

Nor was this only the judgment and practice of that time, out of condescension to weakness, and charity to ignorance; for both Christ Jesus himself and his apostles (those blessed messengers of holy truth) have doctrinally laid it down, as the great test to Christians; that which should distinguish them from infidels, and justly intitle them to his discipleship, and Christian communion one with another. Let us read a little farther: "Then said they to Jesus, what shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him, whom God hath sent. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on

^b Acts xvii. 2, 3, 4. ^c John vi. 28, 29. 47. John viii. 24.
Acts xvi. 30, 31. Rom. x. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

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“ me, hath everlasting life.” And upon another occasion, to the Jews, he said, “ For if ye believe not “ that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.” It must follow then, that if they did believe him to be the Messiah, the anointed of God to salvation, “ they “ should be saved.” Most plain is that answer of the apostles to the gaoler, when he came trembling to them, and said, “ Sirs, what must I do to be saved? “ Believe, said they, “ on the Lord Jesus Christ, and “ thou shalt be saved.” The apostle Paul confirms this in his epistle to the Romans, when he says, “ If “ thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, “ and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised “ him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with “ the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with “ the mouth confession is made unto salvation: for the “ scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him, shall “ not be ashamed. For there is no difference between “ the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all “ is rich unto all that call upon him. For whoso- “ ever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be “ saved.”^d This was the word of faith which they preached; and he testified that it was “ nigh in the “ heart,” as Moses had done before him. And, saith the apostle John, on this occasion, “ Who is a liar, “ but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?”—Here- “ by know ye the spirit of God; every spirit that con- “ fesseth (or every one that in heart or spirit confes- “ seth) that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of “ God.” Again, says he, “ Whosoever shall confess, “ that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, “ and he in God.”^e Yet once more he affirms, “ Who- “ soever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of “ God.” But this is more than an *historical* belief; a true, sound, and hearty *persuasion*: a faith that influ- enceth the whole man into a suitable conformity to the

^d Deut. xxx. 14.

^e 1 John ii. 22.
John v. 1.

^f 1 John iv. 2. 15.

nature,

nature, example, and doctrine of the object of that faith.

I will conclude these doctrinal testimonies out of scripture, with a conclusive passage the apostle John useth towards the end of his evangelical history of Jesus Christ: ^a “ And many other signs truly did Jesus in the
 “ presence of his disciples, which are not written in
 “ this book; but these are written that ye might be-
 “ lieve that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and
 “ that believing ye might have life in his name.”
 In which place two things are remarkable: first, that whatever things are written of Jesus, are written to this end, “ That we might believe that Jesus is
 “ the Christ.” Secondly, “ That those that sin-
 “ cerely believe, shall through him obtain eternal
 “ life.” Certainly, then, if this be true, their in-
 charity and presumption must be great, who have taken other measures, and set another rule of Christianity, than Jesus and his apostles gave. This *sincere confession* contented Christ and his apostles; but it will not satisfy those that yet pretend to believe them: it was enough then for a miracle and salvation too, but it goes for little or nothing now. A man may sincerely believe this, and be stigmatized for a schismatick, an heretick, an excommunicate: but I may say, as Christ did to the Jews in another case, “ From the beginning it
 “ was not so.”

But here I expect to be assaulted with this objection:
 ‘ If this be all that is necessary to be believed to sal-
 ‘ vation, of what use is the rest of the scripture?’

I answer, of great use, as the apostle himself teaches us; ^b “ All scripture is given by inspiration of God,
 “ and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for cor-
 “ rection, for instruction in righteousness, that the
 “ man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished
 “ unto all good works.” It concerns the whole life

^a John xx. 30, 31.

^b 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

and

and conversation of a man; but every *passage* in it is not therefore fit to be such an article of faith, as upon which Christian communion ought, or ought not, to be maintained. For though it be all equally *true*, it is not all equally *important*: there is a great difference between the *truth* and *weight* of a thing. For example: it is as true that Christ suffered under *Pontius Pilate*, as that he *suffered*; and that he was *pierced*, as that he *died*; and that he did *eat* after his resurrection, as that he *rose* from the dead *at all*; but no person of common understanding will conclude an equal weight or concernment in these things, because they are equally true: the *death* of Christ was of much greater value than the *manner* of it; his *resurrection*, than any circumstance of his appearance *after* he was risen. The question is not, whether *all* the truths contained in scripture are not to be *believed*; but whether those truths are equally *important*? And whether the ‘*Belief with the heart, and confession with the mouth, that Jesus is the Christ and Son of God, be not as sufficient now to intitle a man to communion here, and salvation hereafter, as in those times?*’ Against which nothing can be, of weight, objected.

If it be said, ‘That this contradicts the judgment and practice of many great and good men;’

I answer, I cannot help that. If they have been tempted, out of their own curiosity, or the corruption of times, to depart from the ancient paths, the footsteps of purest antiquity and best examples, let their pretences have been what they will, it was presumption: and it was just with God, that error and confusion should be the consequence of those adventures; nor has it ever failed to follow them.

Lastly, if it be alledged, ‘That this will take in all parties, yea, that *schismaticks* and *bereticks* will creep in under this general confession, since few of them will refuse to make it:’

I do say, it would be an happy day. What man, who loves God and Christ, seeks peace and concord,

that

that would not rejoice if all our animosities and vexations about matters of religion were buried in this one confession of Jesus, the great Author and Lord of the Christian religion, so often lost in pretending to contest for it? View the parties on foot in Christendom among those called Protestants, observe their differences well, and how they are generally maintained, and you will tell me, that they are rent and divided about their own comments, consequences and conclusions: not the *text*, but the *meaning*; and that too, which perhaps is not in itself essential to salvation; as the dispute betwixt the Lutherans and Calvinists, the Arminians and Predestinarians, and the like. Is it not lamentable to think, that those who pretend to be Christians, and reformed ones also, should divide with the winds, and fight, as *pro aris et focis*, for such things, as either are not expressly to be found in scripture, or if there, yet never appointed or intended by Christ or his apostles for articles of communion. Should they then erect their communion on another bottom, or break it for deviating from any other doctrines than what they in so many words have delivered to us for necessary?

If we consider the matter well, I fear it will appear that the occasion of disturbance in the church of Christ hath in most ages been found to lie on the side of those who have had the greatest sway in it. Very pertinent to our present purpose is that passage of J. Hales of Eton, in his *tract* concerning *schism*:¹ ‘It hath,’ said he, ‘been the common disease of Christians from
 ‘ the beginning, not to content themselves with that
 ‘ measure of faith which God and the scriptures have
 ‘ expressly afforded us; but, out of a vain desire to
 ‘ know more than is revealed, they have attempted to
 ‘ discuss things, of which we can have no light, nei-
 ‘ ther from reason nor revelation. Neither have they

† *Tract of Schism*, (printed with other things) page 212, 213.

‘ rested here ; but, upon pretence of church autho-
 ‘ rity, which is NONE, or tradition, which for the most
 ‘ part is but FIGMENT, they have peremptorily con-
 ‘ cluded, and confidently imposed upon others a neces-
 ‘ sity of entertaining conclusions of that nature ; and,
 ‘ to strengthen themselves, have broken out into di-
 ‘ visions and factions, opposing man to man, synod to
 ‘ synod, till the peace of the church vanished, with-
 ‘ out all possibility of recall. Hence arose those an-
 ‘ cient and many separations amongst Christians ;
 ‘ Arianism, Eutychianism, Nestorianism, Photinian-
 ‘ ism, Sabellianism ; and many more, both ancient
 ‘ and in our time.

And as he hath told us one great occasion of the
 disease, so he offers what follows for the cure :^k ‘ And
 ‘ were liturgies,’ says he, ‘ and publick forms of ser-
 ‘ vice so framed, as that they admitted not of particu-
 ‘ lar and private fancies, but contained only such
 ‘ things, as in which all Christians do agree, schisms
 ‘ on opinion were utterly vanished : whereas to load
 ‘ our publick forms with the private fancies upon
 ‘ which we differ, is the most sovereign way to perpe-
 ‘ tuate schism unto the world’s end.—Remove from
 ‘ them whatsoever is scandalous to any party, and
 ‘ leave nothing but what all agree on ; and the event
 ‘ shall be, that the publick service and honour of God
 ‘ shall no ways suffer. For to charge churches and
 ‘ liturgies with things unnecessary, was the first begin-
 ‘ ning of all superstition.---If the spiritual guides and
 ‘ fathers of the church would be a little sparing of in-
 ‘ cumbering churches with superfluities, and not over-
 ‘ rigid, either in reviving obsolete customs, or impo-
 ‘ sing new, there were far less danger of schism or su-
 ‘ perstition.---Mean while, wheresoever *false* or *suspect-*
 ‘ *ed* opinions are made a piece of the church liturgy,
 ‘ he that *separates* is not a *schismatick* : for it is alike un-
 ‘ lawful to make profession of known or suspected fal-
 ‘ shoods, as to put in practice unlawful or suspected

^k Tract of Schism, page 215, 216, 217, 218.

‘ actions.’

‘ actions.’ He farther tells us, in his sermon of dealing with erring Christians,¹ ‘ That it is the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and not the identity (or oneness) of conceit, which the Holy Ghost requires at the hands of Christians.—A better way my conceit cannot reach unto, than that we should be willing to think that these things, which with some shew of probability we deduce from scripture, are, at the best, but our opinions. For this peremptory manner of setting down our conclusions under this high commanding form of necessary truths, is generally one of the greatest causes which keeps the churches this day so far asunder; when-as a gracious receiving of each other by mutual forbearance, in this kind, might, peradventure, in time bring them nearer together.’

Thus much of this great man concerning schism, the cause and cure of it? And for the notion of hereticks he will help us altogether as well: for though they are generally taken for such who err in *judgment* about doctrines and articles of *faith*, yet if this man may have any credit, and perhaps none of his profession has deserved more, he tells us, that ‘ Heresy is an act of the *will*, not of *reason*; and is, indeed, a *lie*, not a *mistake*: else,’ says he, ‘ how could that known speech of Austin go for true, *Errare possum, Hereticus esse nolo*: I may err, but I am unwilling to be an heretick?’ And indeed this is no other than what holy scripture teacheth; “ A man that is an heretick, “ after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such, is subverted, and sinneth, “ being condemned of himself.”² Which is as much as to say, that nobody is an heretick, but he that gives the lie to his own conscience, and is self-condemned: which is not the case of men merely *mistaken*, or who only err in *judgment*. And therefore the term of hereticks is as untruly as uncharitably flung upon those that conscientiously dissent, either in point of disci-

¹ J. Hales, Golden Remains, p. 49, 50.

² Tit. iii. 10, 11.

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pline or doctrine, from any society of Christians; and it is not hard to observe that those who have most merited that character, have most liberally bestowed it.

But to shew you that neither true schismatick, who is ‘ One that unnecessarily and unwarrantably separates from that part of the visible church of which he was once a member,’ nor true heretick, who is a ‘ wilful subverter of true, or an introducer of false doctrines, a self-condemned person,’ can ever shelter himself under this common confession of Christianity, sincerely made; let us consider, that whoever so declares Jesus to be the Messiah and anointed Saviour of God to men, must be supposed to believe *all that of him*, with respect to which he is *so called*. Now that for which he is so denominated, is that which God sent him to do: the reason and end of his coming he could best tell, who hath told us thus; “ I am come, that ye may have life, and that ye may have it more abundantly.” The world was *dead* in trespasses and sins; the guilt and defilement of transgression had *killed* the soul, as to *spiritual* life and motion; and from under this powerful *death* he came to redeem the soul unto *life*: in short, to restore man from that fearful degeneracy which his disobedience to God had reduced him unto.

The way he took to accomplish this blessed work was, first, ‘ To preach repentance, and the reproach of the kingdom of God,’^a which is his *rule* and *authority* in the *hearts* of men: and that brings to the second thing to be believed; namely,

What he taught.

First, His doctrine led men to *repentance*: “ Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand.” No man could receive the kingdom of God, whilst he lived under the kingdom and power of Satan: so that to *repent*, is only to bring their deeds to the *light*, which hath exhorted men to; but to *forsake* that, upon

^a Mark i. 14. John iii. 20, 21.

examination, which appears to be evil. Wherefore I conclude, that such as have not been acquainted with this holy repentance, do not sincerely believe, neither can rightly confess, Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. Therefore saith the apostle, "Let him that nameth the name of the Lord, depart from iniquity;" plainly implying, that those do rather *profane* than *confess* the name of the Lord, who do not depart from their iniquities. And, saith the apostle in another place, "No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost:" which opens to us the nature of the true confession we ought to make, and which, being truly made in a scripture sense, makes us Christians in a right Christian acceptation; to wit, 'That the true confession of Jesus to be both Lord and Christ, is from such a belief in the heart, as is accompanied with the embracing and practising of his holy doctrine.' Such a faith is the work of the Holy Ghost; and those that do not so confess him, or call upon him, that is, by virtue of the overshadowing of this divine spirit and power, are not truly Christians, true worshippers, or believers and disciples of our Lord Jesus.

Furthermore, they that receive Christ, receive his kingdom, his power and authority in their souls; whereby the strong man that kept the house becomes bound, and his goods spoiled by this stronger man, the "Lord's Christ;" who is come from heaven to dwell in us, and be the 'hope of our glory;' for so he was preached to the Gentiles. This kingdom, the apostle tells us, stands in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; and Christ tells us where it is to be set up: "The kingdom of God is within you," saith the king himself; and where should the king be, but in his own kingdom? They are blessed that feel him to rule, and that live under the swaying of his righteous sceptre: For when this "righteous one rules the earth, the sons of men rejoice."

• Luke xvii. 20, 21.

So that no man can truly confess, and rightly believe, Jesus to be the Christ and Son of God, who does not receive him to be his king to rule his heart and affections. For can a man be said to believe in one that he will not receive? But “to as many as received Christ of old, gave he power to become the sons of God;” which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” What is this will of God? Paul answers the question: “The will of God is your sanctification;” for this Christ came into the world. So that those that believe and receive Christ, he is made to them “righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; that is, he has saved them from their sins, both guilt and defilement, and sanctified them from their corruptions: they live now by the grace of God, that teaches them to be of a sober, righteous, godlike life. “Ye shall know them by their fruits,” saith Christ of the Pharisees; so shall men know them, that sincerely believe and confess Christ, by their sanctified manners and blameless conversations. And woe from the true and just God to them that make other distinctions! for God has made no other: there will be but goats and sheep at the last day; holy and unholy; just and unjust: therefore let that be our distinction, which ever was, and will be, God’s distinction; for all other measures are the effects of the passions and presumptions of men. But because it may be expected that I should fix upon some few general heads of Christian doctrine, from the mouth of Christ and his apostles, as requisite to Christian communion, I shall proceed to mention what Christ eminently taught.

He that reads his sermon upon the mount, will find in the entrance how many states and conditions *it blessed;* “The *poor in spirit, the mourners, the they that hunger after righteousness; the merciful pure in heart, and the peace-makers;*” which, comprehend the whole of Christianity.

† John i. 12, 13. † 1 Cor. i. 30. † Mat. v.

By *mourners*, we understand true penitents, men of unfeigned repentance; which leads them not only to confess, but forsake their sins. This "godly sorrow" strips men of all false rests and comforts, makes them "poor in spirit," empty of themselves, wanting the comfort of the light, life and power of Jesus to support and sustain them; yet, as they steadfastly walk in that measure they have, the *atonement* of the blood is felt, and it cleanseth them from all unrighteousness, which makes them pure in heart. And in this condition no food will serve their turn but righteousness;* after this they hunger and thirst, more than for the bread that perisheth. They are full of meekness and mercy, making peace, and promoting concord, wherever they come: for being themselves reconciled to God, they endeavour to reconcile all men unto God, and one unto another: submitting all worldly considerations to this incomparable peace, that passeth all human understanding.

In short, let us bring it home to our consciences, and deal faithfully with ourselves. Do we know this holy *mourning*? This godly *sorrow*? Are we poor in spirit *indeed*? Not self-conceited, but *humble, meek, and lowly* in heart, like him that bid us do so? Do we *hunger* after the kingdom of God, and the righteousness of it? And are our hearts *purified* by the precious faith of the Son of God, that is a working, cleansing, and conquering faith? In fine, Are we *merciful? Tender-hearted? Lovers of peace*, more than lovers of *ourselves? Persecuted*, rather than *persecutors*? Such as *receive stripes* for Christ's sake, and not those that *beat* our fellow-servants? No man has true faith in Christ Jesus, that is not acquainted with these blessed qualifications. This is Christ's doctrine; and to *believe in him*, is to *obey* it, and be *like* him.

The great intention of this sermon, is to press people to a more excellent righteousness than that of the Scribes and Pharisees. "For," said Jesus to the mul-

* 1 John i. 7.

† 1 Cor. ii. 3.

titude, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the
"righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall
"in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."^a

1. He taught, not only that *killing*, but *anger*, without a very just cause, is unlawful to his disciples, his followers.^v

2. He prefers *concord* above *devotion*; *mercy* before *sacrifice*: he that will not use his utmost endeavour to be reconciled to his brother, shall find no place for his prayers with him that can only make them effectual.^z And *every man* is this *brother*.

3. He not only forbids *adultery*, which the law forbids, but *lust*. The *axe* of his *doctrine* is laid to the *root* of the tree;⁷ it reaches to the first *seeds* of things, to the innermost and most hidden conceptions of the mind, because he has brought his light *near*, and searches the innermost parts of the belly with his divine candle.

4. From keeping and performing *legal vows*, to *not swearing at all*. And indeed, what use can there be of any swearing, where mens *yea* is *yea*, and their *nay*, *nay*?^z There their speech, their answers, on all occasions, should be, at the most, but *yea*, *yea*; or *nay*, *nay*.

5. He taught, not to *resist evil*, but to *suffer loss*, rather than enter into *contention*: his divine wisdom did foresee how much easier it would be to overcome the violent passions of men by patience, than controversy.^a And he that justly considers the unruliness of some mens dispositions, their heats and prejudices, will find, that it is not always a real *injury* or *loss*, but some *passion*, *revenge*, or base *interest*, that puts them upon clamours, and suits of law.

6. He taught us the highest complacency and charity: "If any man compel thee to go a mile, go with
"him twain."^b Be of an easy and ready mind to do *good*; to all *friendly offices* be easily persuaded; and

^a Mat. v. 20.
29, 30.

^v Verse 22.
^z Verse 33, 34.

^x Verse 23, 24, 25.
^a Verse 39, 40.

⁷ Verse 28,
^b Verse 14.

therein

therein rather exceed, than fall short of, any one's in-treaty or necessity.

7. He taught as great *liberality* and *bounty*, "To give to him that asks, and from him that would borrow, not to turn away."^c In short, to be stewards of our *external substance* for the *good of mankind*, according to our respective abilities; not grudging, knowing whose it is; nor disbelieving, as knowing him who is both able and bountiful.

8. He advances the doctrine of loving *friends*, to the degree of loving *enemies*. "Ye have heard," said Jesus, "that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy;^d but I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you." Surely, then, where no anger dwells, no revenge can grow; and if we must love *enemies*, there is *no* man left to be *bated*. This is the doctrine of that Jesus that laid down his life for all; and this is the end for which he preached it. "That," says he "ye may be children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." It is as much as if Christ had said, 'No man can be like God, who does not love his *enemies*, and cannot do good to *all*.' Consequently, 'he that does love enemies, and is ready to do good unto *all*, he is like God the Father that is in heaven, who is love.'

9. Christ teaches us to avoid *ostentation* in our *charity*: "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them."^e

10. He teaches us the duty of *prayer*, and what: "not in the corners of the street, nor in the synagogues to be seen of men: but in the closet, in the secret of the heart, betwixt God and the soul."^f O heavenly precepts! he knew our natures, our weak-

^c Mat. v. 42. ^d Verse 43, 44, 45. ^e John iv. 8. Mat. vi. 1.
^f Verse 5, 6.

ness, and how to meet with it, and mend it. ‘ A blessed physician indeed!’ Let us receive him, for he is sure, and he is free.

11. He forbids *boarding*, and laying up of money in bank; but “ presses our treasuring up wealth in heaven;”^c and the reason is this, “ That the one is corruptible, and the other is incorruptible.”

12. He teaches *dependance* upon the *providence of God*; calling the distrustful,^b “ O ye of little faith! which of you,” says he, “ by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

13. He sets up a discrimination or distinction between *false* and *true prophets*; those that are his disciples, from counterfeits. “ Ye shall know them,” said Christ,¹ “ by their fruits: do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit: wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” This was the distinction given by Christ to his followers; the tree was not accounted a good tree by the leaves, but the fruits; not by a meer opinion, but holy living. The faith in that day, was an intire resignation and dependance upon God, and not a subscription to verbal propositions and articles, though ever so true: that was the work of after-times, more corrupt and superstitious ages, that laid more stress upon consent, aye, the very show of it, than

^c Mat. vi. 19, 20.

^b Verse 25, to the end.
16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

¹ Mat. vii. 15,

holiness,

Holiness, without which no man shall ever see the Lord. But.—

14. Lastly, Christ preaches the *general judgment*. “Many will say to me in that day,” [What day? The last day, or day of account, and final reckoning with mankind:] “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils,^k and done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity. Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was builded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes.”

By all which it is most plain, that as Christ is the rock, on which true Christians build, so none can be said truly to build upon this rock, but those that keep his sayings, that do his commandments, that obey his doctrine. Wherefore that faith of Jesus to be the Son and Christ of God, must be such a faith as does the will of the heavenly Father, and keepeth these sayings of Christ.

There are two places, in which Christ seems to sum up his blessed doctrine: one is this,^l “Therefore all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do

^k Mat. vii. 21. to the end. ^l Mat. vii. 12.

“ to you, do ye even so to them ; for this is the law
 “ and the prophets ;” which, by the way, Christ came
 not to destroy, but to fulfil. But the other passage
 seems to be more full ; the first relating only to our
 dealings with men, this second passage comprehend-
 ing our duty both to God and men, viz. ^m “ Thou
 “ shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and
 “ with all thy soul, and with all thy mind ; this is the
 “ first and great commandment : and the second is
 “ like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy-
 “ self. On these two commandments hang all the law
 “ and the prophets.”

This is the sum and perfection of the Christian reli-
 gion, the great commandment of Christ, and the cer-
 tain token of discipleship. ⁿ “ A new commandment,”
 said Christ, “ I give unto you, that ye *love one another* ;
 “ as I have loved you, that ye also love one another :
 “ by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples,
 “ if ye have love one to another.” Again Christ
 speaks to his disciples ; ^o “ If ye keep my command-
 “ ments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have
 “ kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his
 “ love : and this is my commandment, that ye love
 “ one another as I have loved you.” Yea, once more :
 “ Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command
 “ you, that you *love one another*. He that hath my
 “ commandments and keepeth them, he it is that lo-
 “ veth me ; ^p and he that loveth me shall be loved of
 “ my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest
 “ myself to him : but he that loveth me not, keepeth
 “ not my sayings.” So that only those are friends and
 disciples of Christ Jesus that do his sayings and keep
 his commandments ; and the great commandment of
 all is *love* ; for upon this one commandment do all the
 rest depend.

And indeed the reason is very obvious, since he that
 loves God above all, will leave all for God : not one

^m Mat. xxii. 37, 38, 39. ⁿ John xiii. 34, 35. ^o John xv. 10,
 12, 14, 17. ^p John xiv. 21.

of his commandments shall be slighted: and he that loves his neighbour, will much more love the “House-
 “hold of faith,” Well may such be true Christians, when their faith in Christ works by *love*, by the power of this *divine power*: he that dwells in this love, dwells in God,¹ (if John say true) for he is LOVE. “And in
 “this he recommended his love unto us, that he sent
 “his only-begotten Son,—that whosoever believeth in
 “him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Also, herein did Christ manifest his love, in laying down his life for us.² “This is my commandment,” said Christ, “that ye love one another, as I have loved
 “you: and greater love hath no man than this, that
 “a man lay down his life for his friends; ye are my
 “friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” Indeed he gave his life for the world, and offered up one common sacrifice for mankind:³ “And by this
 “one offering up of himself, once for all, he hath for
 “ever perfected,” that is, *quitted* and *discharged*, and taken into *favour*, “them that are sanctified;” who have received the spirit of grace and sanctification in their hearts; for such as resist it, receive not the benefit of that sacrifice, but damnation to themselves.

This holy offering-up of himself by the eternal spirit, is a great part of his *Messiahship*; for therein he hath both confirmed his blessed message of remission of sins, and life everlasting, to as many as truly believe in his name, and hath given himself “a propitiation
 “for all that have sinned, and thereby come short of
 “the glory of God:” Infomuch that God is said, by the apostle Paul,⁴ to be “just, and the justifier of
 “him which believeth in Jesus, whom God hath set
 “forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his
 “blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance
 “of God.”

¹ 1 John iv. 16.

² John xv. 12, 13, 14.

³ Heb. x.

⁴ Rom. iii. 25, 26, 27.

Unto which I shall join his *mediatorship* or *advocacy*, linked together both by the apostle of the Gentiles, and the beloved disciple John: the first in these words;”^u “ For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” The apostle John expresseth it thus:”^v “ My little children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not; and if any man sinneth, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world.” So that, to be brief, the *Christian creed*; so far as it is declaratory, lies eminently in a confession of these particulars: of the divine authority of the New, as well as of the Old Testament writings, and particularly of these great, general, and obvious truths therein expressed; to wit, ‘ Of God and Christ, his miracles, doctrine, death, resurrection, advocacy or mediation, the gift of his light, spirit or grace: of faith, and repentance from dead works unto remission of sins, keeping his commandments, and lastly, of eternal recompence.’—Less, once, than all this, would have done; and it does not shew the age more Christian, but more curious, indeed more infidel, to be sure more captious and froward, that there is this stir made about external creeds of communion: for distrust of brethren, and incredulity among Christians, are no small signs of their decay of faith towards God: “ From the beginning it was not so.”

But it may be here objected, ‘ How shall we know that such a declaration of faith is sincere?’

I answer, ‘ By recurring to that evidence which God shall give us.’^x They that can *try spirits*, under the most *sheep-like clothing*, have the most immediate and certain proof; and such an one there is, by the favour and relish the spirit of God gives, to them that

^u 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.

^v 1 John ii. 1, 2.

^x 1 John iv.

have

have it, of the spirits of men: but let it suffice, that Christ hath told us,⁷ "By their fruits we shall know them. If any man," says Christ, "will come after me, let him take up his cross, and follow me:" and in another place he tells us thus:⁸ "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me;" that is, they are led by my spirit, they live my life, they obey my doctrine, they are of my own nature. And the apostle Peter assures us,⁹ 'That true faith purifies the heart; and no impurity can flow from a pure heart.' You may know this faith by that way by which Abraham's faith was known to be true, to wit, *obedience*. "He believed God;" that is, he *obeyed* God; he submitted to the will of God, and relied upon his goodness: as if he had said, and he said it doubtless to himself,¹⁰ 'He that gave me my son by a miracle, can work another to save him: to God all things are possible.' It is called by the apostle Paul,¹¹ "The *spirit* of faith;" something more near and inward, than any external articles and declarations of faith: that from whence all true confessions and good works came; which made the apostle Paul thus to say,¹² "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering, without ceasing, your work of faith."

It was this *true* faith, that brings forth works of *righteousness*, by which "Abel offered to God, Enoch was translated, Noah was saved." It is said of him, "that he became the heir of the righteousness which is by faith." By this faith Abraham left his own country, and obeyed the voice of God. "By faith Moses was preserved from his childhood; and when he came to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; by faith he forsook Egypt, and passed the Red Sea. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, and Rahab was saved. By faith Gideon, Barak, Sampson, Jephtha, David, Samuel, and the

⁷ Mat. xvi. 24. ⁸ John x. 27. ⁹ Acts xv. 9. ¹⁰ Rom. iv.
¹¹ 2 Cor. iv. 13. ¹² 1 Thef. i. 2, 3.

" prophets,

“ prophets, subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword ;”^c with much more too large to be uttered here.

This is that faith, which the apostle James magnifies against all false faiths :^f “ Faith,” says he, “ if it has not works, is dead. A man may say, thou hast *faith*, and I have *works* ; shew me thy *faith without* thy works, and I will shew thee my *faith by* my works.” And as if he had foreseen the pother made by the men of creeds and articles, he speaks on this wise ; “ Thou believest that there is one God ; thou dost well ; the *devils* also *believe* and *tremble*. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that *faith without works* is dead ? Was not Abraham, our father, justified by *works*, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar ? Seest thou how *faith wrought* with his works ? And by *works* was *faith* made *perfect*.— And he was called the *friend* of God.” Very notable and informing is that *expression* of his, “ The *devils* also *believe* and *tremble* ;” and as if he had said, ‘ The devil believes, as well as you ; and trembles too, which is more.’ This shows there is a faith that is not the true faith, and that not with relation to the matters believed, but the spirit of the mind in believing : for the *devils* believe the truth *literally* ; but their faith works not by *love*, no more than their knowledge by *obedience*, and therefore it does them no good, and is not the true faith. O that Christendom would lay this very one thing to heart ! But I must proceed.

The exhortation of the apostle Peter is a farther and plain discrimination of true faith :^g “ And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to pa-

^a Heb. xi.

^f James ii. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

^g 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

“ tience

“ tience godliness, and to godliness brotherly-kind-
 “ ness, and to brotherly-kindness charity. For if
 “ these things be in you, and abound, they make
 “ you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful
 “ in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But
 “ he that lacketh these things is *blind*, and cannot see
 “ far off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from
 “ his old sins:” as if he had said, they have forgot
 where they begun, that think they can be Christians
 without a life of holiness.

I will seal up these scripture testimonies of faith,
 with that account which is given us by the apostle
 John,^b “ For whatsoever is born of God overcometh
 “ the world: and this is the victory that overcometh
 “ the world, even our faith. Who is he that over-
 “ cometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus
 “ is the Son of God?” So that the belief in the Son
 of God must have this evidence to prove it a *true*
 belief in God’s account, that by it men are *born of God*
 and *overcome the world*:^c wherefore their faith is false
 whom the world *overcomes*: “ I am not of this world,”
 saith Christ Jesus; neither can that *faith* be, that is
 rightly called the faith of the Son of God.

There are three passages left upon record by this be-
 loved disciple of Jesus, of great weight and impor-
 tance to us: when he had discoursed of the propitia-
 tion and advocateship of Christ, he does immediately
 add; ^k “ And hereby do we know that we know him,
 “ if we keep his commandments. He that saith I
 “ know him, and keepeth not his commandments,
 “ is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso
 “ keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God
 “ perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.
 “ He that saith, he abideth in him, ought himself also
 “ so to walk, even as he walked.”

The second passage, very pertinent to this matter,
 is in the next chapter; ^l “ My little children, let us

^b 1 John v. 4, 5. ⁱ John xiv. 17. ^k 1 John ii. 3, 4, 5, 6.
^c 1 John iii. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.

“ not

“ not love in *word*, neither in *tongue*, but in *deed* and
 “ in *truth*. And hereby we know that we are of the
 “ truth, and shall assure our hearts before him : for if
 “ our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our
 “ heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our
 “ heart condemn us not, then have we confidence to-
 “ wards God : and whatsoever we ask we receive of
 “ him, because we keep his commandments, and do
 “ those things that are pleasing in his sight. And
 “ this is his commandment, that we should believe on
 “ the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one
 “ another, as he gave us commandment.”

The third and last passage, which I shall mention on this account, is in his fourth chapter of the same epistle, viz. “ And we have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein our love is made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because, as *he* is, so *are we* in this world.” So that keeping God’s word and commandments, and our consciences from accusing us, and our being like to CHRIST in this world, is our *loving* of God as we ought to love him.

These are the holy fruits of all those that love God, and believe in Christ, that are the ‘ family of the faithful,’ regenerated and redeemed from the earth: wherever two or three of them are met together, Christ is in the midst of them; they neither ask nor hope in vain. With this character let us take a view of all persons and societies of Christians throughout the world, not forgetting ourselves; let us hereby try their faith and religion, and our own: “ If it be of God the Father, it is pure and undefiled; it leads

“ 1 John iv. 14, 15, 16, 17. “ James i. 27.

‘ them

‘ them that have it, to visit the fatherless and widows
 ‘ in their affliction, and to keep themselves unspotted
 ‘ from the world.’ Is this our case? O that it were
 so!

If it be objected, ‘ Which way shall we obtain this
 ‘ like precious faith?’

I answer, We must take diligent heed to the *light*
 and *grace* that comes by Jesus;° that *candle* of the
Lord, which he has set up in our souls: we must bring
 our deeds to this light, and see if they be wrought in
 God or no? for this gives us to discern betwixt the
 precious and the vile; the one gives joy, the other
 brings a load of guilt upon the soul. Do we not
 know, that we do the things we ought not; and that
 we leave undone the things we ought to do. This,
 alas! will be our judgment one day, the last, the ter-
 rible day: for therefore men are *condemnable*, because
 they *know*.

Those, therefore, that would obtain this *precious*
faith, that overcomes the world, must embrace the
 “ GRACE of our Lord Jesus Christ,” by which this
 faith is begotten; and they who believe not in this
grace, nor receive it in the love of it, nor give them-
 selves up to be taught and led by it, can never be
 said truly to *believe* in him from whom it comes, any
 more than the Jews may be said to believe in *God*,
 when they rejected him that *came* from God, his *Be-*
loved Son. He that denies the *measure*, can never own
 or receive the *fulness*. John bears record, that he was[†]
 “ full of grace and truth, and that of his *fulness* they
 “ received, and grace for grace: for the law was given
 “ by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ:”
 so that it is utterly impossible for a man to *believe* in
 Christ, and not to be taught and led by the *grace*
 that comes from him, and by him.

It is a common saying of people in these days, “ We
 “ are not under the law, but under grace;” who are
 in truth under *sin* and the law of *death*, and subjects to

° John iii. 20, 21. † John i. 14, 16, 17.

the prince of the power of the air, who reigns in the hearts of "the children of disobedience;" and their lives show it: no, those are under grace, that live the holy life of grace. "For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation," saith the apostle Paul, "hath appeared unto all men; teaching us, that denying ungodliness and the world's lusts, we should live *soberly, righteously, and godly* in this present world:" These are the people that believe in Christ, unto the saving of the soul. This is that blessed light which shines in the hearts of those that believe, and gives "the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." The ancients walked in it, and found eternal life by it. "I am the light of the world," said Christ, "he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." The saints armed themselves with it against the fiery darts of Satan; and, by the virtue and power that is in it, were enabled to overcome temptation. And this will be the condemnation of disobedient men, 'That they see, but shut their eyes; they know the light, but rebel against it.' Christ, by his holy light in the conscience, shews men their danger, warns them of it, before it comes upon them: no man on earth can plead either ignorance or surprise.

It is true, the "Candle of the wicked is often put out:" but that implies it is often lighted, and that men sin against conviction, against sight and knowledge: it is wilful, and that is dangerous. No faith, in disobedience, will do; no faith, without holy fruits, holy works, will save. Men must be born again, if ever they will enter into the kingdom of God: there is no fellowship between Christ and Belial: people must part with their vile affections and inordinate desires, or they are no company for Christ; they have no share in him. What part can pride have in humility, wrath in meekness, lust in self-denial, revenge in for-

^a Tit. ii. 11, 12. ^b John viii. 12. ^c Rom. xiii. 12, 13, 14.

^d Job xxi. 17. ^e John iii. 3. ^f 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15.

givenness?

giveness? To pretend to believe in Christ, and not to be like him, is a contradiction. "This is the message," said the beloved disciple,^v "which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light; and in him is no darkness at all: if we say, that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." The truth is, all such faith and profession are a *lie*, and that "in the right-hand;"^x a cheat upon a man's self. "But," says he, "if we *walk* in the light, as God is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanse us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, (*to be cleansed from*) we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us: but if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." To conclude, Christ Jesus, the Son of God, and Saviour of the world, is holy, harmless, and undefiled, and so must his followers be: he is no head of a corrupt body, nor master of rebellious servants: he that has not the 'Wedding garment,' must be cast out: the branch that brings not forth fruit, will be cut off. But those that truly believe in his name, walk in his light, and are taught by his grace to renounce the "Lusts of the eye, the lusts of the flesh, and pride of life,"^y the unjust profits, pleasures and pomps of the world, and chuse to follow him in his own holy way of resignation and regeneration, the same is his brother, his sister, and his mother. And whatever losses they may here sustain for his name's sake, they have the promise of an "Hundred-fold in this life, and the inheritance of that which is eternal."^z

And I do fervently beseech Almighty God, the giver of all saving faith, mercifully to vouchsafe, more and more, to beget a serious inquiry in us, what that faith is which we have? Who is the author of it?

^v 1 John i. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.
33, 34, 35.

^x Isaiah xlv. 20.

^y Mark iii. 32,

^z Mat. xix. 28, 29.

And

And what fruits it hath brought forth? That so we may not profane the name of God by a 'Vain profession of it,' nor abuse ourselves unto eternal perdition: but that we may endeavour, by God's assistance, to approve ourselves such believers, as sincerely fear God, love righteousness, and hate every evil way, as becomes the redeemed of God by the precious blood of his Son. Since, therefore, we are not our own, but the Lord's, who hath bought us with that great price, let us glorify him in our bodies, in our souls, and in our spirits, which are his: then shall we be children of Abraham indeed, heirs of the promises, partakers of that resurrection and life, that immortality and glory, which God the righteous judge will, one day, plentifully distribute to them that abide in this precious faith unto the end. This naturally brings me to my third head, and an unhappiness we have long laboured under.

S E C T. IV.

Of debasing the true value of morality, under pretence of higher things; and mistaking, in great measure, the very end of Christ's coming.

BY *morality*, I understand virtuous living, purity of manners; that justice, temperance, truth, charity, and blamelessness in conversation, out of conscience and duty to God and man, which may well denominate the man that lives that life, a man just, virtuous, and pious: in short, "one that does unto all men, as he would have all men do unto him:"^a This is my *moral man*.

It is notorious how small an estimate two sorts of people have put upon him; the profane and the professors, the Publicans and the Pharisees: the first despise him, as too squeamish, nice and formal; they deride

^a Mat. vii. 12.

his regularity, and make a jest of his preciseness. And thinking no man can be good, because *they* are naught, and that all must needs fall by those temptations they will not resist, they construe sobriety to be a trick to decoy mankind, and put a cheat upon the world. If they hear any one say, 'Such a man is a sober and just person,' they have learned, by themselves, to call him knave; that he has a design upon somebody, by being just in little things, to cheat in things of more moment. This man is very unfashionable among men of immoral principles; for his very looks and life carry a reproof with them upon vicious men; who, as if virtue were their common enemy, are in combination against the lovers and entertainers of her: the reason is, because such true virtuoso will neither do the ill things they would have them, nor flatter them in the ill they do; and therefore where ill men have the power, good men are sure to be made the common enemy.

But the reproaches that men of morality receive at the hands of lewd men, are more their honour than their suffering: that which is most of all anxious, is, 'that Morality is denied to be Christianity; that virtue has any claim to grace; and that those who glory to be called Christians, can be so partial and cruel as to renounce a mere *just man* their society, and send him packing among the heathen for damnation.' And pray what is the matter? 'Why! though this person be a *sober liver*, yet he is but a *general* believer; his faith is at large. It is true, he believes in *God*, but 'I hear little of his faith in *Christ*.' Very well, does he not therefore believe in *Christ*? or must he therefore be without the pale of salvation? Is it possible that a man can truly believe in *God*, and be damned? But as he that believes in *Christ*, believes in *God*, so he that believes in *God*, believes in *Christ*: "For he that believes on *him* that raised up Jesus from the dead, his faith shall be imputed to him for righteousness;" and says Christ himself: "He that believeth *my word*, and believeth on *him* that sent me, hath everlasting

‘ sincerity of the life of some heathens, that they be-
 ‘ lieved God had in store for such even his saving
 ‘ grace, and that he would make them possessors of
 ‘ his everlasting kingdom.’ And measuring your sa-
 tisfaction by the pleasure I took in reading what the
 author both quotes and comments upon this subject,
 I will venture to transcribe him at large, whose au-
 thority ought to go as far as his reason, and he claims
 no more; nor indeed does any reasonable man, since
 God himself seems to submit to that method of over-
 coming us, to wit, conviction, viz.

* ‘ Let it not trouble you,’ saith he, ‘ that I intitle
 ‘ them to some part of *Christian faith*, and there-
 ‘ fore without scruple to be received as weak, and
 ‘ not to be cast forth as dead. Salvianus disputing
 ‘ what faith is; *Quid est igitur credulitas vel fides?* saith,
 ‘ *Opinor fideliter hominem Christo credere, id est, fidelem*
 ‘ *Deo esse, hoc est, fideliter Dei mandata servare.* What
 ‘ might this faith be?’ said he, ‘ I suppose it is no-
 ‘ thing else, but *faithfully to believe in Christ*; and this
 ‘ is to be faithful unto God; which is nothing else
 ‘ but *faithfully to keep the commandments of God*. Not
 ‘ therefore only a bare belief, but the fidelity and
 ‘ trustiness of God’s servants, *faithfully accomplishing*
 ‘ the will of our master, is required as a part of our
 ‘ Christian faith.

‘ Now, all those good things which *moral men* by
 ‘ the *light of nature* † do, are a part of God’s will writ-
 ‘ ten in their hearts: wherefore so far as they were
 ‘ conscientious in performing them (if Salvianus’s rea-

* J. Hales of Eton, ‘ Golden Remains, of dealing with erring
 ‘ Christians,’ page 36, 37.

† Or the light which comes with us into the world, and grows up
 with us, as we are of a capacity to discern the teachings of it. See
 John i. 9. chap. viii. 12. Rom. i. 19. Ephes. v. 13. 1 John i. 7.
 All agree in it, as to its universality; but the beloved disciple in-
 structs us of its original, nature and use, in the first chapter of his
 Evangelical History, deeply and clearly: they had it before Christ’s
 coming, as may be seen Job xviii. 5, 6. chap. xxi. 17. chap. xxiv.
 § 3. 16. Psalm xxvii. 1. 36. 9.

' son be good) so far have they title and interest in
 ' our faith. And therefore Regulus, that famous
 ' Roman, when he endured infinite torments, rather
 ' than he would break his oath, may thus far be count-
 ' ed a martyr and witness for the truth. For the crown
 ' of martyrdom sits not only on the heads of those who
 ' have lost their lives, rather than they would cease to
 ' profess the *name of Christ*; but on the head of every
 ' one that suffers for the testimony of a *good conscience*,
 ' and for righteousness sake. And here I cannot pass
 ' by one very general and gross mistake of our age.
 ' For in our discourses concerning the notes of a
 ' *Christian man*, by what signs we may know a man to
 ' be one of the *visible company of Christ*, we have so
 ' tied ourselves to this outward profession, that if we
 ' know no other virtue in a man, but that he hath
 ' conned his creed by heart, let his life be never so
 ' profane, we think it argument enough for us to ac-
 ' count him within the pale and circuit of the church.
 ' On the contrary side, let his life be never so upright,
 ' if either he be little seen in, or peradventure quite
 ' ignorant of, the mystery of Christ, we esteem of him
 ' but as dead. And those who conceive well of those
 ' moral good things, as of some tokens giving hope
 ' of life, we account but as a kind of Manichees, who
 ' thought the very earth had life in it. I must con-
 ' fess that I have not yet made that proficiency in the
 ' schools of our age, as that I could see why the second
 ' table, and the acts of it, are not as properly the parts
 ' of religion and Christianity, as the acts and observa-
 ' tions of the first? If I mistake, then it is St. James
 ' that hath abused me; for he, describing religion by
 ' its proper acts, tells us, that "Pure religion and
 ' undefiled before God and the Father, is, to visit
 ' the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and
 ' to keep himself unspotted of the world." So that
 ' the thing which is an especial refined dialect of the
 ' new Christian language, signifies nothing but *mo-
 ' rality and civility*, that, in the language of the Holy
 ' Ghost, imports *true religion*.' Thus far J. Hales.

He hath said so well on this account, that there is little need I should say any more; yet let me add thus much: did men mind the *language* of the *Holy Ghost* more than their own *conceits*, they would not stile those mere *moral men*, in a way of disgrace, who are not of their *persuasion*: it would suffice, that those that “fear God and work righteousness in all nations are accepted of him;” that Christ himself hath said, “He that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven;” and of them that work iniquity, “Depart from me, I know you not.”

My friends, let us not deceive ourselves; “God will not be mocked; such as we sow we shall certainly reap.”^b The tree is known by its fruits, and will be judged according to its fruits. “The wages of sin is death:”^a men will find it so; and every man shall receive his reward suitable to his work. For people to talk of *special grace*, and yet be carried away by *common temptations*; to let pride, vanity, covetousness, revenge, &c. predominate, is provoking to God: but to conceit that the righteous God will indulge his people in that latitude which he condemns in other men, is abominable. It is sanctification that makes the saint, and self-denial that constitutes the Christian; and not filling our heads, and elevating our fancies, by applying those promises to ourselves, which, as yet, we have no interest in, though we may think they belong to nobody else: this *spiritual flattery* of ourselves is most pernicious. I cannot but say, with the apostle,^c “It is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, Jew nor Gentile (this nor the other thing) but the new creature, created after Christ Jesus in holiness: for without holiness no man shall ever see the Lord,” And what is *holiness*, but abstaining from wickedness? And what is that, but keeping the law of God? “Great peace have they that

^a Acts x. 34, 35. Mat. vii. ^b Gal. vi. ^c Mat. vii. Rom. vi. 23. * Rom. ii. 29. Gal. vi. 15. Heb. xii. 14.

“love thy law,”¹ said David, that had known the trouble of breaking it: therefore it is that “Grace and truth are come by Jesus Christ,” to help us to fulfil the law, not to excuse our *disobedience* to the law: and what before we were unable, this gives us force to do. So that Christianity is not an *indulgence* of people under weakness and disobedience, but the completing and perfection of that righteousness, which, without him, was but short and imperfect, through the all-sufficient grace and power that came by Jesus Christ.

Give me leave, I beseech you, for I have a godly jealousy upon me; I fear lest the very *end* of Christ’s coming is *mistaken*; and of how dreadful a consequence such a mistake would be, you cannot possibly be ignorant, that believe, “there is no salvation in any other name.” Let us hear the testimony of scripture: they are the words of Christ himself,² “I must preach the kingdom of God, for therefore am I sent.” Now, what is this *kingdom* of God, but God’s *government*? And where is this kingdom and government to be set up, but in *man*? So Christ tells us,³ “Behold the kingdom of God is *within* you.” So that the reason of his being sent is, that the kingdom and government of the *devil* may be destroyed, the strong man that kept the house, the *heart*, be dispossessed, and the kingdom and government of *God* in the soul erected and established. We are taught to pray for it, as little as we make of it.⁴ “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.” Would to God people would but consider what they pray for! for they are scandalized at the thing they ask, and both neglect and revile the substance of their own prayers; “Thy kingdom come, and thy will be done;” but believe neither. It was the office God designed his Son to. “The thief,” says Christ, “does not come but to kill, to steal, and to destroy;” that is, to steal

¹ Psalm cix. Psalm cxv. John i. 16, 17. ² Luke iv. 43.

³ Luke xvii. 21. ⁴ Luke xi. 2.

away the *heart* from God, and to kill and destroy all good desires and inclinations in the soul: for the *devil* is the thief and destroyer: "But I am come," says Christ,^p "that ye might have life; and that ye might have it more abundantly." Again,^q "O death, I will be thy death!" as if he had said, "I will kill *that* which kill the *soul*: I will breathe the breath of life into it again; and, by my spirit and grace, I will beget holy motions, and kindle heavenly desires, in it after God, after the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof:" this is the *newness of life*:^r "And I will not only restore that life the soul has lost, but I will increase it: I will add to it, that it may have *life more abundantly*; more power and strength to resist evil, and embrace and delight in that which is good."

Indeed he was anointed of God for this purpose; and is therefore called the "Restorer of paths, the repairer of breaches, and the builder-up of waste places;" that is, he is ordained of God for the recovery of man from his *fallen* and *disobedient state*; this is the reason of his name: "Thou shalt call his name *JESUS*," said the angel,^s "for he shall save his people from their sins:" not from wrath only, but from sin, which is the cause of wrath. That is, of *bad* men he will make them really *good* men, and of *sinful* and *unboly*, he will make them *boly* and *righteous* men, i. e. such as truly believe in him. This is the burden of John's testimony: "There is one," says he,^t "that cometh after me, who is mightier than I; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire; whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor." And seeing Jesus coming to him, he said,^u "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world!"

I know the use that too many make of these scriptures, as if they were an *Hebraism* borrowed from the

^p John x. 11. John x. 10. ^q Hof. xiii. 4. ^r Rom. vi. 4.
^s Mat. i. 21. ^t Mat. iii. 11, 12. ^u John i. 29.

old sacrifices; which may be said to take away *sin* by taking away the *guilt*, and not that the *natures* of men are restored and perfected. And, indeed, this is that sense which I dread above all others, because it perverts the end of *Christ's coming*, and lodges men in a security pernicious to their own souls. For though it is most true, that 'Remission of sin was, and is, preached in his name and blood,' and that sin, in a sense, may be said to be taken away, when the *guilt* of the sin is removed by *remission*; yet this is only of *sin past*, that upon repentance is forgiven: but this is not the whole, full and evangelical sense, as *Christ's own words* do plainly import. "For," says he,² "the Son of man is come to save that which was lost."

And upon another occasion he expresseth himself to the same purpose, and almost in the same words,⁷ "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Now, who is this that is lost, but *man*? And in what sense can man be said to be lost, but by *sin* and *disobedience*? That it was which cast him out of the presence and garden of God, and put him in a condition of eternal misery. If *Christ* then came to save lost man, he must be understood to save him from *that* which puts him into a *lost condition*, and that is *sin*; for "The wages of sin is death, and the servant of sin is a son of perdition."

Christ has determined this point beyond all exception, in his discourse with the Jews, John viii. 31, 32, 33, 34. "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." What *freedom* was this? Certainly from *sin*; suitable to that passage in his prayer: "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth."² But some Jews present, proud of their privileges, apprehended not the liberty *Christ* spoke of, and therefore answered him thus: "We are

⁷ Acts x. 43. Ephes. i. 7. ² Mat. xviii. 11. Luke xix. 10.

⁷ Rom. vi. 23. ² Rom. xvii. 17.

"Abraham's

“ Abraham’s seed, and were never in bondage to any man; how sayest thou, ye shall be made free? ”
 “ Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever *committeth* sin, is the *servant* of sin.”
 In which place it is very remarkable, that men are only to be distinguished by their *works*; that no claims, privileges, successions, or descents are available, but he that *commits* sin, is the *servant* of sin. So that Christ’s *free man* is he that is freed from *sin*: this is his follower and disciple. And as Christ opposed the works of the Jews, who unjustly sought to kill him, to the pretensions they made to be Abraham’s seed; so we must oppose the actions of ill men to their better professions: we must faithfully tell them, “ He that commits sin, is the servant of sin; ” from which servitude Christ came to *save* his people, and is therefore rightly called “ the Saviour and Redeemer.”

This doctrine is closely followed by the apostle Paul; in his sixth chapter to the Romans. “ Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.—Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.—Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” As if he had said, ‘ The end of Christ’s coming, is to turn people from their sins; and that those who persist in their disobedience, resist the benefits that come by him.’

“ Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof. ^a Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.—Know ye not, that to whom ye yield

^a Rom. vi. 4, 6, 11. ^b Rom. vi. 12, 13, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23.

“ yourselves

“ yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to
 “ whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of
 “ obedience unto righteousness?—For when ye were
 “ the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.
 “ What fruit had ye then in those things, whereof ye
 “ are now ashamed? For the end of those things is
 “ death. But now being made free from sin, and be-
 “ come servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holi-
 “ ness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages
 “ of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life,
 “ through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

To conclude, nothing can be more apparent, than that ‘Freedom from actual sinning, and giving newness of life to the souls of men,’ was the great reason of Christ’s coming, and the end for which he hath given us, out of his fulness of grace and truth, “Grace for grace;” and that to be under grace, and not under the law, is not to have liberty to do that now, which ought not to have been done before, or to be excused from former moral obligations, as the *ranters* interpret it; but to be freed from the condemnation of the law, first, through remission of the sins that are past, upon faith and repentance; and next, by freeing us from that weakness, by which we were disabled from keeping God’s just law, and fulfilling the righteousness of it, in receiving and obeying the light and grace that comes by Jesus Christ.

Very pertinent is that passage of the apostle Paul to Titus, to our present purpose, for it seems to comprehend the end of Christ’s coming, and the faith and duty of his people; which our great Selden, after all his painful readings, and curious disquisitions, said, but a little before his death, was the most weighty passage of the whole bible to him, as the bible was the best of books in the world, viz. “For the grace of God, that
 “ bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men;”
 “ teaching us, that denying ungodliness, and worldly
 “ lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly

† Tit. ii. 11, 12, 13, 14.

“ in this present world; looking for that blessed
 “ hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God,
 “ and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for
 “ us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and
 “ purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of
 “ good works.”

In which comprehensive passage, we find the *end* of *Christ's coming* to be *our redemption from all iniquity*, both to blot out our sins that are *past*, and to purify our hearts from the sin that *remains*. We have the *means* that works and brings this salvation into our souls, which is the *grace*; and the *way* by which this grace doth accomplish it, is by “ Teaching us to deny
 “ ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly,
 “ righteously, and godly in this present world.” Which has this great encouragement joined to it, that those who *so* live, have only right to look for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

I will add the testimony of his beloved disciple John,^c who has defined to us the end of Christ's coming thus: “ Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth
 “ also the law; and ye know, that he was manifested
 “ to *take away* our sins.” And to shew that this is understood not only of the *guilt* of sins *past*, but of the *nature* and present *power* of sin in man, observe what follows; “ Whosoever abideth in him (*Christ*) sinneth
 “ not.” And as if this apostle had foreseen the present mischief Christianity labours under, both on the side of evil men, and of but too many mistaken professors, he adds, “ Little children, let no man deceive
 “ you; he that *doth* righteousness *is* righteous, even as
 “ *he* is righteous; he that committeth *sin* is of the
 “ *devil*, for the devil sinneth from the beginning.” Now comes this most express passage to the matter in hand: “ For *this* purpose the Son of God was *manifested*, that he might *destroy* the *works* of the devil:” Which is more than the remission of sins that are *past*;

^c 1. John iii. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

here

here is the destruction of the power and kingdom of Satan. They that know not this, know not Christ as he should be known; not savingly. For as we, so our Lord, is known by his fruits, by the works which he works in us: Therefore it is said, "That his own works praise him." And said Christ,^d "If I had not done among them the works which no other man did," &c. So that he referred to his works to prove his nature and mission.

He therefore that lives in sin, denies Christ, by denying the end of his coming. The fool did not say with his *mouth*, but in his *heart*, "There is no God;" yet but too many, now a-days, plead with their tongues and pen for sin 'Term of life,' by endeavouring to shew the impossibility of overcoming sin. But what saith this apostle further of the business?^e "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin: in this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever doth not righteousness, is not of God; neither he that loveth not his brother. But if we walk in the light, as God is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.^f He that saith he abideth in Christ, ought himself also so to walk, even as Christ walked." A little lower, in the same chapter, he says, "I have written unto you young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one."

I will add one scripture-testimony more in the present case, and it is this:^g "Herein," saith John, "is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world."

Behold now the true *end* of Christ's coming! viz. 'To save from *sin*, and to purge us from *all iniquity*; that he might present us to God without spot or ble-

^d John xv. 24.

^e 1 John iii. 9, 10. 1 John i. 7.

^f 1 John

ii. 6, 14. ^g 1 John iv. 17.

^h *miss.*

‘*mish.*’^b Let us not then flatter ourselves, for *we* shall be the losers: neither let us make that impossible through our infidelity, which a grain of sincere faith can make not only possible, but easy. What has been may be again; nay, in this case must be. Did the first Christians “overcome the wicked one?” so must the last Christians too. Were those ages led by the holy spirit, and taught by the grace of God to live *god-like*, or like *God*, in the world? so must we of these latter ages too, if we will be blessed for ever; that, having “put off the old man,” the devil and his works, we may “put on Christ,”¹ the new and heavenly man, the second Adam, with his holy life and works; so shall “the fruits of his spirit” shine through us, which are, “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, patience, gentleness, faith, meekness, temperance;” for they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh, “with the affections and lusts:” they hear his voice, that leads them out of the concupiscences of this vile world; “and they follow him, and he gives unto them eternal life, and a stranger they will not follow.”^k The world, the flesh, and the devil, make up this stranger; and those that are carried away by this stranger are in an unreconciled state to God, and, so dying, must inevitably perish. Well, then! will we be true Christians? Have we faith? Then let us take the advice of that good man Peter;¹ “Let us add to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness charity: for,” says he, “if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore

^b Eph. v. 27. ¹ Rom. xiii. 14. Eph. iv. 12. Gal. v. 22, 23, 24. ^k John x. 4, 5. 27. ¹ 1 Pet. i. 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

“the

“ the rather, brethren, give diligence, to make your
 “ calling and election sure; for if ye do these things
 “ ye shall never fall. For so an entrance shall be
 “ ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting
 “ kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

Thus much, O ye Protestants! that profess a reformation, and value yourselves upon it, of the true reformed doctrine of godliness, a virtuous and good life; without which your profession will be the aggravation of your guilt. For know this once for all, ‘ That a true reformation lies in the spirit of reformation, reforming the minds and manners of such as profess it.’ God Almighty open your eyes, and affect your hearts with this great truth.

S E C T. V.

The fourth great ecclesiastical evil, is preferring *human authority* above *reason* and *truth*.

THIS, and the next evil, which is the last now to be considered, to wit, *propagation of faith by force*, and *religion by arms*, are the two legs upon which the false church hath in all ages stood. Under this degeneracy we find the Jewish church at Christ’s coming, and he complains of it,^m “ Ye teach for doctrines the traditions of men; ye seek to kill me, a man that has told you the truth:” But I challenge the whole account of time, and records of the world, which are come to the hands of this age, to tell me, *when, where, and by whom*, these principles have been received, improved and used, in any sort of proportion or comparison with the practice of that church, which has long prided herself in the name of *Catholic and Christian*. And yet I could wish nothing of these two ill principles had found any place amongst us, that call ourselves Protestants; though to the great

^m Mat. xv. 9. John viii. 40.

men of her communion, in divers countries of Europe, is chiefly owing most of that ignorance, superstition, idolatry, persecution and blood-shed that have been among Christians, since the Christian profession hath grown to any power in the world. I shall consider them severally, respecting us, and in their due order, with as much brevity as well I can.

That *human authority* hath been preferred above *reason* and *truth*, that is, that the *apprehensions, interpretations, conclusions, and injunctions* of men have been reputed the great necessities or essentials to salvation and Christian communion, insomuch as a sober and reasonable dissent hath been too often over-ruled, not by weight of argument or evidence of truth, but by the power and numbers of men in ecclesiastical office and dignity, is, and speak modestly, in a large degree true amongst us. The first church-evil reprehended in this discourse may begin the proof, and give the first witness upon this part of the charge, viz. ‘ That
 ‘ *opinions* have been made articles of faith; that is,
 ‘ the constructions and conclusions of men from sacred
 ‘ writ, and not the *text itself*, have been enjoined and
 ‘ imposed as essential to eternal salvation, and exter-
 ‘ nal Christian communion,’ Insomuch that no *rea-
 son, scripture, or purest antiquity*, hath been suffered to prevail against such determinations, and too often not enough to excuse those that have pleaded for a conscientious dissent from them; the authors of them either resting upon the authority of their own judgments, or conforming themselves to the example of ages less pure and clear.

I conscientiously refuse to name parties, because I am tender of giving the least offence; but upon a just observance of those revolutions of protestancy that have been amongst us, we may see with what stiffness, not to say obstinacy, several *models of religion and draughts of creeds* have been contended for. I would beseech every party, in Christ’s name, to look into itself, for I do not; because such are best able (if they will be impartial, and put no cheat upon themselves)

to make the application of what I say. However, I will name those points, about which the authority of man, as it seems to me, has been so positive. 'Of God, as to his *prescience* and *predetermination*: of Christ, as to his *natures* and *personality*, and the *extent* of his death and intercession: of *free-will* and *grace*: of *faith* and *works*: of *perseverance* and *falling-away*: of the nature and power of the *church*: and, lastly, of the dignity and power of the *clergy*.'

And if men please but to lay their hands upon their parts, and cast their eyes upon the scriptures; if they will but use the light that God has afforded them, and bring such debates and results to the test of that light, and the sound form of words the Holy Ghost hath sent and preserved amongst us, I need not take the employment upon me of pointing to human authority among the several parties of Protestants, as to these points, since nothing will be clearer. For it is about the meaning of *this*, and the intention of *that* place of scripture, the contest hath been and still is; and how to maintain and propagate those conceits: so that the falling out is in the wood of our own *opinions*, and where the contention is kindled, that consumes all about our ears: a most unwarrantable curiosity and nicety, for the most part, that has more influence upon our affections than our practice; which is usually the worse point of charity, and not the better for them in any thing. O that we would but be impartial, and leave our own *over-plus* to the *scriptures*, and retrench that redundancy, or keep it modestly! for it is an absurd thing that we Protestants should assume a power of ranging our *human apprehensions* with the *sacred text*, and enjoining our *imaginings* for indispensable *articles of faith* and *Christian communion*.

But the next proof of the prevalency of human authority amongst us Protestants, is 'The great power and sway of the *clergy*, and the people's *reliance* upon them for the knowledge of *religion*, and the *way* of *life* and *salvation*.' This is such plain fact, that every parish more or less proves it. Is not *prophecy*,
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once the *church's*,^a now engrossed by them, and wholly in their hands? Who dare publicly *preach* or *pray*; that is not of that class or order? Have not they *only* the keys in keeping? May any body else pretend to the power of *absolution* or *excommunication*? Much less to constitute ministers? Are not all church rites and privileges in their custody? Do not they make it their proper inheritance? Nay, so much larger is their empire than *Cæsar's*, that only *they* begin with *births*, and end with *burials*; men must pay them for *coming-in* and *going-out* of the world: *to pay for dying* is hard! Thus their profits run from the womb to the grave; and that which is the loss of others, is their gain, and a part of their revenue. Both lives and deaths do bring grist to their mill, and toll to their exchequer; for they have an estate in us for our lives, and an heriot at our deaths.

It is of this great order and set of men *only*, that all *synods* and *convocations* are, of modern ages, compounded; and what they determine, is called the *canons* or *decrees* of the *church*; though, alas! she is only to obey, what they of the gown ordain; giving us thereby to understand, that they want the authority of her name, where they deny her to have a part, or to be present.

But they have not only been the usual starters of new opinions, and the great *creed-makers* among Christians, but the sway they have long had with the people, makes them so considerable an interest in the eyes of the civil magistrate, that he often finds it not for his safety to disoblige them. Upon this it is, that we see them so successful in their solicitations of publick authority to give its sanction to their opinions and forms; and not only recommend them (which goes certainly a great way with the people) but impose their reception, and that on severe penalties: insomuch, that either men must offer up their understandings to their *fears*, and dissemble conviction, to be safe, or else

^a 1 Cor. xiv.

perish:

perish: there is no medium. Something of this lies near us: God Almighty open our eyes to see both the truth and mischief of this thing.

But what shall I say of that implicit reverence the people have for the clergy, and dependance upon them about religion and salvation; as if they were the only trustees of truth, and high-treasurers of divine knowledge to the laity: and we daily see, that the blind opinion they have of their office (as that which is peculiar to that order, and not common to Christians, be their gifts as they will) disposes them to rely entirely upon their performances. The minister is chooser and taster, and every thing for them: they seem to have delivered up their spiritual selves, and made over the business of religion, the rights of their souls, to their pastor; and that scarcely with any limitation of truth too: and, as if he were, or could be, their guarantee in the other world, they become very unsolicitous of any farther search here. So that if we would examine the respective parishes of Protestant as well as Popish countries, we shall find, and it is come to that sad pass, that very few have any other religion than the tradition of their priest. They have given up their judgment to him, and seem greatly at their ease, that they have discharged themselves of the trouble of "working out their own salvation, and proving all things, that they might hold fast that which is good;" and, in the room of that care, bequeathed the charge of those affairs to a standing pensioner for that purpose.

Thus the clergy are become a sort of mediators betwixt Christ and us; that as we must go to God by *Christ*, so must we come to Christ by *them*: they must be, it seems, like the high-priest under the law, who only entered into the "holy of holies; whose lips preserved knowledge;" and by *them* we must understand the divine oracle. As if the mysteries of salvation were not to be intrusted with the vulgar, or that it were a kind of profanation to expose them to their

view; and the only way to make them cheap and contemptible to suffer *every Christian* to have the keeping of them; though they *belong to every Christian*. But this language, thanks be to God! is that of human authority, that would magnify the mysteries of salvation by the ignorance of those that should know them; as if the gospel-dispensation were not that of full age, but infancy or minority.

It is true, the state of people under the law and the *Levitical priesthood* is called "a state of bondage, childhood and minority," and the law therefore is termed a "*school-master to bring us to Christ*;" but it is as true, that the state of Christianity is reputed the age of "*grace, freedom, manhood, and inheritance*," by the same apostle: and that we should have external guardians of our faith and religion upon us, after we are come to years of discretion, that might be very allowable under the feeble state of our minority, is not to obtain greater freedom, but to make our case worse. For it is more tolerable to be used as children when we *are* children, and know nothing above that condition, than when riper years have brought us to the understanding and resentment of men. But it is almost as unpardonable, as it is unsufferable, to make that infancy the 'Perfection of the Christian religion;' as if there were nothing beyond wearing a *bib*, and being *fed, carried and governed as nurses please*; that is, as the *priest* will. It is a knowing and reasonable, and not a blind obedience, that commends a man: *children* should be ruled, because they have not so ripe an understanding, or choice; but because it is not so with *men*, reason ought to conduct them in their duty, that the service they perform to God may be such as the apostle calls a *reasonable one*: the *will* is no longer *will*, if not *free*: nor *conscience* to be reputed *conscience*, where it is *compelled*. The gospel is not the time of ceremonial works, but of faith; therefore not *coercive*, because out of our own *power*; it is the gift of God.

• Gal. iii.

But

But though this be very unhappy, that so excellent a reformation, founded upon the freest principles of inquiry, common to all that had souls to save, should so miserably degenerate into formality and ignorance, implicit faith and blind obedience; yet that part of our history is most lamentable to me, where we find the "Noble Bereans," the diligent *inquirers*, people that desire to "prove all things," that they may "hold fast that which is good; such as would see with their own eyes, and that dare not transfer the right of examination of points that so nearly concern their immortal souls to any mortal man; but who desire to make their faith and religion, the faith and religion of their *conscience* and *judgment*, that on which they dare depend, and rest their eternal happiness in the day of judgment; that these, I say, should, instead of being cherished, be therefore exposed to the displeasure of the clergy, the scorn of the rude multitude, and the prosecution of the civil magistrate, has something in it, I confess, that is harsh and anxious to remember; and I only do it for this purpose, that it may put us in mind of our great declension from primitive Protestantism, and how much human authority has crept into the affairs of religion, since that time of the day, when we made it a prime article of our Protestant creed to reject and renounce it.

And that you may yet see yourselves short of your own pretences, if not contrary to your express principles, and how much you have narrowed yourselves from the use of your first principle; let us suppose a Turk is convinced, that Christ is *that*, which he believed Mahomet to be, the "Greatest of all prophets;" that Mahomet was an impostor; that Jesus is the only Saviour and Mediator; but, being catechistically taught the *two natures* in *one person*, the *hypostatical union*, in *fine*, the *Atbanasian creed*, and other articles of faith, or rites of your church, not so clearly expressed in scripture, nor easily apprehended or assented to; will not this poor creature be looked upon either as infidel or heretick, and deprived of all share in Christ or

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Christian fellowship, because his weakness, or understanding, will not allow him to come up to the full inventory of articles believed and imposed by you? Certainly you must either be partial, and give him that liberty you deny to persons of equal tenderness; or else you must, after your present straitness, conclude him infidel or heretick, though he believe 'One God, ' Christ to be the only mediator, the gift of the spirit, ' the necessity of holiness, communion and charity.' But I would beseech you that we may consider if this bears any proportion with the wisdom and love of God, in sending Christ into the world to save you and me?

The apostle "became all unto all, to win some;" but this is "becoming all unto none, to force all:" he thereby recommends the utmost condescension that can be lawful; but this use of human authority seems to make it unlawful to condescend: as if faith *per force* were better than love; and *conformity*, however it be come at, than Christian condescension.

The blessed apostle had his eye to the *good intention* and *sober life* of the weak, and used an holy sort of guile to catch them: he seems as if he dissembled the knowledge of those *averse opinions* which they held, or the necessity of their embracing those doctrines, which, as yet, they might not believe. He fell not to debate and canvass points in difference between them; which, instead of union, would have inflamed the difference, and raised contention: no, no, "he became all unto all;" that is, he stooped to all *capacities*, and humbled himself to those degrees of knowledge that men had, and valued that which was good in all; and with this sweetness he practised upon them to their farther proficiency in the school of Christ. These allurements were all his injunctions. Nay, in this case he makes it an injunction to use no other: "Let us therefore," says he, "as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and " if in any thing ye be *otherwise* minded, God shall re-

* Phil, iii. 15.

veal even *it* unto you." Which is to say, ' You shall not be imposed upon, stigmatized, or excommunicated, for want of full satisfaction, or because you do not consent before conviction; for, " God shall reveal it to you;" you shall *see* and *know* what you do, and to *God* you shall owe your knowledge and conformity, and not to human authority and imposition: your faith shall not be implicit, nor your obedience blind; the reason of your hope shall be *in* you.'

Pray let us compare this with the language of our own times; where, because people cannot come up to the prescriptions of men, but plead the liberty of dissent, though with ever so much sobriety and true tenderness of conscience, they are upbraided after this manner: ' Are you wiser than your superiors? Were our fore-fathers out of the way? Did nobody know the truth 'till *you* came? Are you abler than all our ministers and bishops, and your mother the *church*? Cannot it content you to believe as *she* believes? Is not this pride and presumption in you, a design to make and head sects and parties?' With the like entertainment.

Now this is that which you yourselves, at least in the persons of your ancestors, have stiled *Popery*; yea, *Popery* in the abstract; to wit, *implicit faith* and *blind obedience*: if so, then, say I, let us also have a care of *Popery* in *Protestant guise*; for that *Popery* is likely to do us more injury that is least suspected. I beg you, by the love of God and truth, and as you would lay a sure foundation of peace here, and eternal comfort to your own souls, that you would consider the tendency of upbraiding and violently over-ruling the dissent of conscientious and peaceable people: for if you will rob me once of the liberty of my *choice*, the use of my *understanding*, the distinction of my *judgment*, no religion comes amiss; indeed it leads to no religion. It was the saying of the old king to the then prince of Wales and our present king; ' Make the religion of your education the religion of your judgment: ' which to me is of the nature of an appeal from his education

to his judgment, about the truth of his religion that he was educated in: and that religion which is too tender to be examined is unsound: "Prove all things, and "hold fast that which is good," lies as an impeachment against imposition, delivered upon record by the apostle Paul, in the name of the Holy Ghost. It was the same apostle that commended the Bereans of old, for that they "diligently searched the scriptures," whether those things, delivered by the apostles concerning the Messiah, were true.

Nay, Christ himself, to whom all power was given in heaven and in earth, submitted himself to the test: he did not require them to believe him, because he *would* be believed; he refers them to the witness that God bore to him:^p "If I bear witness of myself, my "witness is not true." He also sends them to the scriptures; and pleads the truth of his authority from that of his doctrine and miracles:^q "If I had not done "among them the works which none other man did." And, finally, challenges them to convince him but of *one* sin:^r "Which of you convinceth me of sin? And "if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" He offers to *reason* the matter, and submit himself to the judgment of truth; and well he might, who was truth itself.

But an *imposing church* bears witness of herself, and will be both party and judge: she requires assent without *evidence*, and faith without *proof*; therefore false. Christian religion ought to be carried on only by that way by which it was introduced, which was *persuasion*: "If any man will be my disciple, let him take up his "cross, and follow me:" and this is the glory of it, that it does not *destroy*, but fairly *conquer*, the *understanding*.

I am not unacquainted with the pretences of Romanists to *Abnegation*, to a mortified and self-denying life; and I do freely acknowledge, that the author of the "German Theology," Taulerus, Thomas à Kem-

^p John v. 31, 32, 37, 39.

^q John xv. 24.

^r John viii. 46.

pis, and other mysticks in that communion, have written excellent practical things; but there is scarcely any thing of this violent Popery in those tracts: on the contrary, the very nature and tendency of them is diametrically opposite to the compulsory spirit and constitution of that church, and all others that practise imposition in religion, whatever name they walk under.

And as it is one great mark of the false church to pervert the right end of true doctrine, so hath she excelled in the abuse of that excellent word *self-denial*: for she hath translated it from *life* to *understanding*, from *morals* to *faith*: *subjugare intellectum in obsequium fidei*, 'to subject the understanding to the obedience of faith,' is the perpetual burden of their song, and conclusion of their conferences. But what is this *faith*? That which conquers the world, and purifies the heart? By no means: but it is to believe that the church of *Rome* is the *true church*, and the *Pope* Christ's *vicar*, and the *visible head* of that church.

Thus that *self-denial*, which relates to our *wills* and *affections* in a corrupt state, they apply to the *use* of our *understanding* about *religion*: as if it were the *same thing* to deny that which we understand and know to be the will of God that we *should* deny, (which is the Christian self-denial) and to deny that very *knowledge* and *understanding* which is God's gift and our honour. Whereas *religion* and *reason* are so consistent, that *religion* can neither be understood, nor maintained, without *reason*. For if *this* must be laid aside, I am so far from being infallibly assured of my salvation, that I am not capable of any measure or distinction of good from evil, truth from falsehood. Why, I have no *understanding*; or, at least, not the *use* of any. All the disadvantage the Protestant is under in this, is that of his greater modesty, and that he submits his belief to be tried; which the other refuses, under the pretence of unaccountable infallibility: to *that* authority *reason* demurs; *right* reason I mean; the REASON of the first nine verses of the first of John; for so Tertulian,

lian, (and some other ancient, as well as modern critics) gives us the word *Logos*: and the *divine* reason is *one* in all; that *lamp* of *God*, which lights our candle, and enlightens our darkness, and is the measure and test of our knowledge.

So that whereas some people excuse their embracing of that religion, by urging the certainty that is in it, I do say, it is but a *presumption*. For a man can never be certain of that, about which he has not the liberty of examining, understanding, or judging: *confident*, I confess, he may be; but that's quite another thing than being *certain*.

Yet I must never deny, but that every Christian ought to believe as the *church* believes, provided the church be *true*: but the question is, which is that true church? And when that is answered, as a man may *unlawfully* execute a *lawful* sentence, so he may *falsely* believe as the *true church* believes: for if I believe what *she* believes, *only* because *she* believes it, and not because I am convinced in my understanding and conscience of the *truth* of what she believes, *my* faith is *false*, though *hers* be *true*: I say, it is not true to *me*; I have no *evidence* of it.

What is this church, or *congregation* rather (as worthy Tindal every-where translates it) but 'a company of people agreed together in the sincere profession and obedience of the gospel of Christ.' Now look, what inducement *they severally* had to believe and embrace the gospel, and unite into fellowship, that *we* must have to join with them: for as they made not *one another* an infallible authority to one another, upon which they first embraced the gospel, neither are we to ground our belief thereof upon *their authority jointly*: but as they had a *rule* to believe and commune, so must we have the *same* rule to embrace their communion. So that the *church* cannot properly be the rule of *my* faith, who have the *same* faith, and *object* for my faith, that *she* has. I argue thus,

I must believe as the church believes; that is, I must have the *same faith* the church has: then I must have

have the same *rule*; because the church can be no more the *rule* of that faith, than she can be *that faith* of which some would make her the rule. If then the church has *faith*, and that faith have a *rule*, and that she can no more be the *rule* of her *own faith*, than she can be that *faith itself*; it follows she cannot be the rule of the faith of her *members*, because those members have the *same faith*, and *make up* this church. For that which is the rule of the *congregation's* faith in general, must reasonably be the rule of every *member's* faith that makes up that congregation; and, consequently, of every member that may *hereafter* adhere to it. So that to talk of believing as the church believes, to flourish upon that self-denial and humility which takes all upon *trust*, and revile those with the bitterest invectives that are modestly scrupulous, and ~~ask~~ the Bereans for their souls (who think that *casiness* of nature and condescension may be better used, and in this occasion is ill placed and dangerous) is to put the knife to the throat of Protestantism, and, what in them lies, to sacrifice it to implicit faith and blind obedience. For it cannot be denied, but that the great foundation of our Protestant religion is, 'the Divine authority of the scriptures from *without* us, and the testimony and illumination of the holy spirit *within* us.'

Upon this foot the first reformers stood, and made and maintained their separation from Rome, and freely offered up their innocent lives in confirmation. With good cause, therefore, it is the general consent of all *sound* Protestant writers, 'That neither traditions, councils, nor canons of any visible church, much less the edicts of any civil sessions or jurisdiction, but the *scriptures only*, interpreted by the holy spirit *in us*, give the final determination in matters of religion; and that only in the conscience of every Christian to himself.' Which protestation, made by the first publick reformers against the imperial edicts of Charles the fifth, imposing church traditions without scripture authority, gave first beginning to the
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name of *Protestant*, and with that name hath ever been received this doctrine, which prefers the divine authority of the scripture and spirit, to that of the church and her traditions. And if the church is not sufficient to be implicitly believed, (as we hold it is not) what can there else be named, of more force with us,¹ but the Divine illumination in the conscience, or *conscience* in the *best* sense of the word; than which, *God only is greater?* But if any man shall pretend that the scripture judges, according to his conceptions or conscience, for other men, and that they must take their religious measures by the line of *his* direction; such a person makes himself *greater* than either church, scripture, or conscience. And, pray, let us consider if in any thing the Pope is by our Protestant divinity so justly resembled to antichrist, as in assuming infallibility over conscience and scripture, to determine as he thinks fit; and so, in effect, to give the law to God, scripture, magistrates and conscience. To this Protestants have, without scruple, applied that to the Thessalonians,² “Sitting in the temple of God, exalting himself above all that is called God.”

To check this exorbitancy the apostle Paul demands,³ “Who art thou that judgeth another’s servant? To his own Lord he stands or falls?” Which showeth with great evidence, that Christians of all sizes, great and small, are but brethren; and, consequently, all superiority, lordship and imposition are excluded: but if there be a difference, it is in this, that, as Christ taught, “he that is greatest is to be servant to the rest:” but what is more opposite to a *servant* than a *lord*; and to *service*, than *injunction* and *imposition*, and that on penalties too? Here it is that Christ is Lord and law-giver, who is only king of this inward kingdom of the soul. And it is to be noted, that the apostle did not write this to a private brother, or in some special case, but to the *church*, as a general and standing truth; and therefore now as authentick

¹ 1 John iii. 20.

² 2 Theff. ii. 4.

³ Rom. xiv. 4.

and

and proper as then. And if this be true, I cannot see how any, or even the most part of the church, that are still but brethren to the rest, of one voluntary communion and profession, can with any shew of reason impose upon them, and escape the reproof of this scripture: for all societies are to govern themselves according to their institution, and first principles of union: Where there is violence upon this part, *tyranny*, and not *order*, is introduced. Now since *persuasion* and *compulsion* began all true Christian societies, they must uphold themselves upon the same free bottom, or they turn *anti-christians*. I beseech you, here, let us examine ourselves faithfully, and I am persuaded that something of this will yet appear among some of us; who shew great reverence to that free name.

But to make good their unreasonable conceit of church-authority, they object Christ's words; "Go tell the church;" that is, say they, "The church is the rule and guide of faith; whatever the church agrees upon, and requireth your assent to and faith in, that you must necessarily believe and submit to." But though, as before, it is confessed, in a sense, we must believe as the true church believes; yet not because *she* so believes, but for the same *reasons* that *she* herself *did* and *does* so believe; in that none can truly believe *as she* believes, but must do so upon the same principles and motives, for which *they* believed that first *made up* that Christian church. To talk of being the rule and guide in point of faith, is to contradict scripture, and juggle Christ out of his office, which is peculiar to him. He is given to his church an *head*," that is, a *counsellor*, a *ruler*, a *judge*, and is called a *lawgiver*; and, says the apostle, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his;" and "the children of God are led by the spirit of God." And he was "wisdom and righteousness" to the church apostolick, and is so to his own church all the world over. Besides, it is absurd that the church can

♥ Isa. ix. 6. Rom. viii. 9. 14.

be the rule and guide of faith; for, as such, she must be *her own* rule and guide; the faith of the *members* being that of the *church*; which cannot be.

But what then can be the meaning of Christ's words, "Go tell the church?" Very well. I answer, it is not about *faith*, but *injury*, that Christ speaks; and the place explains itself, which is this:² "Moreover, "if thy brother shall *trespass* against thee, go and tell "him his fault, between thee and him alone." Here is *wrong*, not religion; *injustice*, not faith or conscience concerned; as some would have it, to maintain their church-power. "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 unto thee as an heathen man and "a publican. 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," &c. The matter and manner of which passage, delivered by Christ, shews that he intended not to set up 'Church power about faith and worship,' unto which all must bow, even without, if not against, conviction. The words *trespass* and *fault*, prove abundantly that he meant private and personal injuries; and that not only from the common and undeniable signification and use of the words *trespass* and *fault*, but from the way Christ directs and commands for accommodation, viz. 'That the person wronged, 'speak to him that commits an injury *alone*: if that 'will not do, that he take one or two with him:' but no man can think that if it related to *faith* and *worship*, I ought to receive the judgment of one, or two, or three, for a sufficient rule. This has not been the practice, at least not the principle, of the most degenerated church since the primitive times; for most, if not all, agree, "That nothing *lower* than the *church*

² Mat. xviii. 15, 16, 17, 18.

³ can

‘ can determine about matters of faith;’ and even many, with reason, cannot go so far; I mean as to injunction and imposition. Yet Christ seems to fix a blame upon him that complies not with the person he has offended; and more, if he refuse to give satisfaction, after one or two have also intreated him: but therefore it cannot relate to matters of faith and scruples of conscience, but personal and private injuries. Which is yet clearer from this part of Christ’s saying, viz. “That in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established:” which implies a *trial* and judicial proceeding, as is customary in civil cases, about personal and private trespasses; for it were not so proper to speak of witnesses on any other account. This is interpreted, beyond exception, by the apostle to the Corinthians, where he reproveth and forbids them “to go to law one with another before unbelievers;” arguing thus, “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?” This shews the meaning of church authority in those days, and is a natural exposition upon Christ’s words, in case of trespass and refractoriness, “Tell the church.” And it is yet the practice of all sober, just and quiet people, rather to refer their controversies to approved men, than to tear one another to pieces at law.

But it is worth our notice, that as any decision upon an *Arbitration* obliges only the parties to sit down content with that award, be it loss or gain, which the Arbitrators think equal, as the next best way to accommodate differences, and not that such award should alter their first thoughts and opinions they had of their right, or force them to declare they are of the Arbitrators Mind; so is it most unreasonable, where the church is only an *Arbitrator* about personal *trespasses*, or umpire at most, from thence to imagine a power to determine and impose *faith*, and that upon severe penalties, as well of *this world*, unto which Christ’s church has no

relation, as of the *other* world. I say, this very thing, well weighed, breaks all their fallacies to pieces, and decides the business beyond all contradiction, between those that stand upon the ‘*spirit within, and the scripture without, on the one hand, and such as merely rest upon the traditions of men, and authority of the church, on the other hand.*’ For if, in an arbitration, I am not bound to be of the arbitrators mind, though for peace sake I submit to their award, and that the *church power*, in this place controverted, relates only to external and personal trespasses, injuries or injustices, as the place itself plainly proves, there can be no sense, reason, or modesty in the earth, on the part of those high-church-men, from hence to wring and extort the power of defining, resolving, and imposing upon all people, under temporal and eternal punishment, ‘*articles of faith and bonds of Christian communion.*’

I conclude this of the church, with saying, That it is not *identity of opinion*, but *justice*, not *religious uniformity*, but *personal satisfaction*, that concerns the text; and therefore reason, sober conscience, and good sense, may at any time lawfully insist upon their claim to be heard in all their scruples or exceptions, without disrespect to that excellent doctrine, when rightly understood, “Go tell the Church.”

To this let me add something about this great word *church*. Some men think they are sure enough, if they can but get within the *pale* of the *church*, that have not yet considered what it is. The word *church* signifies any *assembly*; so the Greeks used it: and it is by worthy Tindal every-where translated *congregation*. It has a twofold sense in scripture. The first and most excellent sense, is that in which she is called the *body and bride* of Christ. In this respect she takes in *all generations*, and is made up of the *regenerated*, be they in heaven or on earth, thus Ephes. i. 22. chap. v. 23. to 33. Col. i. 16, 17, 18. Heb. xii. 22, 23. Rev. xxi. 2. chap. xxii. 17. Here Christ *only* can be head: this church is washed from all sin; not a *spot* nor a *wrinkle* left: ill
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men have nothing to do with this church, within whose pale only is salvation; nor is this *universal* and truly *catbolick* church capable of being *convened*, to be told of wrongs or trespasses. The other use of that word in scripture is always referred to *particular* assemblies and places; *that* is the church, which, by Christ's doctrine, is to be told of personal injuries, and whose determination, for peace sake, is to be adhered and submitted to: they must, of necessity, be the adjacent or most contiguous company of Christian believers, those to whom the persons in difference are by external society and communion related: and that such *private* and *distinct* assemblies are called the church, is apparent from the acts and writings of the apostles: the church of Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, Rome, Galatia, Thessalonica, Crete, &c. peruse these places, Acts v. 11. and ix. 31. and xi. 22, 26. and xiv. 23, 27. Rom. xv. 5. 1 Cor. i. 2. and iv. 17. and xiv. 4. Rev. ii. and iii. chap. By which it plainly appears that the *universal* and *visible church*, so much bragged of, for the *rule* and *judge* of *faith*, &c. is an upstart thing; and, like mean families, or ill-got goods, it uses false heraldry to give it a title.

For the apostolick times, to which all others must veil, and by whom they must be tried, knew no such conceit: and the truth is, it was first started, when the pride of one man made him ambitious, and his power able to bid, for headship, empire, and sovereignty: it was then needful to his being *universal head*, that he should have an *universal body*. But suppose such a church there were, it is utterly impossible that such a church could be called together in any *one place*, or at any *one time*, to be told, or to determine of, any thing: so that yielding the thing by them desired, it is useless and impracticable to the ends for which they desire it. But alas! who knows not, that loves not to be blind, that the church among them is the *priesthood*? That a few cunning men govern the majority, and intitle their conceits 'the *canons of Christ's*
 Vol. IV. K 'church.'

'*church*,' to give them entrance and acceptance: and then human power and force, the policy and weapons of this world, must be employed to back their decrees. And all this comes from the *ignorance* and *idleness* of the *people*, that give the *pride* and *industry* of the *clergy* an opportunity to effect their designs upon them. For so mean-spirited are the people, as to take all upon trust for their souls, that would not trust or take from an archbishop a brass shilling or a slit groat.

It is prodigious to think what *reverence* the *priesthood* have raised to themselves, by their usurped commission of *apostleship*, their pretended successions, and their clinkclank of extraordinary Ordination. 'A *priest!* ' a God on earth, a man that has the keys of heaven ' and hell: do as he says, or be damned!' What power like to this? The ignorance of the people of their title and pretences, hath prepared them to deliver up themselves into their hands, like a crafty usurer, that hedges in the estate on which he has a mortgage; and thus they make themselves *over in fee* to the clergy, and become their proper *patrimony*, instead of being their care, and they the true ministers or servants of the people: so that believing as the *church* believes, is neither more nor less than rooking men out of their *understandings*, or doing as ill gamesters are wont to do, get by using false dice. Come, come; it is believing as the *Priesthood* believes, which has made way for the offence wise and good men have taken against the clergy in every age. And did the people examine their *bottom*, the *ground* of their religion and faith, it would not be in the power of their leaders to cause them to err. An implicit reverence of the clergy begun the misery. 'What! doubt my *minister*, ' arraign his *doctrine*, put him to the *Proof!* By no ' means:' but the consequence of not doing it, has been the introduction of much false doctrine, superstition, and formality, which gave just occasion for *schism*; for the word has no hurt in itself, and implies only

only a *separation*; which may as well be *right* as *wrong*.

But that I may not be taxed with partiality, or upbraided with singularity, there are two men, whose worth, good sense, and true learning, I will at any time engage against an intire convocation of another judgment; viz. Jacobus Acontius, and John Hales of Eton, that are of the same mind; who, though they have not writ much, have writ well and much to the purpose. I will begin with Jacobus Acontius at large, and do heartily beseech my readers to be more than ordinarily intent in reading what I cite of him; their care and patience will be requited by his Christian and very acute sense.

‘ It remains that we speak of such causes of the not perceiving that a change of doctrine is introduced, as consist in the persons that are taught. Now they are chiefly two, *carelessness* and *ignorance*. Carelessness for the most part ariseth hence, in that the people trust *too much* to their Pastors; and persuade themselves that they will not slip into any error, and that therefore they have small need to have an eye over them; but that they are bound rather to embrace whatsoever they shall hold forth, without any curious examination. Hereunto may be added many other busineses, whereunto men addict themselves: for that saying is of large extent, ‘ Where mens treasure is, there is their heart;’ ‘ and that other, ‘ No man can serve two masters.’ ‘ Now how it may come to pass, that after a people hath once had a great knowledge of divine truths, the said knowledge may as it were vanish away, besides that cause which hath been even now alledged, we shall in another place make discovery of some other reasons. We shall for the present add only this one, that the people themselves are in a perpetual kind of mutation, some daily dying and departing, others succeeding and growing up in their stead. Whence it comes to pass, that since the change which is made in every age is *small*, either the people cannot perceive it, or if they do observe

' it, yet they esteem it not of such moment, as to
 ' think fit to move any difference thereabout. . This
 ' thing also is of very great force to keep the peopl
 ' from taking notice of a change in doctrine, whe
 ' men shall persuade themselves that they are not abl
 ' to judge of matters of religion; as though *It is, It is*
 ' *not*, and other words used in scripture, do not signi-
 ' fy the same which they do in common discourse; or
 ' as if nothing could be understood without some great
 ' knowledge in the tongues, and arts or sciences, and
 ' as if the power of the spirit were of no efficacy with-
 ' out these helps. Whereby it cometh to pass, that
 ' whilst they think they understand not even those
 ' things which in some sort they do understand, being
 ' expressed in most clear and evident words, they do
 ' at length arrive to that blockishness, that they can-
 ' not understand them indeed; so that, though they
 ' have before their eyes a sentence of scripture so clear,
 ' that nothing can be more evident, yet if they to
 ' whose authority they in all things subject themselves,
 ' shall say any thing point-blank opposite thereunto,
 ' they will give credit unto them, and imagine them-
 ' selves not to see that which they see as clear as the
 ' light. And by these means verily it comes to pass,
 ' that when the doctrine of religion is corrupted, the
 ' mutation is not discovered. Furthermore, when the
 ' doctrine is once begun to be changed, it must needs
 ' be that out of one error another should spring and
 ' propagate infinitely; and God, for just reasons of
 ' his own, blinding them, men bring upon them-
 ' selves so great darkness, and slip into such foul er-
 ' rors, that if God of his mercy open a man's eyes,
 ' and let him see those errors he lives in, he can scarce-
 ' ly believe himself, or be persuaded that he was ever
 ' enveloped with such blind errors. Which thing is as
 ' true, and as well to be seen, in men of greatest
 ' learning and experience. If thou shalt thoroughly
 ' peruse the writings of some of the school-men (as
 ' they call them) thou shalt in some places meet with
 ' so much acuteness, as will make thee admire: thou
 ' shalt

‘ shalt see them oftentimes cleave a fine thread into
 ‘ many parts, and accurately anatomise a flea, and a
 ‘ little after fall so foully, and avouch such absurdities,
 ‘ that thou canst not sufficiently stand amazed:
 ‘ Wherefore we must obey that advice of the poet;

‘ *Principiis obsta, serò medicina paratur,*
 ‘ *Cum mala per longas invaluere moras.*

‘ Resist betimes; that med’cine stays too long,
 ‘ Which comes when age has made the grief too
 ‘ strong.

‘ Now there is need of a double caution, viz. That
 ‘ there be no change made in the doctrine, when it is
 ‘ pure: and if any change be made, that there be notice
 ‘ taken of it. Now look what change is made in
 ‘ this kind, all the blame is laid upon those whose
 ‘ office it is to instruct the people: for though themselves
 ‘ are the authors of the change, yet will the people
 ‘ impute it to the ministers sleepiness, and want of
 ‘ care at least. It concerns therefore the pastors and
 ‘ teachers to be eagle-eyed, and to be very well acquainted
 ‘ with those causes whereby the change of doctrine
 ‘ becomes undiscovered, and to have them at their fingers
 ‘ ends, and to be wary, that on no hand they may
 ‘ miscarry. Now it will be an excellent caution for the
 ‘ keeping of doctrine pure, if they shall avoid all
 ‘ curious and vain controversies: if they shall set
 ‘ before their eyes the scope and end of all religious
 ‘ doctrines, and likewise a series or catalogue of all
 ‘ such things as make to the attainment of that end
 ‘ (of which we formerly spake); if they shall affect
 ‘ not only the matter itself, but also the words and
 ‘ phrases, which the Holy Ghost in scripture makes
 ‘ use of, and exceedingly suspect all different forms
 ‘ of speaking. Not that I would have them speak
 ‘ nothing but *Hebraisms*; for so their language
 ‘ would not be plain nor intelligible; but I wish
 ‘ they would shun all such expressions as have been in-

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' vented by over-nice disputants, beyond what was
 ' necessary to express the sense of the Hebrew and
 ' Greek; and all those tenets which men by their own
 ' wits do collect and infer from the scriptures. Now
 ' of what concernment this will be, we may gather
 ' by this instance: the Papists think it one and the
 ' same thing to say, *the church cannot err*; and to say,
 ' in the words of our Lord, "Wheresoever two or
 ' three shall be gathered together in my name, there
 ' will I be in the midst of them." Yet is the dif-
 ' ference very great; which may thus appear, foras-
 ' much as in case any one shall conceive the church
 ' to be the pope, cardinals, and bishops anointed by
 ' the Pope; he, hearing the aforesaid sentence, will
 ' judge that whatsoever *they* shall decree, ought to be
 ' of force. But if he shall rather mind the words of
 ' our Lord, and shall consider that those kind of men
 ' do regard nothing but their own commodity, wealth
 ' and dominion, he will be so far from so understand-
 ' ing them, that, peradventure, not being able to al-
 ' low the deeds and practices of these men, he will
 ' come to hope from those words, that if *himself*, with
 ' some other *good men*, loving God with their whole
 ' heart, shall come together, and unanimously implore
 ' the assistance of God, they shall be better able to de-
 ' termine what it is that ought to be believed and
 ' practiced for the attainment of salvation, than if
 ' they should persist to put their confidence in such
 ' pastors. Now this rule, that the words of the scrip-
 ' ture ought to be used rather than any other, is then
 ' especially to be observed, when any thing is deliver-
 ' ed as a certain and tried truth, or as a rule of faith
 ' or life, or out of which any other thing is to be
 ' inferred. For in expositions and explanations, as
 ' there is need haply of greater liberty, so is there less
 ' danger if it be taken. For when-as the word of
 ' God, and the exposition thereof, are at one and the
 ' same time both together in view as it were, there
 ' no man can be ignorant, that the exposition is the
 ' *word of man*, so that he may *reject it*, in case it seem
 ' impertinent.

' impertinent. And look, by what means a man may
 ' hinder the doctrine of religion from being changed,
 ' by the self-same he may find whether it be changed
 ' or no. Now every man ought to compare the doc-
 ' trine of that age wherein he lives, with no other doc-
 ' trine than that which was out of question spotless,
 ' which is the doctrine of the apostles. Wherefore,
 ' notwithstanding that in our age the gospel is as it
 ' were revived, yet ought not any man thus to think,
 ' that he ought not to examine whether the gospel
 ' hath not lost any of that purity whereunto it had at
 ' this time arrived; he ought rather to look again and
 ' again, whether some corruption do not yet remain,
 ' whether it be not in some parts as yet not sufficiently
 ' restored to its ancient purity and lustre; and confi-
 ' dently persuade himself, that he cannot be (that I
 ' may so speak) sufficiently superstitious in rejecting
 ' every word which is not in the scriptures. Foral-
 ' much as man will ever be more wise and wary than
 ' the Holy Spirit, and can very hardly forbear to min-
 ' gle somewhat from his own head: so that whatever
 ' comes from man, can never be sufficiently suspected.
 ' And because a thing will be so much the better pre-
 ' served, by how much the greater is the number of
 ' those that keep it; the people ought often to be
 ' put in mind, that both the reading of the scriptures,
 ' and the care of religion, belongs not to the pastors
 ' of the church *only*; but that every one that would
 ' be saved ought to make diligent search, whether any
 ' corruption be already, or is for the future like to be
 ' introduced; and this to do no less carefully, than if
 ' he were persuaded that all beside himself were asleep:
 ' and whatsoever is wont to take the common people off
 ' from such studies, care must be taken that that thing
 ' be wholly taken away. Concerning which matter
 ' we shall more conveniently discourse anon.

' Now, forasmuch as the profit will be small, if
 ' some private man shall observe that an error is intro-
 ' duced, unless he discover the said error, and lay it
 ' open; there must of necessity be some way how this

' may conveniently be done. Now there cannot be a
 ' more fitting way, than that which the apostle pro-
 ' pounds to the Corinthians.* " Let two or three
 ' prophets speak, and let the rest judge; and if any
 ' thing be revealed to him that sits by, let the for-
 ' mer be silent. For ye may all prophesy one by
 ' one, that all may learn, and all may be exhorted."
 ' If some one person shall always speak in the church,
 ' and no man at any time may contradict him, it will
 ' be a very strange thing if that one man be not puff-
 ' ed up, if he do not fall into such a conceit of
 ' himself, as to think that he is the only man, that
 ' he only hath understanding, he alone is wise; that
 ' all the rest are a company of brute animals as it
 ' were, who ought to depend only upon him, and to
 ' do nothing but learn of him: and if any man shall
 ' think that himself likewise hath some ability to teach,
 ' he will account that man an heinous offender. But
 ' what says the apostle to this? " Did the word of God
 ' come *from* you? Or came it *unto* you only? If any
 ' seem to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknow-
 ' ledge what I write unto you to be the commands
 ' of the Lord. But if any one be ignorant, let him
 ' be ignorant. Wherefore, brethren, labour that ye
 ' may prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues;
 ' let all things be done decently and in order." It
 ' is exceedingly to be lamented, that this custom, and
 ' the practice of this command of the Lord, is not
 ' again restored unto the churches, and brought into
 ' use. But some men may say, such is the rashness
 ' of this age of ours, such the boldness, such the
 ' impudence, that if it were allowed to every one to
 ' speak in the congregation, there will be no end of
 ' brawls and contention. Why so? Is man another
 ' kind of creature now, than what he was of old?
 ' Thou wilt say, he is; for mankind hath continually
 ' degenerated, grown worse and worse, and seems
 ' now to have attained the top of corruption. Is it

* 1 Cor. xiv.

so indeed? But suppose it to be so; thou that art
 the teacher of the people, art not thou also thyself
 made of the same mould? Art not thou born in the
 same age? Inasmuch as this ordinance principally
 was intended to keep pastors within the bounds of
 modesty, that they may understand that they are not
 the authors of the word of God, that they have not
 alone received the spirit; by how much the more
 mankind hath degenerated, by so much the greater
 need is there thereof, for that there is now more
 rashness, arrogance, and pride, than of old: this is
 true, as well of the pastors and teachers, as of the
 rest of the people. Art thou a prophet? Hast thou
 any portion of the spirit? If thou hast not, so unfit-
 ting it is that thou alone shouldest speak in the con-
 gregation, that there will hardly be found any that
 deserves rather to be silenced, than thyself. But if
 thou art a prophet, if thou hast the spirit, mark
 what the apostle says, "Acknowledge, (quoth he)
 that those things which I write, are the command-
 ments of the Lord." Go to, then: on the one side
 we have the judgment of our *Lord*, willing that pro-
 phesy (for this is a word that we are obliged to use)
 should be common to all, and that not for the de-
 struction, but the salvation of the church: on the
 other side we have *thy* judgment, who fearest lest that
 may breed contention and confusion: whose judg-
 ment now ought we rather to stand to? If thou shalt
 conceive we must stand to thine, consider what thou
 assumest unto thyself, and what will become of thy
 modesty. Our Lord, it should seem, understood
 not what a kind of creature man was; he wanted
 thy wisdom, belike, to admonish him of the danger;
 or haply he thought not upon that corruption which
 should befall mankind, whereby such a liberty might
 prove unprofitable. But Paul answers thee, "That
 God is not the author of contention, but of peace:"
 Who, well knowing what might move contentions,
 what beget peace, and not loving nor willing to
 have contention, but peace, willed that this liberty
 of

' of prophecy should be in the church. What canst
 ' thou say to the contrary? What hast thou to object
 ' against God himself, wilt thou accuse him of indis-
 ' cretion? No man hath so wicked a tongue, as to dare
 ' to do it. Yet if thou shalt diligently search thine
 ' heart, thou shalt find there a certain disposition ready
 ' to contend even with God himself: which motion of
 ' thy heart must by no means be hearkened unto, but
 ' sharply repressed, and wholly subjected to the spirit
 ' of God. It may seem, peradventure, an absurd
 ' thing, that after some very learned person hath spo-
 ' ken, some contemptible person shall be allowed to
 ' contradict him. Can such a person so do without
 ' great rashness and temerity? Were I to speak ac-
 ' cording to the judgment of man, verily I could not
 ' deny it. But if we be really persuaded, that the
 ' knowledge of matters divine ought not to be attri-
 ' buted to our *watchings, studies, wits*, but to *God* and
 ' to his *spirit*, wherewith he can in a moment endue
 ' the simplest person in the world, and that with no
 ' more labour or difficulty than if he were to give it to
 ' one that had spent Nestor's age in study; what rea-
 ' son is there for me to judge that this man does rashly
 ' and unadvisedly, if he shall arise and contradict? Is
 ' not the spirit able to reveal somewhat to *him*, which
 ' he hath hidden from *thee*? Now, if the spirit have
 ' revealed somewhat to him, and to that end revealed
 ' it that he might contradict, that by his means the
 ' thing may be revealed to the church; shall I say
 ' that he hath done rashly in obeying the Holy Ghost?
 ' And if thou think otherwise, verily thou art not
 ' persuaded that the spirit is the author and teacher
 ' of this knowledge, but that all the praise thereof is
 ' due to studies, watchings, and the wits of men.
 ' And if this be thy judgment, I tell thee again, that
 ' thou art not only unworthy to be *sole* speaker, but
 ' worthy rather to be the only person not *permitted* to
 ' speak, in the congregation.

' And that thou mayest the better understand that
 ' the most unlearned ought to be allowed to speak,
 ' consider,

' consider, God will have himself to be acknowled-
 ' ged the author of his own gifts : he will not have his
 ' praise attributed unto our studies or wits, but unto
 ' himself. But if the man that hath spent all his life
 ' in study, speak wisely, it is not attributed to *God*,
 ' but to *study*: in word, perhaps, it may be attributed
 ' to God, yet not without a vehement reluctancy of
 ' our judgment; and this is that, which I say God
 ' will not abide. But if so be thou shalt hear a wise
 ' word come out of the mouth of some unlearned per-
 ' son, thou must needs, whether thou wilt or no, ac-
 ' knowledge God to be the author thereof. So when
 ' God was minded to give unto Israel a victory against
 ' the Midianites, under the conduct of Gideon;
 ' and Gideon had gathered together thirty thousand
 ' men; lest the Israelites should boast that they had
 ' gotten the victory by their own strength, and not
 ' by the assistance of God, (which might have been
 ' conceived, if Gideon had fought with so numerous
 ' an army) he would not suffer him to have above three
 ' hundred, that it might appear that *he* was the cause
 ' of the victory, and not the number or valour of those
 ' that fought. Now, besides the glory of God, hereby
 ' great profit does accrue to the church. For if the
 ' people shall see now one man, now another, endued
 ' with the spirit, beyond all expectation, many will
 ' thereby be encouraged to hope for the same gift,
 ' if they shall ask it; many will learn and profit; and
 ' it will thereby come to pass, that when occasion shall
 ' be to choose a minister, the church shall not need
 ' to call strange and unknown persons to that office,
 ' but she may have of her own such as are fit to be
 ' chosen; men whose conversation and manners are
 ' sufficiently known. And when the number of such
 ' as are able to prophesy shall be great, the church
 ' will not be forced to use such pastors, as from their
 ' very childhood have proposed to themselves such
 ' office as the reward of their studies; and addicted
 ' themselves to the study of scripture and religion, no
 ' otherwise than they would have done to some trade,
 ' whereby

‘ whereby they meant in time to get their living: so
 ‘ that a man can expect but very few of them to prove
 ‘ other than mercenary or hireling pastors.

‘ Now, that it was the custom of the Jewish church
 ‘ that all might thus prophesy, we may hence con-
 ‘ jecture, in that it is upon record,^a how our Lord,
 ‘ upon the sabbath-day, according to the custom, came
 ‘ into the synagogue, took a book and expounded a
 ‘ place of Esay; and how, being twelve years of age,
 ‘ he sat at Jerusalem in the temple among the doc-
 ‘ tors, and did dispute. For he could not so do by
 ‘ virtue of any ordinary office, forasmuch as his age
 ‘ was incapable, neither did the doctors know who
 ‘ he was. Yea, rather, our Lord in so doing must
 ‘ needs make use of the power which was granted to
 ‘ every one to speak. It remained in the Christians
 ‘ congregations until the times of Constantine, at the
 ‘ least. Forasmuch as we have these words of Euse-
 ‘ bius, the writer of church affairs, to that effect: ^b
 ‘ “ If any man, inspired by the grace of God, should
 ‘ speak unto the people, they all, with great silence,
 ‘ fixing their eyes upon him, gave such attention, as
 ‘ if he had brought them some errand from heaven.”
 ‘ So great was the reverence of the hearers, such order
 ‘ was seen among the ministers. One after another,
 ‘ another after him. Neither were there only *two* or
 ‘ *three* that prophesied, according to what the apostle
 ‘ said, but to *all* was given to speak; so that the wish
 ‘ of Moses seems rather to have been fulfilled in them,
 ‘ when he said, “ Would God *all* the people might
 ‘ prophesy.” There was no spleen, no envy; the gifts
 ‘ of God were dispensed; every one, according to his
 ‘ ability, contributing his assistance for the confirma-
 ‘ tion of the church: and all was done with love,
 ‘ in such sort, that they strove mutually to honour
 ‘ each other, and every one to prefer another before
 ‘ himself. But to the end this common prophesying
 ‘ may be profitable to the church, we must diligently

^a Luke iv.

^b Eccl. Hist. lib. 9.

‘ mark

mark what the apostle advises. For a sure thing it is, that the pride of man is so great, that whatever hath once fallen from him, he will by any means have it stand for a truth; neither can he suffer that any man should infringe the same. So that if he might be permitted to judge, that last spake, it will be a miracle if a man in his life-time should see any one give way to him that contradicts him: what is Paul's advice therefore in this case? "Let two or three prophets speak, and let the rest judge." He will not therefore have the same persons to be parties and judges. And he adds a little after, "And the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets; for God is not the author of dissension, but of peace." So that as soon as any man hath spoken his own mind, he ought to rest himself satisfied with the judgment of the rest, and not obstinately to make no end of contending. If this be not done, a sure thing it is, there will be no end of strife. But what if any man will not be content to submit to the judgment of the rest: verily I would avouch, that being sharply admonished that he disturb not the congregation, and that he go not against the command of the apostle, or rather of our Lord, commanding the spirits of the prophets to be subject to the prophets, he ought to be cast out of the society, though he should hold the prime place in the congregation. The people likewise must frequently be admonished, that liberty for any one to speak in the congregation, is not therefore granted by the apostle, to the end every one should speak what comes to his tongue's end, as if he were in a market; but whereas he gives liberty to him to speak to whom any thing is *revealed*, he would have all rashness and impudence to be laid aside. He that reverences not the church of God, let that man know he despiseth the spirit of God, who is president there; and shall be sure not to escape unpunished. Before a man propounds any thing to the church, he ought to consider, again and again, *how sure* a manifestation

he hath of that thing; and whatever the matter be,
 let him be sure not to forget a sober, modest, bash-
 ful behaviour; without which virtues, doubtless no
 good can be effected. But here we must attentively
 consider, both how far a man ought to submit to the
 judgment of the congregation, and who may deser-
 vedly be accounted a troubler of the church. Verily
 I conceive a man ought so far to give way, as that,
 after I have alledged what I had to say for my opi-
 nion, if yet the rest shall not allow of my judg-
 ment, I ought to give over defending it, and cease
 to be troublesome to the congregation concerning
 the same: but I ought not to be compelled to confess
 that I have erred, nor to deprecate any fault, while
 I do not yet understand that I have erred, for so I
 shall sin against God. He therefore is a troubler of
 the church, that will not, so far as we have expres-
 sed, submit to the judgment of the church, but
 goeth on to be troublesome; but especially that man
 who would exact of another that which he ought not
 to do; viz. to recant, being not persuaded that he
 is in an error. But those men are commonly reputed
 troublers of the church, who refuse to ratify what-
 ever shall any ways fall out of the pastors mouths.
 Again, in this place it may reasonably be demanded,
 whether, when that a matter hath been once or twice
 debated, and some man, knowing the judgment of
 the congregation, would again reduce it into contro-
 versy, he ought to be heard, or enjoined silence, and
 take the matter for determined. But of this we shall
 in another place more conveniently dispute. That
 which remains, therefore, is, that we wrestle with
 God, by daily prayers, to grant that we may have
 the use of this so sovereign and saving liberty, so pro-
 fitable to the church, and that thereby we may reap
 abundance of fruit: and that he would, to that end,
 break and tame our spirits with *his* spirit, and render
 them mild and gentle; and not suffer what he hath
 ordained for the confirmation and establishment of
 his church, to be, by the stubbornness and perverseness

‘ nefs of our wits and minds, turned to the mischief
 ‘ and destruction thereof.’ With much more to the
 ‘ same purpose, too large to be here inserted.

What I have cited, makes an apology, for doing so,
 needless: his whole book is a most accurate account
 of Satan’s stratagems, to cause and keep up divisions
 among Christians; deserving a first place with the most
 Christian writers since the apostolical times. He was
 an Italian, of excellent natural and supernatural endow-
 ments, banished about Luther’s time for the gospel.

Let us now inform ourselves of the judgment of
 that great man of our own country, J. Hales, of Eton,
 in his treatise of the ‘ Power of the Keys,’ upon the
 matter in hand; viz. ‘ To your second query, *Whether*
 ‘ *the keys were consigned to the apostles only?* The an-
 ‘ swer is in no case hard to give; it may perchance, in
 ‘ some case, be dangerous; for there is a generation
 ‘ of men in the world, the *clergy* they call them, who
 ‘ impropriate the keys unto *themselves*, and would be
 ‘ very angry to understand, that others from themselves
 ‘ should claim a right unto them. To your question
 ‘ then; no doubt but originally none received the keys
 ‘ from the mouth of our Saviour, but the apostles
 ‘ only; none did, or ever could, manage them with
 ‘ that authority and splendor, as the apostles did, who
 ‘ were, above all, most amply furnished with all things
 ‘ fitting so great a work. For whereas you seem to
 ‘ intimate, that the *preaching* mission was communi-
 ‘ cated to others, as the seventy-two *disciples*, as well
 ‘ as the *apostles*, you do but mistake yourself, if you
 ‘ conceive that the keys of the gospel were any way
 ‘ committed to them: for concerning the mystery of
 ‘ Jesus Christ, and him crucified for the sins of the
 ‘ world (wherein, indeed, the opening the kingdom
 ‘ of heaven did consist) *they* received it not, they
 ‘ *knew* it not. To be the prime reporters of this, was
 ‘ an honour imparted only to the apostles: yet were
 ‘ they not so imparted, as that they should be con-

• J. Hales, Of the Keys, page 170, 171, 172, 173.

' fined to them. *Every one* that heard and received
 ' the light of the saving doctrine from *them*, so far
 ' forth as he had *understanding* in the ways of life, had
 ' now the keys of the kingdom of heaven committed to
 ' his power, both for his *own* and *others* use. *Every*
 ' *one*, of what *state* or *condition* soever, that hath any
 ' *occasion* offered him to serve another in the ways of
 ' life, *clergy* or *lay*, *male* or *female*, whatever he be,
 ' hath these keys, not only for *himself*, but for the be-
 ' nefit of *others*. For if *natural* goodness teach every
 ' man, *Lumen de Lumine, erranti comiter monstrare viam,*
 ' &c. then how much more doth *Christian* goodness
 ' require of every one, to his ability, to be a light to
 ' those who sit in darkness, and direct their steps who
 ' most dangerously mistake their way? *To save a soul,*
 ' *every man is a priest.* To whom I pray you, is that
 ' said in Leviticus, "Thou shalt not see thy brother
 ' sin, but shalt reprove, and save thy brother?" And
 ' if the law binds a man, when he saw his enemy's
 ' cattle to stray, to put them in their way; how much
 ' more doth it oblige him to do the like for the man
 ' himself? See you not how the whole world conspires
 ' with me in the same opinion? Doth not every father
 ' teach his son, every master his servant, every man his
 ' friend? How many of the laity in this age, and from
 ' time to time in all ages, have by writing, for the pub-
 ' lick good, propagated the gospel of Christ; as if some
 ' secret instinct of nature had put into mens minds thus
 ' to do, &c.

To this let me add his sense of the force of the
 fathers authority in the decision of controversies; and
 how far the ancients, whether fathers or councils, ought
 to be interested in the debates of these times; which
 may not be improper to the present subject, because
 not a few build upon their bottom; the Clergy to be
 sure, that pretend to direct the rest.

' You shall find,' says he, "that all Schisms have
 ' crept into the church by one of these three ways;
 ' either upon matter of fact, or matter of opinion, or

⁴ J. Hales, Tract of Schism, p. 201, 202, 203, 204.

' point of ambition. For the first; I call that matter
 ' of fact, when something is required to be done by us,
 ' which either we know, or strongly suspect, to be un-
 ' lawful: so the first notable schism, of which we read,
 ' in the church, contained in it matter of fact: for it
 ' being, upon *error*, taken for necessary that an *Easter*
 ' must be kept; and upon *worse* than error, if I may
 ' so speak, for it was no less than a point of *Judaism*,
 ' forced upon the church, upon worse than error, I say,
 ' thought further necessary, that the ground for the
 ' time of our keeping that feast, must be the rule left
 ' by Moses to the Jews; there arose a stout question,
 ' *whether we were to celebrate, with the Jews, on the*
 ' *fourteenth moon, or the Sunday following?* This matter,
 ' though most unnecessary, most vain, yet caused as
 ' great a combustion as ever was in the church; the
 ' west separating, and refusing communion with the
 ' east, for many years together. In this fantastical
 ' hurry, I cannot see but all the world were schisma-
 ' ticks: neither can any thing excuse them from that
 ' imputation, excepting only this, that we charitably
 ' suppose that all parties, out of conscience, did what
 ' they did.

' A thing which beset them through the *ignorance* of
 ' their *guides*; for I will not say their *malice*; and that
 ' through the just judgment of God; because, through
 ' *stob* and *blind obedience*, men *examined* not the things
 ' which they were taught; but, like beasts of burden,
 ' patiently *couched down*, and indifferently underwent
 ' whatsoever their *superiors* laid upon them. By the
 ' way, by this you may plainly see the danger of our
 ' appeal unto antiquity, for resolution in controverted
 ' points of faith, and how small relief we are to ex-
 ' pect from thence. For if the discretion of the
 ' chiefest *guides* and *directors* of the *church*, did, in a
 ' point so trivial, so inconsiderable, so mainly *fail*
 ' them, as not to see the truth in a subject, wherein it
 ' is the greatest marvel how they could avoid the sight
 ' of it; can we, without imputation of extreme gross-
 ' ness and folly, think so poor-spirited persons compe-
 ' tent *judges* of the questions now on foot betwixt
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‘ the churches? Pardon me! I know not what temptation drew that note from me.’

How these two worthy men will come off, I cannot tell: they have ventured fairly, and yet I think their case not hazardous at all. You have them in three points plain. First, ‘ That relying upon the *clergy*, as guardians of truth to the people, and the people not *examining* the truth of things from them, is not apostolical, but apostatical. Secondly, That no *councils* or *fathers* ought to be the *rule* or *judge* of our *faith*. Thirdly, That to save souls, *every man* is a *priest*:’ that is, the people are interested in the Christian ministry, which is not tied to times, places, persons, and orders, as under the law; but free to all that have obtained mercy and grace from God. And therefore Peter calls the believers, 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9. “ An holy and “ royal priesthood.” So that every believer is a priest to himself under the gospel. But all this I have mentioned with design, if it be possible, to beat men off that superstitious and dangerous veneration they carry to the names of *church*, *priesthood*, and *fathers*; as if they were to be saved by *them*, and not by *Christ*, who is the “ Only Head and Saviour of the true church, “ and God over all, blessed for ever.” And truly, when I consider the wide dependance some people have upon the church, whilst they know not *what she is*, and make it a principle *not to inquire*, I am amazed, and often struck with horror, to observe with what confidence they expose their souls. This principle it is, and not *inquiry*, that makes men careless and unactive about their own salvation. But let none deceive themselves, “ as they sow they shall reap,” Gal. vi. 5, 7. “ Every “ one must bear his own burden.” It is not to be *saved*, to be within the pale of any *visible* church in the world. That is putting an eternal cheat upon ourselves. Ill things *are* ill things, *within* or *without* the pale: that matters not: and as sin cannot be *christened*, nor impiety reconciled to Christianity, by any *arts* of men, so “ the wages of sin will be death,” Rom. vi. 23. eternal death. To be therefore of the *church* of which
Christ

Christ is head, the *redeemed, regenerated church of Christ*, is quite another thing than to be of any visible society whatever; for in all such communions there are but too many that have no true title to Christianity. If, then, that *immaculate church*, of which *Christ is head*, be made up only of *holy and regenerated souls* throughout the societies of Christians, this will administer but little comfort to those, that presume upon their being within the pale of the visible church, that are *without the pale of virtue and holiness*.

But to proceed to those scriptures that are irreconcilable to *implicit faith* and *blind obedience*: "He that believeth, hath the witness in himself," 1 John v. 10. This general rule respects no persons: it is the result of the Holy Ghost to all believers. 'Such have no need to go to *Rome, nor Winifred's Well, to the shrines of saints, the priests, nor the church,*' for a proof of their faith. They have an evidence nearer home: they have the witness of their faith, and the reason of their hope, in themselves.

It is true, this is a *private judge*; but (as it happens) it is one of the *Holy Ghost's* setting up; of all things, I confess, most destructive to *papacy*, no doubt; for there is a judge in every man, that sincerely believes, to whom he must stand or fall in this and the other world. For, saith the apostle, "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things: beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God," 1 John iii. 20, 21. That is, 'The witness in ourselves discharges us.' The Spirit beareth witness with our spirits, that we 'are the children of God;' Rom. viii. 16. and sons of the true church: not she that hath fattened herself with the flesh of the saints, and died her garments in the blood of martyrs, who hath merchandized in the souls of men; but of that church which is crowned with stars, and cloathed with the sun, and has the moon under her feet. A church of *light and knowledge, of understanding and truth*, and not of *implicit faith* and *blind obedience*: one that tramples upon all sublunary glory;

glory; and not she that makes her pretences to religion a decoy to catch the empire of the world.

Of like tendency is that notable passage of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in faith; prove your own selves: know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" Here is not a word of the Pope, nor an external judge! no human inquisition or authority. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith? Prove your own selves:" but which way shall we do this? By Christ, who is the *great light*, that shines in our hearts, to give us the knowledge of God and ourselves: "He that believes in him, has the witness in himself;" he is no reprobate; his heart condemns him not.

To which I will add another passage to the same purpose, in his epistle to the Galatians, Gal. vi. 4, 5. "But let every man prove his own work; then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another: for every man shall bear his own burden." Here every man is enjoined to turn inquisitor upon himself; and the reason rendered shews the justice of the thing; 'because my rejoicing must be in myself alone, and not in another, I stand and fall to no man; such as I sow, I must reap at the hand of God,' if Paul say true. Mens pardons are vain, and their indulgencies fictitious; "For every man shall bear his own burden, in that great day of the Lord." It cannot therefore be reasonably thought that another man should have the keeping of my understanding at my eternal cost and charge; or that I must entirely depend upon the judgment of a man, or men, who erring, (and thereby causing men to err) cannot be damned for me, but I must pay their reckoning at the hazard of my own damnation.

I am not unacquainted with the great objection that is made by Roman Catholicks, and some Protestants too, high church-men perhaps, that love the treason, but hate the traitor; that like *this* part of popery, but hate the *pope*, viz. 'There are doubts in scripture, even
about

‘ about the most important points of faith: somebody
 ‘ must guide the weak; there must be some one ulti-
 ‘ mate, external, and visible judge to appeal to, who
 ‘ must determine and conclude all persons, as to their
 ‘ doubts and apprehensions concerning the interpreta-
 ‘ tion of scripture; otherwise so many *men*, so many
 ‘ *minds*; the church would be filled with controversy
 ‘ and confusion.’

I answer, That the scriptures are made more doubt-
 ful than they are, by such as would fain preserve to
 themselves the umpirage and judgeship of their mean-
 ing. I deny it, in point of fact, that man’s duty is not
most plainly expressed in all that concerns eternal salva-
 tion. But it is very strange, that when God intends
 nothing more by the scriptures, than to reach the ca-
 pacities of men as to things on which their eternal
 salvation depends, that no book, if such men say true,
 should be so obscure, or subject to so many various,
 nay, contradictory, constructions. Name me one au-
 thor, *Heathen, Jew, or Christian*, that ever wrote
 with that obscurity and seeming inconsistency, which
 some gladly pretend to find in the holy scripture, that
 they might have the use and keeping of them from the
 vulgar, and make their own ends by it. Is, then, *every
 body’s* book to be understood but *God’s*? Was that writ
 not to be *understood*? In short, one of these two things
 must be true; ‘ Either that God intended *not* to be un-
 ‘ derstood, or *to* be understood, in what he command-
 ‘ ed to be written.’ If he resolved *not* to be understood,
 it had been better there had been nothing writ; for
 then there had been no doubts about the meaning of it:
 but if it was his purpose *to be* understood of men, it
 must be supposed that what he caused to be written,
 was plain enough for men to understand, or he missed
 his own aim and end, and writ it to no purpose; which
 were too low and absurd a thought of the infinite good-
 ness and wisdom.

If it should be told me, ‘ That it is not denied but
 ‘ that the scriptures may be understood by *some* body,
 ‘ but not by *every* body; for that the great, visible

‘ judge must *needs* understand them, because it belongs to his office to *resolve* those doubts, and *determine* those controversies that may arise about understanding them; but not every one that *reads* them.’

Ans. I must also say, that this is not true in fact: for it is ridiculous to imagine, that Luke did not make Theophilus *his own judge* in the reading of what he *writ* to him; or that the apostles, in writing to the several churches, as Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, &c. to whom they directed their epistles, did not intend that they should *understand* what they writ; or that they erected any such officer in the church, as an *expounder* of their epistles to the assembly to be necessarily believed. For we know, in those days, the *people* made the church; *they* were the κληρός, the *clergy*, however it came about that it be now engrossed into fewer hands; as you may see in the Greek of Peter, 1 Pet. v. 4. Μηδ' ὡς κληρονομιᾶς τῶν κληρῶν; which κληρῶν, is translated *heritage* in all our Bibles. But this is as if the *priests* only were the Lord's *heritage*; which cannot be, for a reason obvious to all; namely, that they have long reigned as *lords* over God's heritage, or clergy, forbid expressly by Peter; therefore *not* the heritage and clergy over which they so *rule* like lords; by no means. I will say no more but this, it is no convincing proof to me of their humility. But to shut up this argument about the difficulty of understanding the scripture, and pretended necessity of a visible judge; I say, ‘ Whatsoever may be *spoken*, may be *written*:’ Or thus; ‘ Whatsoever a visible judge can now *say*, the holy penmen, by God's direction, might have *written*:’ and what an omniscient and omnipotent God did *know*, and could *do*, for man's salvation, an omnibenevolent God, that tells us, “ He delights not in the death of one soul, but rather that he should be saved,” would certainly have *done* for man. And because God is an omnibenevolent, as omniscient and omnipotent, we must conclude he *has* done it: and it is great presumption, and a mean shelter to ignorance or ambition,

to raise a credit to human devices, by beating down the true value of the scriptures.

‘They are *dark*.’ What follows? ‘They must not be read.’ What follows then? *Why then such teachers may do as they list with the people.* But did the Pharisees, with their broad phylacteries, know God’s mind better than the prophets? Or could they deliver it clearer? No such matter: it is by the same strange figure, that the *schoolmen* know the mind of Christ better than the *apostles*; and that the *Council of Trent* can declare faith more clearly than the *Holy Ghost* in the scripture hath done: and yet this is the English of their doctrine, that hold to us *those* lights to read the scripture by: and that would have us search their *canons* and *decrees*, to find out the mind of the *Holy Ghost* in scripture.

The confusions that are pretended to follow such an inquiry, are but the wretched arts of selfish men, as much as in them lies, to keep *light* and *truth* out of the world. When the net was cast into the sea, there came some good, some bad fish; it was not the *fisherman’s* fault they were no better. Enquiry is not to be blamed, for the ill use weak, or worse men, make of it. The Bereans might not all *believe*, though they might all *search*; for men do not enquire with equal wisdom, love, and good desire. “Some seek and find not, some ask and receive not;” James iv. 3. Must none therefore ask or seek after that which is good? Or, because some ask or seek amiss, will it follow that the thing itself is naught? If superstition, error, idolatry, and spiritual tyranny be detected, and truth discovered, will it not more than make amends for all that weakness and folly some men have brought forth by the liberty of such an enquiry? The enemies of *light* may be as rhetorical as they please upon the excess or presumption of some, bolder than wise, and more zealous than knowing; but if they had nothing to lose by the discovery, they would never be the enemies of a *Christian search*. It is to be feared, such get that obedience and subjection by a blind devotion,

which no man could yield them upon better information: and is it reasonable that men of that stamp should secure their empire by the ignorance of the people? Ignorance ought to be the mother of devotion with none but those that cannot be devout upon better terms: it is the glory of a man that he is religious upon *reason*, and that his duty and sacrifice (Lev. xxii. 18, 29.) are not *blind* or *forced*, but *free* and *reasonable*. Truth upon *knowledge*, though vexed with schism, wise and good men will choose, before *ignorant* religion, and all its superstitious effects, with uniformity. Enough of this.

But this notion of an infallible visible judge, is as false in reason as in fact. For, first, it takes away the *use* of every man's *reason*; and it is a contradiction to have any, unless he were such an interpreter, and such a judge, as would conclude us by conviction, and not by authority: that would be the most welcome person in the world. But to over-rule my own sight, to give the lie to my own understanding, say, *black is white*, and that *two* and *three* make *ten*; thus *subjugare intellectum in obsequium fidei*; to yield my understanding to such an *in-evident* way of faith, nay, which is worse, to believe a *lie*, (for so it is to them, to whom the thing to be believed appears untrue) is most unreasonable.

If we must be *led*, it had been easier for us to have been born *blind*; we might then have better followed the *dog* and the *bell*; for we could not mend ourselves but to *see*, and to be *led*, and that in ways we see to be foul or *wrong*, this is anxious. Here lies the dispute: and truly here the question might fairly end, 'Either *put out* our eyes, or let us *use* them.' But if we have eyes for our *minds* as well as for our *bodies*, I see no reason why we should trust any man, or men, against the *eyes* of our *understanding*, any more than we ought to confide in them against the sense and certainty of the eyes of our *bodies*.

Where is the poorest mechanick that would be paid for his labour in base coin for silver, by either pope
or

or bishop? And can we be so brutish, as to think our *nobler part* void of distinction, about that *treasure* which is of *eternal moment*? For though Peter was to *feed* the sheep, yet the sheep were not to *follow* Peter, but Christ. "My sheep hear my voice," says he, "and *follow me*, and a stranger they will not follow," John x. 14. Here is no mediator betwixt Christ and his sheep; nor does any body else hear his voice for them; but they hear his voice *themselves*. And though the shepherd may have many servants, yet "*he only is* their shepherd, and they are only the sheep of *his* fold."

But there are three places of scripture, that come fresh into my remembrance, that are very pertinent to the present occasion. The first is this, Rom. i. 19. "That which may be known of God, is manifest in men, for God hath shewed it unto them:" that is, "The *spirit of man*, being the *candle of the Lord*," Prov. xx. 27. God hath *enlightened* it, to manifest unto man what is necessary for him to know both of God and himself. Here is no need of *wax candles*, or *tapers*, or a *visible guide* and *church*; for still, "he that *believes*, has the witness in himself."

Another passage is this: "Be ye followers of me, even as I am also of Christ." 1 Cor. xi. 1. In which the apostle is so far from setting himself up a *judge* over the church at Corinth, that he makes his appeal to them concerning his doctrine and conversation, regulating both by that of his *Lord Jesus Christ*, and making them judges of the truth of his conformity to that example. "Be ye followers of *me*:" how? After what manner? What! *Absolutely*, without *examination*? Must we believe thee without any *trial*, and take what thou sayest for granted, without any more to do? No such thing. "Be ye followers of *me*, even as *I also* am of *Christ*: I submit myself to be judged by you according to that rule; and all men and churches are to be thus measured, that lay claim to the name of Christian: the text will bear it.

The

The third passage is in his second epistle to the same church of Corinth; it is this; 2 Cor. iv. 1, 2. "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not, but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but, by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Here is the utmost *imposition* the apostle makes us of: he requires not men to receive him without *evidence*, and refers himself to that of their own *consciences* in the *sight* of God. This was the way of making Christians then; it must be the way of keeping and making men Christians now.

Conscience, in the best sense of the word, has ever been allowed to be a bond upon men in all religions: but that religion, whoever holds it, which, under pretence of authority, would supersede *conscience*, and instead of making men better (the end of religion) make them worse, by confounding all sense and distinction betwixt good and evil, and resolving all into an *implicit faith* and *blind obedience* unto the commands of a *visible* guide and judge, is false; it cannot be otherwise. For to admire what men do not know, and to make it a principle not to enquire, is the last mark of folly in the believer, and of imposture in the imposer. To be short, a *Christian* implies a *man*; and a *man* implies *conscience* and *understanding*: but he that has *no* conscience nor understanding, (as he has not, that has delivered them up to the will of *another man*) is no *man*, and therefore, no *Christian*.

I do beseech you Protestants, of all sorts, to consider of the danger of this principle, with respect to religion. Of old it was the *Fool* that said in his heart, "there is no God?" But now, upon this principle, men must be made *fools*, in order to *believe* there is one. Shall *folly*, which is the *shame*, if not the *curse* of man, be the perfection of a *Christian*? Christ, indeed, has advised us to become as "little children," but never to become such *fools*; for, as the proverb is,
 this

this is to be led by the *nose*, and not by our *wits*. You know that God hates the "Sacrifices of fools:" Eccles. v. 1. "I will pray with the spirit and with the understanding also," saith the apostle. 1 Cor. xiv. Let us commend that testimony, which we believe to be true, to the consciences of men, and let them have the gospel privilege of *Examination*. *Error only loses upon trial*. If this had been the way to Christianity, (with reverence be it spoken) God had not made our condition better, but worse; for this translates our faith and dependance upon *God*, to *man*; and the possibility, if not probability, of man's erring, exposes us to a greater insecurity than before: for where I never *trusted*, I never could be *deceived*: but if I must abandon *my own* sense and judgment, and yield myself up to the faith and authority of *another*, (to say no more of the blindness and lameness of such belief and devotion) what *security* can I have, that the man or men whom I trust, may not *err*, and *deceive* me? And that deceit is irreparable.

Again; since man is a *reasonable* creature, and that the *more* reasonable he is in his religion, the *nearer* to his own *being* he *comes*, and to the wisdom and truth of his Creator, that did so make him; a religion without reason, imposed by an unaccountable authority, *against* reason, sense and conviction, cannot be the religion of the God of *truth* and *reason*: for it is not to be thought that he requires any thing that carries any violence upon the *nature* of his *creature*, or that gives the *lie* to that *reason* or *sense* with which he first endowed him. In short, either convince my *understanding* by the light of *truth* and power of *reason*, or bear down my infidelity with the force of miracles: for not to give me understanding or faith, and to press a submission that requires *both*, is most unreasonable.

But if there were no other argument than this, it goes a great way with me; that as to such as have their *understanding* at *liberty*, if they are mistaken, there may be hopes of reclaiming them, by *informing* them: but where the understanding and conscience are enslaved

to authority, and where men make it a principal doctrine, to suspect their own *sense*, and strive against their own *convictions*; to move only by *other mens breath*, and fall down to *their conclusions*; nothing seems to be left for the *soundest arguments*, and *clearest truths*, to work upon. They had almost need to be *recreated*, in order to be converted; for who can reasonably endeavour to make him a *Cbristian*, that is not a *man*; which he cannot be truly said to be, who has no *understanding*, or resolves not to *use* it, but *reject* it, which is yet worse: for he that has no understanding, has no prejudice against it; but he that purposely denies and abuses it, is so much worse, as that he turns enemy to him that has and uses his understanding. He, therefore, can never be convinced of his error, who is prejudiced against the *necessary means of conviction*, which is the *use* of his *understanding*; without which it is impossible he should ever be convinced.

To conclude, I have reserved, till last, one argument, which is *ad hominem*, unanswerable by us Protestants; and without yielding to which, we cannot be consistent with ourselves, or be thought to do unto others what we would have others do unto us; and that is this. The *translation* of the *scripture* was the painful work of our *ancestors*; and this I call their most solemn *appeal* to the *people*, against the *Pope* and *traditions of Rome*, in the business of their *separation*. For when the question arose of the Divine Authority of this or the other practice in the doctrine or worship of the Roman church, presently they recurred to the *scriptures*, and therefore made them speak *English*, that they might witness for them to the people. This appeal to the *people*, in defence of their separation, by making *them* judges of their proceeding against the *church*, according to the testimony of the Holy Scripture, puts every man in possession of them. ‘Search the scriptures,’ say the first Protestants; ‘prove all things; see if what we say against the Pope and church of Rome be not true.’ And in case any difficulty did arise, they exhorted all to *wait* upon God, for the divine aid of his

his *spirit*, to illuminate their *understandings*, that one should not *impose* upon the other, but commend them to God: 'Be brotherly, patient, long-suffering, ready to help the weak, inform the ignorant, shew tenderness to the mistaken; and with reason and moderation to gain the obstinate.' In short, *Protestancy* is a restoring to every man his *just right* of *inquiry* and *choice*: and, to its honour be it ever spoken, there is a greater likelihood of *finding* truth, where all have liberty to *seek* after it, than where it is denied to all, but a few grandees, and those too as short-sighted as their neighbours. But now let us Protestants examine, if we have not departed from this sobriety, this Christian temperance? How comes it that we, who have been forgiven much, have ourselves fallen upon our fellow-servants, who yet owe us nothing? Have not we refused them this reasonable choice? Have we not threatened, beaten and imprisoned them? Pray consider, have you not made *creeds*, framed *faiths*, formed and regulated a *worship*; and strictly enjoined all mens *obedience*, by the help of the *civil power*, upon pain of great sufferings, which have not been spared upon Dissenters; though they have been, in common, renouncers and protesters with you, against the Pope and church of Rome. For this the land mourns, heaven is displeas'd, and all is out of due course.

To give us the scriptures, and knock our fingers for *taking* them; to translate them that we may *read* them, and punish us for endeavouring to *understand* and use them as well as we *can*, both with respect to God and our neighbour, is very unreasonable upon our Protestant principles. I wish we could see the mischief we draw upon ourselves, and, which is worse, upon our cause; for the Papist, in this case, acts according to his principle, but we against our principle; which shews, indeed, that we profess the better religion, but that we also are more condemnable. If we will consider it seriously, we shall find it not much more injurious to scripture, truth and good conscience, that.

that we believe as the *church* believes, than that we believe as the church says the *scripture* would have us believe. For where is the difference, since I am not allowed to use my *understanding* about the *sense* of scripture, any more than about the *faith* of the *church*? And if I must not receive any thing for faith or worship from scripture, but what is *banded* to me through the *meanings* of the church, or her clergy, I see myself in as ill terms, as if I had sat down with the old doctrine of believing as the *church* believes. And had the controversy been only for the word *scripture*, without the *use* and *application* of it, (for, at this rate, that is all that is left us) truly the enterprise of our fathers had been weak and unadvised: but because nothing less was intended by them, and that the translation of the scripture was both the *appeal* and *legacy* of those Protestant ancestors; for the reasons before-mentioned, I must conclude we are much degenerated from the simplicity of primitive Protestantism, and need to be admonished of our backslidings: and I heartily pray to Almighty God, that he would quicken us, by his repeated mercies and providences, to return to our first love, to the light and spirit of his Son, that we may become sons indeed; the ground of true Christianity, and from whence the true ministry hath its spring, which is open and free to those that are proficient in that holy school.

Let the scriptures be free, sober opinion tolerated, good life cherished, vice punished: away with imposition, nick-names, animosities, for the Lord's sake; and let the scripture be our common creed; and pious living the test of Christianity, that God may please to perfect his good work of grace he has begun, and deliver us from all our enemies, both within and without.

S E C T. VI.

Of the propagation of faith by force.

I Am now come to the last point, and that is, propagation of faith by force: in which I shall, with the ecclesiastick, consider the civil magistrate's share herein: for though the churchmen are principally guilty; who being professed ministers of a religion which renounces and condemns force, excite the civil magistrate to use it, both to impose their own belief, and suppress that of other men; yet the civil magistrate, in running upon their errands, and turning executioner of their cruelty upon such as dissent from them, involves himself in their guilt.

That in this Protestant country laws have been made to prosecute men for their dissent from the national worship, and that those laws have been executed, I presume will not be denied: for not only our own histories since the reformation will furnish us with instances unbecoming our pretences, as the case of Barrow, Penry, &c. in queen Elizabeth's time, and others in the reign of king James and Charles the first, but our own age abounds with proofs. 'Thousands have been
' excommunicated and imprisoned; whole families
' undone; not a bed left in the house, not a cow left
' in the field, nor any corn in the barn: widows and
' orphans stripped without pity, no regard being had
' to age or sex: and what for? Only because of their
' meeting to worship God after another manner than
' according to the form of the church of England;
' but yet in a very peaceable way.'

Nor have they only suffered this by laws intended against them, but, after an excessive rate, by laws known to have been never designed against them, and only intended against the *Papists*: and in these cases four times the value hath not served their turn. We can prove *sixty pounds* taken for *thirteen*, and not one penny returned, as we made appear before a committee

mittee of the late parliament, which is the penalty of *four* offences for *one*; to say nothing of the gross abuses that have been committed against our names and persons, by men of ill fame and life, that have taken the advantage of our tenderness, and the present posture of the law against us, to have their revengeful and covetous ends upon us. And though we are yet unredressed, not a session of parliament has passed these *seventeen* years, in which we have not humbly remonstrated our suffering condition: we have done our part, which has been patiently to suffer, and modestly to complain: it is yours now to hear our groans, and, if ever you expect mercy from God, to deliver us. The late parliament, just before its dissolution, was preparing some relief for us, if that parliament could think of it, yea, begin it, we hope you will finish and secure it.

The better to remove all scruples or objections, that politically or ecclesiastically, on the part of the state or the church, may be advanced against us in this request, I shall divide this discourse into two parts: first, *Cæsar's authority*; next, the *church's power* in things that relate to *faith* and *conscience*; with my considerations upon both.

* Our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, did long since distinguish the *things* of *Cæsar* from the *things* of *God*, in his plain and notable answer unto that insnaring question of the Jews, "Is it lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar, or not? Render," says he, "unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's:" that is, *divine worship*, and all things relating to it, belong unto God; *civil obedience* to *Cæsar*. God only can be the author of right acts of worship in the mind: this is granted by all; therefore it is not in the power of any man or

The greatest part of what follows in this section, was first by way of appendix to the 'Continued Cry of the Oppress'd for Justice,' anno 1675.

* Mat. xxii. 17, 21.

men

men in the world, to compel the mind rightly to worship God. Where this is but attempted, God's prerogative is invaded, and *Cæsar* (by which word I understand the *civil government*) engrosseth *all*. For he doth not only take his *own* things as much as he can, but the things appertaining to *God* also; since if God hath not *conscience* for his share, he hath nothing. "My kingdom," says Christ, "is not of *this* world;" nor is the magistrate's kingdom of the *other* world: therefore he exceeds his province and commission whenever he meddles with the rights of it. Let Christ have his kingdom, he is sufficient for it; and let *Cæsar* have his, it is his due. "Give unto *Cæsar* the things that *are* *Cæsar's*, and to God the things that are God's." Then there are things that belong *not* to *Cæsar*, and we are not to give those to him which belong not to him; and such are *God's* things, *divine* things, things of an eternal reference: but those that belong to *Cæsar* and his earthly kingdom, must be, of duty, rendered to him.

If any shall ask me, 'What are the things properly belonging to *Cæsar*?' I answer, in scripture language, "To love justice, do judgment, relieve the oppressed, right the fatherless; and in general be a terror unto evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well:" for this is the great end of magistracy; and in these things they are to be obeyed, of conscience as well as interest.

But perhaps my answer will be reckoned too general and ambiguous, and a fresh question started, 'Who are the evil-doers, to whom the civil authority ought to be terrible?' But this ought, in my judgment, to be no question with men that understand the nature of civil authority; for those are the evil-doers that violate those laws which are necessary to the preservation of civil society; as thieves, murderers, adulterers, traitors, plotters, drunkards, cheats, vagabonds, and the like mischievous and dissolute persons; men

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void of virtue, truth, and sincerity; the foundation of all good government, and only firm bond of human society. Whoever denies me this, must at the same time say, that *virtue* is less necessary to government than *opinion*, and that the most *vitiating* men, professing but Cæsar's religion, are the *best* subjects to Cæsar's authority; consequently, that other men, living ever so honestly and industriously, and having as good a claim to civil protection and preference shall, merely for their dissent from that religion; a thing they cannot help, for "Faith is the gift of God," be reputed the worst of evil-doers; which is followed with exposing their names to obloquy, their estates to ruin, and their persons to gaols, exile, and abundance of other cruelties. What is this, but to confound the things of Cæsar with the things of God, divine worship with civil obedience, the church with the state, and perplex human societies with endless debates about religious differences? Nay, is it this to erect *new* measures to try the members of worldly societies by, and give an accession to another power, than that which is necessary to the constitution of civil government? But that which ought to deter wise rulers from assuming and exercising such an authority, is the consideration of the pernicious consequences of doing so. For,

I. It makes *property*, which is the first and most fixed part of English government, floating and uncertain; for, it seems, no conformity to the church, no property in the *state*: and, doubtless, the insecurity of property can be no security to the government: pray think of that.

II. It makes me owe more to the church than to the *state*: for in this case, the anchor I ride by, is not obedience to the laws relating to the preservation of civil society, but conformity to certain things belonging to the doctrine and discipline of the church: that though I may be an honest, industrious Englishman, a great lover of my country, and an admiri

of the government I live under, yet if I refuse to profess the religion that either now is, or hereafter may be imposed, be it ever so false, that is all one, I must neither enjoy the liberty of my person nor the quiet possession of my estate.

III. This not only alters the government, by sacrificing mens properties for that which cannot be called a sin against property, nor an offence to the nature of civil government, if any transgression at all; but it narrows the interest and power of the governors: for look what number they cut off from their protection, they cut off from themselves and the government; not only rendering thereby a great body of people useles, but provoking them to be dangerous: to be sure it clogs the civil magistrate in his administration of government, making that necessary which is not at all necessary to him as *Cæsar*.

It is a sort of duumvirateship in power, by which the civil monarchy is broken: for as that was a plurality of *men*, so this is a plurality of *powers*. And, to speak freely, the civil power is made to act the lacquey, to run of all the unpleasant errands the forward zeal of the other sends it upon; and the best preferment it receives for its pains, is to be *informers*, *constable*, or *hangman* to some of the best livers, and therefore the best subjects, in the kingdom.

O! What greater injustice to *Cæsar*, than to make his government vary by such modes of religion; and oblige him to hold his obedience from his people, not so much by their conformity to *him*, as to the *church*; a mere relative of the other world.

IV. This is so far from resembling the universal goodness of God, who dispenses his light, air, showers, and comfortable seasons to *all*, and whom *Cæsar* ought always to imitate, and so remote from increasing the *trade*, *populoufness*, and *wealth* of this kingdom, as that it evidently tends to the utter ruin of thousands of *traders*, *artificers*, and *husbandmen*, and their families; and, by increasing the charges, it must needs increase the poor of the nation.

V. This must needs be a great discouragement to strangers from coming in, and settling themselves amongst us, when they have reason to apprehend that they, and their children after them, can be no longer secured in the enjoyment of their *properties*, than they shall be able to prevail with their consciences to believe, 'That the *religion* which our laws do now, or shall at any time hereafter, approve and impose, is undoubtedly *true*; and that the *way* of *worshipping* God, which shall be at any time by our laws enjoined, is, and shall be, more agreeable to the will of God, than any other way in which God is worshipped in the world.'

VI. That way of worship we are commanded conformity to, doth not make *better liver*s, that is a demonstration; nor *better artist*s; for it cannot be thought that going to *church*, hearing *common-prayer*, or believing in the present *episcopacy*, teach men to build *ships* or *houses*; to make *clothes*, *shoes*, *dials*, or *watches*; *buy*, *sell*, *trade*, or *commerce*, *better* than any that are of *another* persuasion. And since these things are *useful*, if not *requisite*, in civil society, is not prohibiting, nay ruining, such men, because they will not come to hear common-prayer, &c. *destructive* of civil society? Pray shew me better subjects. If any object, 'Dissenters have not always been so;' the answer is ready, 'Do not expose them; protect them in their lives, liberties, and estates; for in this present posture they think they can call nothing their own, and that all the comforts they have in this world, are hourly liable to forfeiture, for their faith, hope, and practice concerning the other world.' Is not this to destroy nature and civil government, when people are ruined in their natural and civil capacity, not for things relating to either, but which are of a supernatural import?

VII. This deprives them of protection, who protect the government. Dissenters have a great share in the *trade*, which is the greatness of this kingdom; and they make a large proportion of the *taxes* that main-

maintain the government. And is it reasonable, or can it be Christian, when they *pay tribute to Cæsar*, to be preserved in an undisturbed possession of the *rest*, that the *rest* should be continually exposed for the peaceable exercise of their consciences to God?

VIII. Neither is it a conformity to true and solid religion, such as is necessary to eternal salvation, wherein most parties verbally agree, but for a modification of religion; some peculiar way of worship and discipline. 'All confess One God, One Christ, One Holy Ghost, and that it is indispensably requisite to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world.' 2 Tit. xi. 12. yet is one prosecuting the other for his conscience, seizing corn, driving away cattle, breaking open doors, taking away and spoiling of goods; in some places not leaving a cow to give poor orphans milk, nor a bed to lie on; in other places houses have been swept so clean, that a stool hath not been left to sit on, nor so much as working tools to labour for bread. To say nothing of the opprobrious speeches, bloody blows, and tedious imprisonments, even to death itself, through nastiness of dungeons, that many innocent people have suffered only for their peaceable conscience.

IX. But this way of proceeding for maintenance of the national religion, is of an ill consequence upon this account, that heaven is barred, as much as in men lies, from all farther illuminations. Let God send what light he pleases into the world, it must not be received by Cæsar's people, without Cæsar's licence; and if it happen that Cæsar be not presently convinced, as well as I, that it is of God, I must either renounce my convictions, and lose my soul to please Cæsar, or profess and persevere in my persuasion, and so lose my life, liberty, or estate, to please God. This hath frequently occurred, and may again. Therefore I would intreat Cæsar to consider the sad consequence of imposition, and remember both that God did never ask man leave to introduce truth, or make farther discoveries of his mind to the world, and that it hath

been a woful snare to those governments that have been drawn to employ their power against his work and people.

X. This way of procedure endeavours to stifle, or else to punish, sincerity; for fear or hopes, frowns or favour, prevail only with base minds; souls degenerated from true nobleness. Every spark of integrity must be extinguished, where conscience is sacrificed to worldly safety and preferment. This net holds no temporizers: *bonest* men are all the fish it catches: but one would think they should make but an ill treat to such as reckon themselves *generous* men, and, what is more, *Christians* too. That which renders the matter more unjustifiable, is the temptation such severity puts men upon, not hardy enough to *suffer* for conscience, yet strongly persuaded they have truth on their side, to desert their principles, and smother their convictions; which, in plain terms, is to make of sincere men, hypocrites: whereas it is one great end of government, by all laudable means, to preserve sincerity; for without it there can be no faith or truth in civil society. Nor is this all; for it is a maxim worthy of Cæsar's notice, 'Never to think him true to Cæsar, ' that is false to his own *conscience*:' besides, raped consciences treasure up revenge; and such persons are not likely to be longer friends to Cæsar, than he hath preferments to allure them, or power to deter them from being his most implacable enemies.

XI. There is not so ready a way to Atheism, as this of extinguishing the *sense* of *conscience* for *worldly ends*: destroy that *internal rule* of *faith*, *worship*, and *practice* towards *God*, and the reason of my religion will be civil injunctions, and not divine convictions; consequently, I am to be of as many religions as the civil authority shall impose, however untrue or contradictory. This sacred tie of conscience thus broken, farewell to all heavenly obligations in the soul, scripture-authority, and ancient Protestant principles. Christ may at this rate become what the Jews would have had him and his apostles to be reputed, to wit,
 " Turn-

“ Turners of the world upside down,” as their enemies represented them; and the godly martyrs of all ages, so many self-murderers; for they might justly be esteemed resisters of worldly authority, so far as that authority concerned itself with the imposition of religion, because they refused the conformity commanded by it, even to death.

And it may not be unworthy of Cæsar’s consideration, that from these proceedings people are tempted to infer, there is nothing in religion but *worldly aims and ends*; because so much worldly power is abused, under the name of religion, to vex and destroy men for being of another religion; and that he hazards the best hold and obligation he hath to obedience, which is conscience. For where they are taught only to obey for interest, duty and conviction are out of doors. By all means let conscience be sacred, and virtue, and integrity (though under dissenting principles) cherished: charity is more powerful than severity, and persuasion than all the penal laws in the world.

Lastly, To the reproach of this course with wise men, it hath never yet obtained the end desired; since, instead of compliance, the difference is thereby widened, and the sufferers are pitied by spectators, which only helps to increase the number of dissenters; for whoever is in the wrong, few think the persecutor in the right. This, in all ages, having been the issue of severe prosecution of dissenters for matters of religion, what a cruel, troublesome, thankless, successful office is it for Cæsar to be employed in? May he take better measures of his authority and interest, and use his power to the encouragement of all the virtuous and industrious, and just punishment of the lazy and vicious in all persuasions; so shall the kingdom flourish, and the government prosper.

Church power supposeth a *church* first. It will not be improper therefore to examine; first, ‘What a scripture New-Testament-church is;’ and next, ‘What is the scripture power belonging to such a church.’ A scripture-church, as she may be called

visible, is a *company* or *society* of *people*, *believing*, *professing*, and *practising* according to the *doctrine* and *example* of *Christ Jesus* and his *apostles*; and not according to the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, that “taught for doctrine the *traditions of men*.” They are such as are meek in heart, lowly in spirit, ^g chaste in life, ^h virtuous in all conversation, ⁱ full of self-denial, ^k long-suffering and patient, ^l not only forgiving, ^m but loving their very enemies; which answers Christ’s own character of himself, religion, and kingdom, which is the most apt distinction that ever can be given of the nature of his church and her authority, viz. ⁿ “My kingdom is not of this world.” Which well connects with “Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s.”

It was an answer to a very suspicious question; for it was familiarly bruited that he was a *king*, and came to *possess* his kingdom, and was, by some, called the *king of the Jews*.

The Jews being then subjected to the Roman empire, it concerned Pilate, Cæsar’s deputy, to understand his pretensions; which, upon better information, he found to center in this, “My kingdom is not of this world, else would my subjects fight for me.” As if he had said, ‘These reports are a mere perversion of my peaceable and self-denying intentions; an infamous invented by malicious Scribes and Pharisees, that they might the better prevail with Cæsar to sacrifice me to their hatred and revenge.’

‘I am Cæsar’s friend; I seek none of these kingdoms from him; nor will I sow sedition, plot or conspire his ruin; no, let all men render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s: that is my doctrine; for I am come to erect a kingdom of another nature than that of this world, to wit, a *spiritual* kingdom, to be set up in the heart; and conscience is my throne, upon that will I sit, and rule the children of

^g Mat. xi. 10. ^h 1 Pet. iii. 2. ⁱ 2 Cor. xi. 2. ^j Phil. iv. 8.
^k 1 Pet. iv. 15. ^l Mat. xvi. 24. ^m 2 Cor. iv. 6. ⁿ Luke vi, 37.
^o John xviii. 30.

‘ men in righteousness; and whoever lives soberly,
 ‘ righteously, and godly in this world,° shall be my
 ‘ good and loving subjects. And they will certainly
 ‘ make no ill ones for Cæsar, since such virtue is the
 ‘ end of government, and renders his charge both
 ‘ more easy and safe than before. Had I any other
 ‘ design than this, would I suffer myself to be re-
 ‘ proached, traduced, and persecuted by a conquered
 ‘ people? Were it not more my nature to suffer than
 ‘ revenge, would not their many provocations have
 ‘ drawn from me some instance of another kind than
 ‘ the forbearance and forgiveness I teach? Certainly,
 ‘ were I animated by another principle than the per-
 ‘ fection of meekness and divine sweetness, I should
 ‘ not have forbidden Peter fighting, saying, † “ Put
 ‘ up thy sword,” or instruct my followers to bear
 ‘ wrongs; but have revenged all affronts, and, by
 ‘ plots and other stratagems, have attempted ruin to
 ‘ my enemies, and the acquisition of worldly empire;
 ‘ and no doubt but they would have fought for me.
 ‘ Nay, I am not only patiently, and with pity to
 ‘ enemies, sensible of their cruel carriage towards me
 ‘ for my good-will to them, whose eternal happiness I
 ‘ only seek; but I foresee what they farther intend
 ‘ against me: they design to crucify me: and, to do it,
 ‘ will rather free a murderer, than spare their Saviour.‡
 ‘ They will perform that cruelty with all the aggrava-
 ‘ tion and contempt they can; deriding me them-
 ‘ selves, and exposing me to the derision of others:
 ‘ they will mock my divine kingship with a crown of
 ‘ thorns, and in mine agonies of soul and body, for a
 ‘ cordial, give me gall and vinegar to drink. But,
 ‘ notwithstanding all this, to satisfy the world that my
 ‘ religion is above wrath and revenge, I can forgive
 ‘ them.’

‘ And to secure Cæsar and his people from all fears
 ‘ of imposition, notwithstanding my authority, and

° Titus ii 12. † Mat. xxvi. 52. ‡ Mat. xxvii. 20, 27, 29,
 48. † Luke xxiii. 34. Mat. xxvi. 53.

‘ the many legions of angels I might command,
 ‘ both to my deliverance, and the enforcement of my
 ‘ message upon mankind, I resolve to promote nei-
 ‘ ther with worldly power; for it is not of the nature
 ‘ of my religion and kingdom. And as I neither
 ‘ assume nor practise any such thing myself, that am
 ‘ the great author, promoter, and example of this holy
 ‘ way; so have I not only never taught my disciples
 ‘ to live or act otherwise, or given them a power I re-
 ‘ fuse to use myself, but expressly forbid them, and
 ‘ warned them, in my instructions, of exercising any
 ‘ the least revenge, imposition or coercion towards
 ‘ any. This is evident in my sermon preached upon
 ‘ the mount, where I freely, publickly, and with much
 ‘ plainness, not only prohibited *revenge*, but enjoined
 ‘ *love to enemies*, making it to be a great token of true
 ‘ discipleship to suffer wrongs, and conquer cruelty by
 ‘ patience and forgiveness; which is certainly very far
 ‘ from imposition or compulsion upon other men.

‘ Furthermore, when I was strongly bent for Jerusa-
 ‘ lem, and sent messengers before to prepare some en-
 ‘ tertainment for me and my company, in a village be-
 ‘ longing to the ‘ Samaritans, and the people refused,
 ‘ because they apprehended I was going to Jerusalem,
 ‘ though some of my disciples, particularly James and
 ‘ John, were provoked to that degree, that they asked
 ‘ me, if I were willing that they should command fire
 ‘ from heaven to destroy those Samaritans, as Elias
 ‘ in another case had done; I turned about, and rebuked
 ‘ them, saying, “ Ye know not what manner of spirit
 ‘ ye are of; for I am not come into the world to
 ‘ destroy mens lives, but,” ‘ by my peaceable doc-
 ‘ trine, example, and life,’ “ to save them.””

‘ At another time, one of my disciples relating to
 ‘ me some passages of their travels, told me of a cer-
 ‘ tain man they saw, that cast out devils in my name;
 ‘ and because he was not of their company, nor fol-

‘ Mat. v. 44, 45, 46, 47. ‘ Luke ix. 53, 54, 55, 56. ‘ Luke
 ix. 49, 50.

' loved them, said he, *we forbade him*; as if they
 ' thereby served and pleased me; but I presently testi-
 ' fied my dislike of the ignorance and narrowness of
 ' their zeal, and, to inform them better, told them,
 ' they should not have forbid him; for he that is not
 ' *against us is for us.*'

' My drift is not *opinion*, but *piety*: they that cast
 ' out devils, convert sinners, and turn men to righte-
 ' ousness, are not against me, nor the nature and re-
 ' ligion of my kingdom, and therefore ought to be
 ' cherished rather than forbid. That I might suffi-
 ' ciently declare and inculcate my mind in this matter,
 ' I did at another time, and upon a different occasion,
 ' preach against all coercion and persecution for mat-
 ' ters of faith and practice towards God, in my parable
 ' of the sower, as my words manifest, which are these;
 " The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which
 " sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept,
 " his enemy came, and sowed tares among the wheat,
 " and went his way: but when the blade sprung up,
 " and brought forth fruit, there appeared the tares also;
 " so the servants of the householder came and said,
 " Didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? From
 " whence then hath it tares? He answered, An enemy
 " hath done this: the servants said unto him, " Wilt
 " thou then that we go and gather them up? But he
 " said, Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root
 " up also the wheat with them; let both grow toge-
 " ther till the harvest, and in the time of harvest I
 " will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first
 " the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them,
 " but gather the wheat into my barn."

' And that I might not leave so necessary a truth
 ' mis-apprehended of my dear followers, or liable to
 ' any mis-constructions, my disciples, when together,
 ' desiring an explanation, I interpreted my words
 ' thus:

* Mat. xiii. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.

" He

“ He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man;
 “ the field is the world; the good seed are the children
 “ of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of
 “ the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the
 “ devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the
 “ reapers are the angels.”

‘ This patience, this long-suffering, and great for-
 ‘ bearingance belonging to my kingdom and the subjects
 ‘ of it, my doctrine speaks it, and mine example con-
 ‘ firms it; and this can have no possible agreement
 ‘ with imposition and persecution for conscience. It
 ‘ is true I once whipped *out* the profaners of my Fa-
 ‘ ther’s temple; but I never whipped any *in*. I called,
 ‘ I cried to every one that thirsted to come, and freely
 ‘ offered my assistance to the weary and heavy-laden;
 ‘ but I never *imposed* my help, or *forced* any to re-
 ‘ ceive me; for I take not my kingdom by violence,
 ‘ but by suffering. And that I might sufficiently deter
 ‘ my followers from any such thing, as I profess myself
 ‘ to be ’ their Lord and Master, so have I commanded
 ‘ them to *love* one another in a more especial manner.
 ‘ But if, instead thereof, any shall grow proud, high-
 ‘ minded, and beat or abuse their fellow-servants in
 ‘ my religious family, when I come to take an account
 ‘ of my household, he shall be cut asunder, and ap-
 ‘ pointed his portion among the unbelievers. Behold
 ‘ the recompence I appoint to imposing lordly persons,
 ‘ such as count others infidels; and, to make them such
 ‘ believers as themselves, will exercise violence to-
 ‘ wards them, and if they prevail not, will call for
 ‘ *fire* from *heaven* to *devour* them; and if heaven re-
 ‘ fuse to gratify their rage, will fall a beating and
 ‘ killing, and think, it may be, they do God good
 ‘ service too; but their lot shall be with unbelievers
 ‘ for ever.’

‘ Nay, I have so effectually provided against all
 ‘ mastery, that I expressly charged them, not to be many
 ‘ masters; for *one* was their master: I told them, the

² Mat. xiii. 37, 38, 39.

³ John xv. 12.

' greatest amongst them was to be *servant* to the rest,
 ' not to *impose* upon the rest: nay, that to be great in
 ' my kingdom, they must become as gentle and harm-
 ' less as *little children*, and such cannot *force* and *punish*
 ' in matters of religion. In fine, I strictly com-
 ' manded them to *love* one another, as I have loved
 ' *them*, who am ready to lay down my life for the
 ' ungodly, instead of taking away godly mens lives
 ' for opinions. And this is the great maxim of my
 ' holy religion,' " He that would be my disciple,
 " must (not crucify other men, but) take up his cross
 " and follow me, who am meek and lowly;" ' and
 ' such as endure to the end, shall find eternal rest to
 ' their souls: this is the power I use, and this is the
 ' power I give.'

How much this agrees with the language, doctrine,
 and example of Jesus Christ, the Son and Lamb of
 God, I shall leave them to consider that read and be-
 lieve scripture. But some, affected to present church-
 power, and desiring their ruin that conform not to her
 worship and discipline, will object, ' That Christ did
 ' give his church power to bind and loose, and bid
 ' any persons aggrieved tell the church.'

I grant it; but what binding was that? Was it, I
 pray, with *outward* chains and fetters, in nasty holes
 and dungeons? Nothing less? or was it that his church
 had that true *discerning* in her, and power with *him*,
 that what she bound, that is, *condemned*, or loosed, that
 is *remitted*, should stand so in God's sight, and Christ's
 account?

But tell the church; and what then? Observe Christ's
 extent in the punishment of the offender: " If the
 " offender will neither receive private admonition, nor
 " hear the church, then," says Christ, " let him be to
 " thee as an heathen," &c. Here is not one word of
fines, whips, stocks, pillories, gaols, and the like in-
 struments of cruelty, to punish the heretick: for the
 purport of his words seems to be no more than this;
 ' If any member of the church refuse thy private ex-
 ' hortation, and the church's admonition, look upon
 ' such

‘ such a person as obstinate and perverse ; have no more
 ‘ to do with him ; let him take his course ; thou hast
 ‘ done well, and the church is clear of him.’

Well, but say the church-fighters of our age, ‘ Did
 ‘ not St. Paul wish them cut off that troubled the
 ‘ church in his time ?’ Yes: but with what sword think
 you ? Such as Christ bid * Peter *put up*, or the “ Sword
 “ of the Spirit, which is the word of God ?” Give him
 leave to explain his own words ; “ For though we
 “ walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh ; for
 “ the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but
 “ mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong-
 “ holds, casting down imaginations, and every high
 “ thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of
 “ God, and bringing every thought into obedience to
 “ Christ.”

What think you of this ? Here are warfares, weapons,
 oppositions and conformity, and not only no external
 force about matters of religion used or countenanced,
 but the most express and pathetic exclusion and dis-
 claiming of any such thing that can be given.

It was this great apostle that asked that question,
 * “ Who art thou that judgest the servant of another ?
 “ To his own lord he standeth or falleth : but he shall
 “ stand ; for God is able to make him stand.” Can
 we think that imposition or persecution is able to an-
 swer him this question in the day of judgment ? Do we
 with reason deny it to the *papacy* ? with what reason
 then can we assure it to *ourselves* ? Let us remember
 who said, “ Not that we have dominion over your *faith*,
 “ but are helpers of your joy.” *Helpers*, then not
imposers nor *persecutors*. What joy can there be in that
 to the persecuted ? But if Paul had no such commis-
 sion or power over conscience, I would fain know by
 what authority more inferior ministers and Christians do
 claim and use it.

* Mat. xxvi. 52. Eph. vi. 12 to the 18. 2 Cor. x. 3, 4, 5.
 † Tim. i. 18. * Rom. xiv. 4.

The apostle ^b Peter is of the same mind; "Feed" says he, "the flock of God, not by *constraint*, &c. "neither as being *lords* over God's heritage." The heritage of God is free; they have but One Lord in and of their religion, Christ Jesus, and they are brethren.

The apostle ^c Paul says, "That where the Spirit of "the Lord is, there is liberty;" but where *coercion*, *fines*, and *gaols* are, there is *no* liberty. Is it to be supposed that men in these days are instructed by the Spirit of the Lord to destroy people in *this* world for their faith about the *other* world? That cannot possibly be; such mock at it. Again, says that apostle to the Christians of his time, ^d "You are called to liberty;" from what, I pray? "Sin and the ceremonies of the "law?" And shall the end of that call be the enthralling of conscience to human edicts in religion, yea, about mere ceremonies of religion, under the Gospel? This would make our case worse than the Jews, for their worship stood on divine authority; and if Christ came to make men free from them, and that those very ordinances are by the apostle called beggarly elements and a burdensome yoke, is it reasonable that we must be subject to the injunctions of men in the worship of God, that are not of equal authority with them?

The apostle yet informs us, ^e "For this end," says he, "Christ both died and rose again, that he might be "Lord both of the dead and living: but why dost thou "judge thy brother?" Than which nothing can more expressly oppose the imposition, excommunication, and persecution that are among us: it is as if he had said, ^f Christ is Lord of Christians; by what authority ^g dost thou pretend to judge his servants? Thou also ^h art but one of them: a brother at most. Thou hast ⁱ no dominion over their faith, nor hast thou commision to be lord over their consciences; it is Christ's ^j right, his purchase, he has paid for it: "for this

^b 1 Pet. v. 2, 3. Mat. xxiii. 8. ^c 2 Cor. iii. 7. ^d Gal. v. 23. ^e Rom. xiv. 9, 10.

“ end he both died and rose again, that he might be
 “ Lord of dead and living ;” ‘ that he might rescue
 ‘ them from the jaws of oppression, from those that
 ‘ usurp over their consciences, and make a prey of their
 ‘ souls.’ “ But why dost thou judge thy brother ?”
 If not *judge*, then not *persecute, plunder, beat, im-*
prison to death, our brethren ; that must needs follow.
 Come, let us Protestants look at home, and view our
 actions, if we are not the men.

In short, “ Let every man be fully persuaded in his
 “ own mind ; and if any thing be short, God will re-
 “ veal it.” let us but be patient. It was not *flesh*
 and *blood* that revealed *Christ* to *Peter* ; they are *Christ’s*
 words ; therefore let us leave off the consultation and
 weapons of flesh and blood, and trust *Christ* with his
 own kingdom : he hath said, that the “ gates of hell
 “ shall not prevail against it ;” and we cannot think
 that he would have us seek to hell’s gates to maintain
 it : and if it is not of this world, then not to be
 maintained by force and policy, which are the props
 of the kingdoms of this world. “ God,” the apostle
 tells us, “ has chosen the weak things of this world,
 “ to confound the mighty :” therefore he has not
 chosen the strength and power of this world, to sup-
 press conscientious people, that, as to human force,
 are justly accounted weakest and most destitute, in all
 ages, of defence.

I will here conclude my scripture-proofs with this
 exhortation, or injunction rather, of the apostle.
 “ Ye are bought with a price ; be not ye the servants
 “ of men.”[†] The subject here is not *human*, wherein
 human ordinances are to be obeyed ; that is not the
 question ; but *divine* ; and those that for fear or favour
 of men desert their principles, and betray their con-
 sciences, they renounce their Lord, deny him that
 bought them, and tread his blood, the price of their
 souls, under their feet : “ Ye are bought with a price ;”
 Christ has purchased you ; you are not your own, but

[†] Rom. xiv. 5. § 1 Cor. vii. 23.

his that bought you; therefore be not the *servants* of men, about God's things or Christ's kingdom; vail to no man's judgment, neither make man's determinations your rule of faith and worship. "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith he has made you free, and be not entangled again into bondage;^a for we are not come to that mountain that we cannot touch, to Sinai:¹" we are not now to be kept under, like school-boys or minors: that imposition might be useful then, which is a bondage now. Moses was God's servant, and faithful; he saw, heard, and went up to the mount for the people; but Christians are come to *mount Zion*, to *Jerusalem*, the mother of *peace* and *freedom*. Much then depended upon the integrity of Moses; and yet God sent for the people near the mount, that they might *see* his glory; and wrought wonders and miracles to engage their faith, and vindicate the integrity of Moses his servant (as the 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 chapters of Numbers declare) and which none now can pretend to vouch the exercise of their authority: I say it pleased God then to appear by those ways; but now the *law* is brought home to every man's *heart*, and every one shall know God for *himself*, from the least to the greatest. "My sheep," says Christ, "hear my voice." And let us remember that there is no possibility of deception there, where there is no necessity of trusting. In fine, "Ye are bought with a price, be not ye the servants of men. One is Lord, even Christ, and ye are brethren."²

But methinks I hear a stout objection, and it is this: 'At this rate you will overthrow all church-discipline, all censure of errors, if no man or men can determine.' My answer is ready and short: no scripture church-discipline is hereby oppugned or weakened: let not the sentence end in violence upon the conscience unconvinced: let who will expound or determine, so it be according to true church-discipline, which can be exercised on them only, who have

^a Gal. v. ¹ Heb. xii. ² Heb. 8. John x. Mark xvi.

willingly joined themselves in that covenant of union, and which proceeds only to a separation from the rest, a disavowing or disowning; and that only in case of falling from principles or practices once received, or about known trespasses: but never to any corporal or pecuniary punishment; the two arms of Antichrist, or rather of the great *beast* which carries the *wbare*.

But let us observe what sort of church-government the apostle recommends. "Avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and striving about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain: a man that is an heretick, after the first and second admonition, reject, knowing that he that is such, is *subverted*, and sinneth, being condemned of (or *in*) himself;"¹ or self-condemned.

It is very remarkable, first, that this great apostle, instead of exhorting Titus to stand upon niceties, and sacrifice mens natural comforts and enjoyments for opinions of religion, enjoins him to shun disputes about them; leaving the people to their own thoughts and apprehensions in those matters, as reputed the loss of peace, in striving, greater than the gain that could arise from such an unity and conformity: which exactly agrees with another passage of his; "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."² He did not say you shall be fined, pillaged, excommunicated, and flung into prison, if ye be not of our mind.

2dly, That in the apostle's definition, an *heretick* is a *self-condemned* person, one conscious to himself of error, and obstinacy in it; but that are not conscientious Dissenters; for many ten thousands in this nation act as they believe, and dissent from the national religion purely upon a principle of conscience to Almighty God; and would heartily conform, if they could do it upon conviction, or with any satisfaction

¹ 1 Tim. iv, v, vi. ² Tim. ii. 23. Tit. iii. 9. ³ Phil. iii. 15.

to their own minds : and with men of any tenderness, or common sense, their continual great sufferings in person and estate, and their patience under them, are a demonstration, or there can be none in the world, that conscience, and not humour or interest, is at bottom.

Nor can their persecutors disprove them, unless they could search hearts ; and that is a little too far for a fallible spirit to reach, and an infallible one they deny. So that the apostle makes not the heretick to lie upon the side of *mis-believing*, or not coming up to *his* degree of faith and knowledge, but upon the side of wilfully, turbulently, obstinately, and self-condemnedly, maintaining things inconsistent with the faith, peace, and prosperity of the church.

Granting us then not to be obstinate and self-condemned Dissenters, (and you cannot reasonably refuse it us) how do you prove us erroneous in the other part? All parties plead scripture, and that for the most opposite principles. ‘The scripture,’ you say, ‘cannot determine the sense of *itself*; it must have an interpreter:’ if so, he must either be *fallible*, or *infallible*: if the first, we are worse than before; for men are apt to be no less confident, and yet are still upon as uncertain grounds: if the last, this must either be an *external*, or an *internal* judge: if an *external*, you know where you are, without pointing; for there stands nothing between you and Popery in that principle: if an *internal* judge, either it is *ourselves*, or the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us: not ourselves, for then *the rule* would be *the thing ruled*, which cannot be: and if it be the Spirit of Christ Jesus, (and the apostle tells us, “That unless we have the Spirit, we are none of Christ’s,”^a) then is the neck of imposition broken: and what hast thou to do to judge me? Let me stand or fall to my own Master: and upon this foot went Luther, Zuinglius, Calvin, Melancthon, Beza, Bullinger, Zanchius, abroad; and Tindal,

^a Rom. viii.

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Barns, Cranmer, Ridley, Hooper, Jewel, Bradford, Philpot, Sanders, Rogers, &c. at home; and as good men, and constant martyrs, in ages before them.

But suppose conscientious Dissenters as ill men as the apostle describes an heretick to be; what is the punishment? This is close to the point; stand it.

3dly. "A man that is an heretick, after the first and second admonition, reject;" that is, deny his communion; declare he is none of you, condemn his proceedings by a publick censure from among yourselves. What more can be strained, by the fiercest prosecutors of men for religion, out of these words?

But will we be governed by the rules of holy writ? Have we any true veneration for the exhortations and injunctions therein? Then let us soberly consider, what the apostle Paul advises and recommends to his beloved Timothy upon the present occasion, and I dare promise an end to contest and persecution for religion. "Flee youthful lusts; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart; but foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." 2 Tim. ii. 22, 23, 24, 25.

There is such a depth of wisdom lodged in this one passage, that I find difficulty to express myself upon it, and yet I shall with pleasure endeavour it. Here is both faith and government, religion and duty, all that becomes us towards God, our brethren, our neighbour, ourselves, yea, our opposers and enemies.

"Flee youthful lusts:" that is, avoid sin, turn away from every appearance of evil, flee the temptation as soon as thou seest it, lest it ensnare thee; but follow righteousness, charity, and peace; seek and love holiness, and there will be charity and peace to thyself, and in thee, to all men. Rom. xiv. 17. 1 Cor, iv.

20. "For the kingdom of God stands in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;" not in contest about words, nor in maintaining foolish and unlearned questions, which reach not the soul, nor carry any force upon our affections, nor learn men to be better, to have more piety, virtue, goodness; but are mere notions and speculations, that have no influence upon holy living, or tendency to the regimen of our passions: such questions as the curiosity or wantonness of mens wit or restless fancy are apt to start, under pretence of divine truth, and sublime mysteries: these niceties, conceits, and imaginations of men, (not bottomed on the revelation of the eternal Spirit, but human apprehension and tradition) such questions avoid, meddle not with them; but, next to youthful lusts, flee them by all means; for they draw to strife, to heats, animosities, envy, hatred, and persecution, which unbecome the man of God; for says this apostle, "He must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient:" let his rank, notion, opinion, or faith be what it will, he must not be fierce, nor censorious, much less should he persecute, or excite Cæsar to do it for him; no such matter: "he must be apt to teach," and inform the ignorant; and in case it succeed not, he ought not to be outrageous, or go about to whip and club it into him: "he must be patient;" that is, he must not think to force and bend things to his own will or time, but commit his honest endeavours to God's blessing, "that can raise, of the stones of the streets, children unto Abraham." This sort of man will serve God against his will, instead of submitting his will to God's. There is no evil he will stick at to serve God his way; he will plunder and kill for God's sake, and meritoriously send all his passions upon the errands of his ignorant zeal; and the trophies that it loves, are the spoils and havock it makes upon mankind; the most unnatural and dangerous temper in the world. Our blessed Lord, who knew what was in man, has left us his remark upon it, Luke ix. 55.

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The want of this patience has been the undoing of all.

But some will object, 'O! but it is not ignorance! it is obstinacy and opposition.' Hardly judged, my friend! But admit it were so, here is a receipt for the malady, and that of the apostle's prescribing. Observe the following words: "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth." Then not fining, plundering, beating, stocking, imprisoning, banishing and killing, even opposers themselves, for religion; unless there be a way of doing these things with gentleness, patience, and meekness; which I confess I think nobody ever heard of.

But as the apostle gives Timothy another method than is now used by the sons of violence for reclaiming opposers, so the reason of the counsel makes all other ways unlawful, viz. "If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth." I would hereupon enter the lists with a persecutor: is repentance in my own power; or is it in thine to give me? The apostle says neither: it is God's gift alone; "If God peradventure will give them repentance," &c. Since repentance then is in the case, and that God alone can give it, of what use are violent courses, which never beget repentance? On the contrary, they have rarely failed to raise prejudice, and beget hardness in the sufferer, and pity in the beholder.

But was this the evangelical rule and practice? Yes, that it was. O then! whence comes imposition, force, cruelty, spoil of goods, imprisonments, knockings, beatings, bruifings, stockings, whippings, and spilling of blood for religion? What church is that whose officers are so far from clothing the naked, that they strip the clothed; from feeding the hungry, that they take their bread from them; and those, some of them, poor widows and helpless orphans? And so remote are they from visiting the sick and imprisoned, that they drag

drag away their beds from under them, and cast their persons into prison, for conscience sake. Nay, some have been so unnatural, that they haled away an honest man from a meeting to gaol at Reading, a while since, not permitting him to take leave of his poor wife, newly delivered, and in a dying condition, though she much desired it, and lived but just by the meeting from whence they took him; with an hundred more things, that I forbear being particular in, because I would not be thought to provoke, when I aim only at Christian reproof and amendment. In fine, What are they that for no other cause pass such dreadful excommunications, as render the excommunicants little better than outlawed persons, subjecting their civil and natural rights to their pride, passion, interest, or revenge, unless they will purchase their enjoyment at the dear rate of giving their own consciences the lie? For what else can be the consequence of conforming to that I do not believe? Is not this to destroy sincere men, and make and save hypocrites? When it is but too palpable that vice reigns without controul, and few of these busy men, these conscience-hunters, give themselves the thought of correcting manners, defending virtue, or suppressing vice.

O that such as are concerned would soberly consider if any thing be so scandalous to true religion as force! who can think that evidence good that is extorted? And what a church is that which is made up of such profelytes, or that employs such means to make them? It is base coin that needs imposition to make it current, but true metal passeth for its own intrinsic value. O where is that Christian meekness, patience, and forbearance! how many have been ruined, that were never exhorted, and excommunicated before they were once admonished? This is not to serve God, but worldly interest: it is quite contrary to Christ's counsel and his followers practice. He came to save, and not to destroy nature, to magnify his grace. You pretend, most of you, to dislike J. Calvin's unconditional reprobation, yet practise it: if you say, 'No

'conformity is your condition;' I answer, it is as unreasonable to require an impossibility, as cruel to damn men for not doing it: for, as you say, *his* doctrine makes God to command them to repent, that *cannot* repent; and yet damn them if they repent *not*: so you enjoin men to relinquish their present faith and worship, and conform to *yours*, which is not in their power to do, yet damn them, in a temporal respect, if they refuse it: for you make such an unavoidable dissent punishable with the destruction of mens liberties and estates. You had better leave off valuing yourselves upon the mercy and well-naturedness of that tenet of the universal love of God to mankind, 'till you love more than yourselves, and abominate that the church of England should be the elect to the civil government, and all others as reprobates, since you pretend to detest the like injustice in John Calvin's notion of election and reprobation.

And the truth of it is, this helps on atheism, as much as any enormity in the land; when witty men are not willing to take pains to examine after the truth and excellency in religion, so that people, that call themselves Christ's ministers and the apostles successors and followers, affect and seek government, and yet twice deny it, when they go to receive it: that some others grow lordly, live voluptuously, and watch after the biggest preferments, not being excited by most service for God, but earthly power and wealth for themselves; and that, at the same time, they persecute men of more self-denial, for matters of opinion about faith and worship towards God; so that no conformity to the church, no protection from the state. Which, among Protestants, is so much the more unreasonable; first, because they, by these courses, implicitly own and assume the highest infallibility and perfection, and yet deny any such thing. For it supposes that nothing is truer, nothing perfecter; or else they both persecute men to embrace a fallible and imperfect religion, and with cruel penalties provide against any thing more true or infallible; which is the

the greatest injury to the world that can be, inasmuch as it is a plain endeavour to frustrate all those excellent prophecies and gracious promises God hath given, and the holy scriptures declare of the latter days. But, Secondly, It exposes Protestants to the lash and scorn of the Papist unavoidably; for, at this rate, you that, with reason, think it ignorance and irreligion in the Papist to imagine himself discharged in God's account, by believing only as the church believes, conceive yourselves, at the same time, justified by believing only as a few of your own doctors, or else as the state believes. But if the church cannot use force in religion, because she cannot infallibly determine to the conscience without conviction, much less ought a few doctors, or the civil authority, to use force where they can much less judge. Unless you would make them the civil executioners of your displeasure, who have no civil power to give them such commission; and, to be sure, no ecclesiastical authority to exercise any force or violence about religion. For the Papist, judging by his principles, punishes them that believe not as the church believes, though *against scripture*; but the Protestant, who teaches every one to believe the scripture, though *against church-authority*, persecutes, against his own principles, even them that in any particular so believe, as he, in general, teaches them to believe. This is hard, but true, upon the Protestant; for what is plainer than that he afflicts those, that, according to his own doctrine, believe and honour holy scripture, but against it will receive no human interpretation. Them, I say, who interpret scripture to themselves, which, by his position, none but they to themselves can interpret; them, that use the scripture no otherwise, by his own doctrine, to their edification, than he himself uses it to their punishing; and so those whom his doctrine acknowledges true believers, his discipline persecutes as hereticks.

To sum up all at this time; if we must believe as **Cæsar** appoints, why not then as the church believes?

But

But if not as either, without *convincement*, pray how can force be lawful? Let me recommend one book to you, that of right claims a place with you, and that is, 'Bishop Taylor's, of Liberty of Prophecy;' never answered, that I have heard of, and I have reason to believe never will be attempted; for indeed it is unanswerable. That was the judgment of a doctor under persecution; I could be glad if it might be the practice of bishops in their power: I may say the same of J. Tillotson's Sober and Seasonable Discourse before the Commons on the fifth of November. And, the truth is, I am the more earnest with you at this time, because I find that God daily shews us he has great goodwill to poor England. O why should we drive him from us, by our disobedience to him, and our severities to one another! he has lately put a prize into our hands, and continues to pour his favours upon us: all depends upon a sincere reformation, and our perseverance therein.

To give testimony of this, let us with our whole hearts turn to God, and keep his holy law; and let us but be jealous of his glory, by punishing vice, and cherishing virtue, and we may assure ourselves he will interest himself in our safety. Of this we cannot doubt; for he who has begun to do it under our disobedience, will not desert us in our sincere repentance. And as this is our duty to God, without which we vainly hope for deliverance, so is there a duty we owe to one another, that is the next requisite to our preservation.

Let, therefore, all asperities be avoided, nick-names forbidden, and the oppressed Protestant delivered. Revive the noble principle of *Liberty of Conscience*, on which the reformation rose: for in vain do we hope to be delivered from Papists, 'till we deliver ourselves from popery. This coercion upon conscience, and persecution for religion, are that part of popery which is most justly hated and feared: and if we either fear or hate popery for its cruelty, shall we *practise* the cruelty we fear or hate it for? God forbid! no, not
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on those that have used it to us. This were the way to be deserted of God, and left to their cruelty. The same sins will ever fix the same odium, and find the same punishment, wherever they are; yea greater, by how much Protestants pretend to better things: if they burnt your ancestors, do not you strip and starve your brethren: remember the many thousands now persecuted in this kingdom, for the sake of their tender and very peaceable consciences; husbands are unlawfully separated from their wives, and parents from their children; their corn, cattle, and household-stuff swept away, perhaps at the instigation of some lewd and indigent informer, or to please the malice of an ill-disposed neighbour. In the mean time, many, once sufficient, are exposed to charity; the fruits of their honest labour and bread of their poor helpless children being now made the forfeiture of their conscience.

Friends and countrymen, there is a deep doctrine in this providence; examine it well, that you may reap the benefit of it: and, among the rest, let me tell you, this is not the least part of it, that God is shewing *you* mercy, that *you* may shew mercy, and has awakened you at the brink of the pit, that you may help your brethren out of it; aye, your enemies. Be wise and considerate: it will be much your own fault if you are not happy. And truly I have no manner of scruple but God will preserve us, if we will not cast away ourselves. For our own sins and folly can only direct the hand that seeks to hit and hurt us; and shall we make it successful to our own ruin? Let us therefore turn away from all impiety; let the magistracy discourage and punish it; and let us forbear and love one another. If we begin with God, we shall end with God, and that is with *success*: Else, be assured, we shall only inherit the wind of our own invention, and be deserted of him then, when we shall most want him.

In short, reverence the present providence; and though your lives have not deserved it, let them now
be

be grateful, and not abuse it. Pursue your advantages thoroughly, but wisely; be as temperate as zealous; and to your enemies as generous as just. Insult not over ill men for the sake of their ill principles, but pity their unhappiness, whilst you abhor the cause of it: let them see, that you had rather inform than destroy them, and that you take more pleasure in their conversion, than your own revenge. This will be the greatest confutation upon them, that they be taught the goodness of your religion by the mildness of it; and, by its mercy, the cruelty of their own. The Indian Atabaliba rejected the Romish baptism, because of the Spanish tyranny; whence it was usual with those poor Americans to desire they might *not* go to heaven if the *Spaniards* went thither. I know there are little arts used to prevent Protestant union, and that in a Protestant guise: and it is a trick, not of yesterday, to put one party of Protestants upon devouring four or five, that both the Protestant church may have the odium of eating or devouring her own children, and that *another* interest, behind the hangings, may find the more easy and creditable accession to the chair: it is the men of this strain, though under disguise, that now seek to distract you; and to effect it the better, old stories must be had up, acts of oblivion violated, the dead disturbed, their tombs rifled, and they haled out of their graves to receive a new sentence: that condemning the living of that interest by the dead, they might be deserted of those, that, to say true, cannot be long safe without them.

If any thing sober and judicious be proposed for allaying asperities, accommodating differences, and securing to prince and people a just and legal union of interest, as our government requires, we must presently be told of 41, and 42; as if there were a sort of necromancy in the *numbers*, or that the naming of those *figures* (long since made cyphers, by an act of oblivion) had power enough to lay the active and generous spirits of our times: but they find themselves mistaken in their black art, and that things, as well as times,

times, are changed; the mask is off, and he that runs may read, *res nolunt malè administrari*.

Men, in their pleas and endeavours for truth, justice, and sincere religion, will not be overborne or staggered by such stale and trifling reflections, rarely used of late, but to palliate wretched designs, or discredit good ones with men of weak judgment, though perhaps of loyal principles.

I beseech you let us not be unskilful in these tricks, that we may not be mistaken or abused by them: I cannot tell a time in which the minds of all sorts of Protestants have been more powerfully and unanimously engaged to endeavour a good understanding between the king and people. And as I am sure it was never more needed, so let me say, no age hath put a richer prize into the hands of men, or yielded a fairer occasion, to fix an happy and lasting union upon: in order to which, let me prevail with you that we may study to improve this great principle as the necessary means to it, viz. ‘That God’s providence, and our own constitution, have made the interest of prince and people *one*; and that their peace and greatness lie in a most industrious and impartial prosecution of it.’

Those that teach other doctrine, as that the ‘Prince hath an interest *apart* from the good and safety of the people,’ are the sole men that get by it; and therefore find themselves obliged to study their misunderstanding, because they only are disappointed and infecured by their union.

Experience truly tells us, that such persons have another interest than that which leads to a common good, and are often but too artificial in interesting princes in the success of it: but prudent and generous princes have ever seen that it is neither safe nor just; and that no kingdom can be governed with true glory and success, but there where the interest of the *governor* is one with that of the *governed*, and where there is the strictest care to steer all transactions of state by the fundamentals, or the first and great principles, of their

their own constitution: especially since swerving from them hath always made way for confusion and misery in government. Our own stories are almost everywhere vexed by this neglect; and those of our neighbours must submit to the same truth.

To conclude, and sum up the whole discourse: if you will both cure present, and prevent future grievances, it will greatly behove you to take a most deliberate and unbiassed view of the present state of things, with their proper causes and tendencies. Let us confront our *ecclesiastical* matters with the plain text and letter of holy scripture: this is *Protestant*: and let us compare our *civil* transactions with the *ancient laws* and *statutes* of the realm: this is *English*. And I do humbly and heartily beseech Almighty God, that he would so dispose the hearts of prince and people, as that firm foundations may be now laid for a just and lasting tranquillity to these nations: and, believe me if you please, unless they are *just* and *equal*, they cannot *last*. Time will prove it, because it always has, and that God is unchangeable in the order and justice of his providence. And since righteousness exalts a nation, and that sin is the shame of any people; therefore will I close with David's prayer, Psal. vii. 9. "O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, " but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth " the hearts and the reins."

A N

A P P E N D I X

O F T H E

C A U S E S and C U R E

O F

P E R S E C U T I O N.

Impute all perfecution for religion to these seven ensuing causes; though, properly speaking, there is but one original cause of this evil, and that is the **DEVIL**; as there is but one original cause of good, and that is **GOD**.

I. The first cause of perfecution is this, ' That the authors and users of it have little or no religion at heart: ' they are not subject to the ground and first cause of true religion in their own souls; for it is the part of true religion to *bumble* the mind, *break* the heart, and *soften* the affection. It was God himself that said, ° " Unto this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at my word: " not one that breaks heads, and plunders goods, for religion. " Blessed are they that mourn," said Christ, " they shall be comforted: " But not those that sell *Joseph*, and make merry. " Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God: " Those that are low in their own eyes; not such as devour and damn all but themselves. " Blessed are the

° *Isaiah* lxi. 2.

" meek,

“ meek, for they shall inherit the earth:” such as are gentle, and ready to help, and not tyrannize over neighbours. “ Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy:” What then shall become of those that are cruel, under pretence of doing it for God’s sake? “ Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God:” then disturbers and destroyers of their peaceable neighbours shall not be called so. “ Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled:” but not those that hunger and thirst after our corn and cattle, houses and land, for conscience sake. “ And blessed are you,” says Christ, “ when men shall revile and persecute you,” &c. Then not those that revile and persecute others that are sober and harmless: not one blessing to the conscience-hunting doctrine and practice of him, that devours the widow and orphans for religion. Were men inwardly and truly religious, they would have so low an opinion of themselves, so tender a regard to mankind, so great an awe of Almighty God, as that none of these froward passions would have any sway with them. But the mischief is, *unmortified passions* pretend to religion; a proud, impatient, arrogant mind would promote it; than which, nothing of man is more remote from it; mistaking the very nature and end of Christ’s peaceable religion; which, if the apostle James says true,^p is “ to visit the fatherless and widow, and keep ourselves unspotted of the world.” But, on the contrary, they turn widow and fatherless out of house and home, and spot themselves with the cruelty and injustice of usurping their poor patrimony, the bread of their lives, and sustenance of their natures: such men as these are void of natural affection; their religion has no bowels, or they are without mercy in the profession of it; which is the reverse of true religion, that makes us “ love enemies, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use

^p James i. 27.

“ us.”

“ us.” And so much stronger, in souls truly religious, is the power of love to mankind than any self-revenging passion, that, from an humble and serious reflection upon the mercies and goodness of God to them, they do not only suppress any rising of heart against their persecutors (much more against peaceable Dissenters) but, with much softness and charity, commiserate their ignorance and anger; offering to inform them, and praying that they may be forgiven. This is to be *religious*; and therefore those that *persecute* for religion any ways, are *irreligious*.

II. The next cause of persecution, is the gross but general mistake which people are under concerning the nature of the church and kingdom of Christ: for the lamentable worldliness of mens minds hath put them upon those carnal constructions which have made way for all the external coercion and violence, used by bad and suffered by good men, on the score of religion, from the beginning. And no wonder if ordinary persons stumble upon this construction, when the disciples of Jesus shewed themselves so ill-read in the mysteries of his kingdom, that after all the intimacy they had had with him, they refrained not to ask; “ When shall the kingdom be restored to Israel?” They looked abroad, had a *worldly* idea in their minds; *Jews-like*, they waited for *external* deliverance from the power of the *Romans*, rather than an *internal* salvation from the dominion of *Satan*; and interpreted those words to *worldly* loss and *freedom*, which did relate to the loss and redemption of the *soul*: but Jesus taught them better things; yet so, as not to deny or flatly discourage and rebuke them; for that, though true, might have been more at that time, than they could have borne; therefore he winds off with them upon the *time* and the *season* of the thing; knowing that the time was at hand, that they should be better taught and satisfied of the nature of his kingdom, unto which he referred them. “ When the

¹ Mat. v. 44.

210 AN ADDRESS TO PROTESTANTS.

“ Spirit of Truth comes, it shall lead you into all
“ truth,” &c.

That the kingdom of Christ is not of *this* world, has been before observed; and the reason is so great, that all men of common sense must allow it, upon Christ's principle and argument; “ for,” says he, “ then would my servants *fight* for me:” truly implying, because the kingdoms of this world are evidently set up and maintained by worldly force, and that he will have no worldly force used in the business of his kingdom, that therefore it is not of this world. Consequently, those that attempt to set up his kingdom by worldly force, or make that their pretence to use it, are none of his servants: they are truly but men of this world; such as seek an earthly, and not an heavenly crown and kingdom: themselves, and not Christ Jesus. Where, by the way, let me observe, that though the Jews, to engage Pilate the more easily to their side, impeached Christ of being an enemy to Cæsar, *they* were enemies, and *he* appeared a *friend* to Cæsar; for he came to reform the *lives* of men, to make them better *subjects*; to *obey* Cæsar, not for *fear*, but for *conscience*-sake: a way to make Cæsar's province both easy and safe. But the Jews would have had him Cæsar's enemy; one that would have forcibly rescued them from Cæsar's power: that was what they waited for; a *captain-general* to head the revolt; and, with an high hand, to overbear and captive *Cæsar*, as *he* had done *them*: and it is more than probable, that this appearance being after quite another manner, and to another end, than they expected, they therefore rejected him; their hearts being set upon the desire of *worldly* empire.

But to return: Christ told his disciples, that he had
“ *drawn them out* of the world:” how, pray? Not
“ *to die*, or live *bodily* in it? No such matter: but
“ *toosen* or singled them from the *nature, spirit,*
“ *utility,* and *pomp* of this world. How persons,

• John xvi. 13. • John xviii. 36.

so qualified, can make a *worldly* church or kingdom, unless they desert Christ's doctrine, is past my skill to tell. So that the capacity that Christians stand in to Christ is *spiritual*, and not worldly or carnal: and for that reason, not carnal or worldly, but *spiritual* methods and weapons only, are to be used to inform or reclaim such as are ignorant or disobedient. And if we will give ancient story credit, we shall find that worldly weapons were never employed by the Christian church till she became *worldly*, and so ceased to be truly *Christian*.

But why should I say the *church*? The most abused word in the world! It is her *leaders* have taught her to err; and that of believing as the *church* believes, is so far from being true in point of fact, as well as reason, that the church *herself* has long believed as the *clergy*, that is, the *priest*, believed, ever since that sort of men have practised a distinction from, and superiority upon, the laity. He that will peruse the ecclesiastical story, delivered us by Eusebius Pamphilus, Socrates Scholasticus, Evagrius, Ruffinus, Sozomen, and more especially the councils, B. Usher, aye, and Baronius *himself*, will find but too many and sad instances of the truth of this.

In short, people apprehending the church and kingdom of Christ to be *visible* and *worldly*, like other societies and governments, have thought it not only to be lawful, but necessary, to use the arts and force of *this* world to support his church and kingdom; especially since the interest of religion hath been incorporated with that of the *civil magistrate*: for from that time he hath been made *custos utriusque tabulae*; and such as offend, though about church-matters, have been reputed transgressors against the state, and consequently the state interested in punishing the offence. Whereas had Christians remained in their primitive simplicity and purity, in the self-denying, patient, and suffering doctrine of Christ: Christianity had stood in *holy living*, and not in *worldly regiment*; and its compulsion would have been *love*, its arms *reason* and truth,

and its utmost rigour, even to obstinate and apostates, but renouncing of their communion that not till much forbearance and many Christian labours had been used to reclaim them.

To sum up all: the kingdoms of this world are in outward, bodily and civil matters; and the laws and power of men reach and are effectual to the kingdom and church of Christ, that is to the world, stands not in "*bodily exertions*" (as the apostle says, "profits little") nor in *places*, but in *faith*, and that worship which we do is in "spirit and in truth." To this compulsion can bring or force men; it is the power of that King of righteousness whose law is in the minds and souls of the just; and it is the law of his own free Spirit, which, like the wind, "bloweth where it listeth." And as we are by the Spirit of regeneration, no man can be made a member of Christ's church or kingdom, and less so neither is it in the power of man to convert it; and consequently all worldly force to make men members of Christ's church and kingdom, is as ineffectual as unnatural. I could

large upon this point, for it is very fruitful in much the cause of perdition, that if there were another to be considered, this were enough upon due consideration must needs be in man's judgment and experience. I have sense of memory of the words of Eton upon

' When our Lord Jesus Christ in the Acts
' rection, was speaking to his disciples
' kingdom of God is not of this world
' this question
' "unto Israel
' ignorance
' like unto
' ing they
' to the c

‘ them up, *Non est vestrum*; your question is nothing
 ‘ to the purpose; the kingdom that I have spoken of
 ‘ is another manner of kingdom than you conceive.
 ‘ Sixteen hundred years, *Et quod excurrit*, hath the
 ‘ gospel been preached unto the world, and is this
 ‘ stain spunged out yet? I doubt it. Whence arise
 ‘ those novel and late disputes, *de notis ecclesiæ*, of the
 ‘ notes and *visibility* of the church? Is it not from
 ‘ hence, they of Rome take the world and the church
 ‘ to be like *Mercury* and *Sofia* in *Plautus* his comedies,
 ‘ so like one another, that one of them must wear a
 ‘ *toy* in his cap, that so the spectators might distinguish
 ‘ them. Whence comes it, that they stand so much
 ‘ upon *state* and *ceremony* in the church? Is it not
 ‘ from hence, that they think the church must come
 ‘ in like *Agrippa* and *Bernice* in the *Acts*, *μετὰ*
 ‘ *πολλῆς φαντασίας*, as *St. Luke* speaks, with a great deal of
 ‘ *pomp*, and *train*, and *show*, and *vanity*? And that the
 ‘ service of God doth necessarily require this noise
 ‘ and tumult of outward state and ceremony? Whence
 ‘ comes it, that we are at our wits end, when we see
 ‘ persecution, and sword, and fire, to rage against the
 ‘ true professors of the gospel? Is it not because, as
 ‘ these bring ruin and desolation upon the kingdoms
 ‘ of the world, so we suppose they work no other ef-
 ‘ fect in the kingdom of Christ? All these conceits,
 ‘ and many more of the like nature, spring out of no
 ‘ other fountain than that old inveterate error, which
 ‘ is so hardly wiped out of our hearts, that the state
 ‘ of the church and kingdom of Christ, doth hold
 ‘ some proportion, some likeness, with the state and
 ‘ managing of *temporal* kingdoms. Wherefore to
 ‘ pluck out of our hearts, *opinionem tam infitam, tam*
 ‘ *vetustam*, a conceit so ancient, so deeply rooted in
 ‘ us, our Saviour spake most excellently, most perti-
 ‘ nently, and most fully, when he tells us that his
 ‘ church, that his *kingdom* is not of *this world*.²

² John xviii. 36.

‘ In which words of his, there is contained the true
 ‘ art of discovering and knowing the true nature and
 ‘ essence of the church. For as they which make *sta-*
 ‘ *tues*, cut and pare away all superfluities of the mat-
 ‘ ter upon which they work; so our Saviour, to shew
 ‘ us the true proportion and features of the *church*,
 ‘ prunes away the *world*, and all superfluous excres-
 ‘ cences, and sends her to be seen, as he did our first
 ‘ parents in paradise, *stark-naked*: as those elders in
 ‘ the apocryphal story of Susanna, when they would
 ‘ see her beauty, commanded to take off her mask; so
 ‘ he that longs to see the beauty of the church, must
 ‘ pull off that mask of the *world*, and outward shew.
 ‘ For as Juda, in the book of Genesis, when Thamar
 ‘ sat veiled by the way-side, knew not his daughter
 ‘ from an whore; so whilst the church, the daughter
 ‘ and spouse of Christ, sits veiled with the *world*, and
 ‘ *pomp* and *shew*, it will be an hard matter to discern
 ‘ her from an harlot. But yet farther, to make the
 ‘ difference betwixt these kingdoms the more plainly
 ‘ to appear, and so better to fix in your memories, I
 ‘ will briefly touch some of those heads, in which
 ‘ they are most notoriously differenced.

‘ The first head wherein the difference is seen, are
 ‘ the persons and subjects of this kingdom: for as
 ‘ the kingdom of Christ is not of *this* world, so the
 ‘ subjects of this kingdom are men of *another* world,
 ‘ and not of this. Every one of us bears a double
 ‘ person, and accordingly is the subject of a double
 ‘ kingdom: the Holy Ghost, by the Psalmist, divides
 ‘ heaven and earth betwixt God and man, and tells
 ‘ us, as for God, “ He is in heaven; but the earth
 ‘ has he given to the children of men:” ‘ so hath the
 ‘ same Spirit, by the apostle St. Paul, divided every
 ‘ one of our persons into heaven and earth, into an
 ‘ outward and earthly man, and into an inward and
 ‘ heavenly man: this *earth*, that is, this body of clay,
 ‘ hath he given to the *sons of men*, to the *princes* under
 ‘ whose government we live; but *heaven*, that is, the
 ‘ *inward* and *spiritual man*, hath he reserved unto him-
 ‘ self;

‘ self: they can restrain the *outward man*, and moderate our *outward actions*, by edicts and laws; they can tie our hands and our tongues; *illâ se jactet in aulâ Æolus*: thus far they can go; and when they are gone thus far, they can go no farther: but to rule the *inward man* in our *hearts* and *souls*, to set up an impartial throne in our *understandings* and *wills*, this part of our government belongs to *God* and to *Christ*: these are the subjects, this the government, of his kingdom. Men may be kings of *earth* and *bodies*; but Christ alone is the King of *spirits* and *souls*. Yet this *inward* government hath influence upon our *outward* actions: for the authority of kings over our outward man is not so absolute, but that it suffers a great restraint; it must stretch no farther than the Prince of our *inward* man pleases: for if secular princes stretch out the skirts of their authority to command aught by which our *souls* are prejudiced, the King of souls hath in this case given us a greater command, “ That we rather obey *God* than *men*.”

III. A third great cause of persecution for religion is this, ‘ That men make *too many* things necessary to be believed to salvation and communion.’ Persecution entered with *creed-making*: for it so falls out, that those who distinguish the tree in the bulk, cannot with the like ease discern every branch or leaf that grows upon it: and to run out the necessary articles of faith to every good or true thing that the wit of man may deduce from the text, and so too, as that I ought to have a *distinct* idea or apprehension of every one of them, and must run them over in my mind, as a child would con a lesson by heart, of which I must not miss a tittle upon my salvation; this I think to be a temptation upon men to fall into dispute and division: and then we are taught, by long experience, that he that has most power will oppress his opinion that is weaker; whence comes persecution. This certainly puts unity and peace too much upon the hazard. *Mary’s* choice therefore was not of *many* things, but

the *one* thing necessary, as Christ, the Lord of the *true* divinity, terms it, Luke x. 42. And pray what was this one needful thing, but Christ Jesus *himself*, and her faith, love and obedience *in* and *to* him? Here is no perplexed creed to subscribe, no *system* of divinity to charge the head with: this *one* needful thing was Mary's choice and blessing: may it be ours! and then I should hope a quick end to controversies, and consequently to persecutions.

IV. Another cause of persecution, is 'The prejudice of education, and that bias tradition gives to those men, who have not made their religion the religion of their *judgment*:' for such will forbid all the *inquiry* which might question the weakness or falsehood of their religion, and had rather be deceived in an honourable descent, than be so uncivil to the memory of their ancestors as to seek the truth; which found, must reprove the ignorance of their ages: of this, the vainest of all honours! they are extremely careful; and at the very mention of any thing, to them *new*, though as old as *truth*, and older than *this* world, are easily urged into a tempest, and are not appeased but by a *sacrifice*. This ignorance, and want of inquiry, helps on persecution.

V. Another reason, and that no small one, is 'self-love, and impatience of men under contradiction,' be it of ignorance, that they are angry with what they cannot refute, or out of private interest, it matters not: *their* opinion must reign alone; they are tenacious of their *own* sense, and cannot endure to have it questioned, be there never so much reason for it. Men of their passions are yet to learn that they are ignorant of *religion*, by the want they have of *mortification*; such persons can easily let go their hold on charity, to lay violent hands upon their opposers: if they have power, they rarely fail to use it so; not remembering, that when they absolved themselves from the tie of *love*, *meekness*, and *patience*, they abandoned true religion, and contended not for the faith
once

once delivered to the fairs, which stood *therein*, but for mere *words*.

It is here that proud flesh, and a capricious head, disputes for religion, and not an humble heart and a divine frame of spirit. Men that are *angry* for God, *passionate* for Christ, that can call *names* for religion, and sling *stones* for faith, may tell us they are Christians if they will, but nobody would know them to be such by their *fruits*; to be sure they are no Christians of Christ's making.

I would to God that the disputants of our time did but calmly weigh the irreligiousness of their own heats for religion, and see if what they contend for will quit the cost, will countervail the charge of departing from charity, and making a sacrifice of peace, to gain their point. Upon so seasonable a reflection I am confident they would find that they rather shew their love to *opinion* than truth, and seek *victory* more than concord.

Could men be contented, as he whom they call their Lord was, to *declare* their *message*, and not to strive for *profelytes*, nor vex for *conquest*, they would recommend all to the conscience; and, if it must be so, patiently endure contradiction too, and so lay their religion, as he did *his*, not in violence, but suffering: but I must freely profess, and in duty and conscience I do it, that I cannot call that religion, which is introduced against the laws of love, meekness, and friendship: superstition, interest, or faction, I may.

There is a zeal *without* knowledge; that is *superstition*: there is a zeal *against* knowledge; that is *interest* or *faction*, the true *heresy*: there is a zeal *with* knowledge; that is *religion*: therefore *blind* obedience may be *superstition*, it cannot be *religion*; and if you will view the countries of cruelty, you shall find them superstitious rather than religious. *Religion* is *gentle*, it makes men *better*, more *friendly*, *loving*, and *patient*, than before. And the success which followed Christianity, whilst the ancient professors of it betook themselves to no other defence, plainly proves both the
force

force of those passive arguments above all corporal punishments, and that we must never hope for the same prosperity, till we fall into the same methods, Gal. v. 22. James iii. 17. Are men impatient of having their conceits owned? They are then most to be suspected. Error and superstition, like cracked titles, only fear to be searched, and run and cry for *authority* and *number*. Truth is *plain* and *steadfast*, without arts or tricks: will you receive her? well; if not, there is no compulsion. But pray tell me, what is that desired uniformity that has not *unity*, and that *unity*, which has not *love*, *meekness*, and *patience* in it? I beseech you hear me; for those men depart from the spirit of Christianity that seek with anger and frowardness to promote it. Let us not put so miserable a cheat upon ourselves, nor such an affront upon Christianity, as to think that a most *gentle* and *patient* religion can be advanced by most *ungentle* and *impatient* ways. I should sooner submit to an humble opposition, than to the greatest zealot in the world; and rather deliver up myself to him that would modestly drop a controverted truth, than to such as seek tempestuously to carry it: for even error, bashfully and patiently defended, endangers truth, in the management of imprudent and hasty zeal; and gives to it that lustre, which only *good* eyes can see from gold. Alas! it is for want of considering that men do not see, that to disorder the mind in controversy is a greater mischief, than to carry the point can be a benefit; inasmuch as it is not to be religious to *apprehend rightly*, but to *do well*: the latter can scarcely be without the former, but the former often is without the latter; which brings me to my sixth cause of persecution.

VI. Another, and that no small cause of persecution, is a 'misapprehension of the word *religion*.' For when once the ignorance or prejudice of men has persuaded them to lay more weight upon their own *opinion* of their neighbours, than in truth they bear, to excuse their zeal, or justify their credit, they presently heighten the difference

to a *new* religion; whence we so frequently hear of such reflections as these, ‘*new* gospels and faiths, up-
‘*start* religions and lights,’ and with the like scare-
crows they amuse the vulgar, and render their own
design of ruining honest men the more practicable.
But I would obviate this mischief; for a *new religion*
has a *new foundation*, and consequently where there is
the *same foundation*, there cannot be a *new religion*.
Now the *foundation* of the Christian religion is *Christ*;
and that only is *another* religion than the Christian
which professes another *foundation*, or corruptly *adds* to
that foundation; by adding of *other* mediators, and
introducing a *new* way of remission of sin: which, at
least, cannot be said of the several sorts of Protestants.
For Protestants therefore to reproach each other with
new religions and gospels; and by their indecent and
unchristian behaviour to inflame their own reckoning,
and draw into more discord, is a sin against God, an
injury to the common cause of Protestantism, and to
the security of the civil interest of that country, where
the inhabitants are of that religion, as well as a real
injustice to one another: for Protestants do not only
agree in the same *fundamentals* of Christianity, but of
Protestantism too; that is, in the *reasons* of separation from
Rome, which was also Christian. Let not every cir-
cumstantial difference or variety of *cult* be nicknamed
a *new religion*; neither suffer so ill an use to be made
of such dissents, as to carry them beyond their true
bounds: for the meaning of those arts of ill men, is
to set the people farther off from one another than
they really are, and to aggravate differences in judg-
ment to contrariety in affection: and when they have
once inflamed them to variance and strife, nothing can
hinder persecution but want of power; which being
never wanted by the strongest side, the weakest, though
truest, is oppressed, not by argument, but worldly
weapons.

VII. The seventh and last cause I shall now assign
for persecution is this, ‘That holy living is become
‘no test among us, unless against the liver.’ The

tree was once known by its fruits: it is not so now: the better liver, the more dangerous, if not a *conformist*, and so the more in danger; and this has made way for persecution. There was a time, when virtue was venerable, and good men admired; but that is too much derided, and opinion carries it.

He that can persuade his conscience to comply with the times, be he vicious, knavish, cowardly, any thing, he is protected, perhaps preferred. A man of wisdom, sobriety and ability to serve his king and country, if a *dissenter*, must be blown upon for a *fanatick*, a man of *faction*, of *disloyal* principles, and what not?

Rewards and punishments are the magistrate's duty, and the government's interest and support. Rewards are due to virtue, punishments to vice. Let us not mistake nor miscall things; let virtue be what it always was in government; good *manners*, sober and just *living*; and vice, *ill* manners and *dishonest* living. Reduce all to this: let such good men have the *smiles* and *rewards*, and such ill men the *frowns* and *punishments* of the government: this ends persecution, and lays opinion to sleep. Ill men will make no more advantages by such conformity, nor good men no more suffer for want of it.

In short, as that religious society deserves not the protection of the civil government, which is inconsistent with the safety of it; so those societies of Christians that are not only not destructive of the civil government, but lovers of it, ought, by the civil government, to be secured from ruin.

God Almighty open our understandings and hearts, and pour out the spirit of thorough reformation upon us; for it is in the *spirit*, and not in the *words* of reformation, that the life and prosperity of reformation stands; that so we may be all conscientiously disposed to seek and pursue those things which make for love, **peace**, and godliness, that it may be well with us and **ours**, both here and for ever.

“ For

“ For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be ;
 “ yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and
 “ it shall not be : but the meek shall inherit the
 “ earth, and shall delight themselves in abundance
 “ of peace. The wicked plotteth against the just,
 “ and gnasheth upon him with his teeth ; the Lord
 “ shall laugh at him ; for he seeth that his day is
 “ coming.” Pſal. xxxvii. 10, 11, 12, 13.

The Judgment of King JAMES and King CHARLES
 the Firſt, about Perſecution for Religion.

WE find it aſſerted by king James, in his ſpeech
 to the parliament in the year 1609. ‘ That it
 ‘ is a pure rule in divinity, that God never loves to
 ‘ plant his church with *violence* and *blood*.’ And he
 farthermore ſaid, ‘ It was uſually the condition of
 ‘ Chriſtians to be *perſecuted*, but not to *perſecute*.’

And we find the ſame things in ſubſtance aſſerted
 again by his ſon, King Charles the firſt, in his book
 known by the name of ΕΙΚΩΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΗ, printed for
 R. Royſton, as followeth :

Page 67. In his prayer to God, he ſaid, ‘ Thou
 ‘ ſeeſt how much cruelty, amongſt Chriſtians, is acted
 ‘ under the colour of religion ; as if we could not be
 ‘ Chriſtians, unleſs we crucify one another.’

Page 28. ‘ Make them at length ſeriously to con-
 ‘ ſider, that nothing *violent* and *injurious* can be reli-
 ‘ gion.’

Page 70. ‘ Nor is it ſo proper to hew out religious
 ‘ reformations by the ſword, as to poliſh them by fair
 ‘ and equal diſputations, among thoſe that are moſt
 ‘ concerned in the differences ; whom not *force*, but
 ‘ *reaſon*, ought to convince.’

‘ Sure, in matters of religion, thoſe truths gain
 ‘ moſt upon mens judgments and conſciences, which
 ‘ are leaſt urged with ſecular violence, which weakens
 ‘ truth with prejudices.’

Page 115. ‘ It being an office not only of humanity, rather to use *reason* than *force*; but also of ‘ Christianity, to seek peace and ensue it.’

Some words of advice from King CHARLES the First, to the then Prince of Wales, now king of England, &c.

Page 165. ‘ **M**Y counsel and charge to you is, ‘ that you seriously consider the ‘ former real or objected miscarriages, which might ‘ occasion my troubles, that you may avoid them,’ &c.

‘ Beware of exasperating any faction, by the cross-
‘ nefs and asperity of some mens passions, humours,
‘ and private opinions, employed by you, grounded
‘ only upon differences in lesser matters, which are
‘ but the skirts and suburbs of religion, wherein a
‘ charitable connivance, and Christian toleration, often
‘ dissipates their strength, when rougher opposition
‘ fortifies, and puts the despised and oppressed party
‘ into such combinations, as may most enable them
‘ to get a full revenge on those they count their persecutors.’

Page 166. ‘ Take heed that outward circumstances
‘ and formalities of religion devour not all.’

SAUL SMITTEN TO THE GROUND:

BEING A BRIEF BUT FAITHFUL

NARRATIVE

OF THE

DYING REMORSE of a late LIVING ENEMY

TO THE

PEOPLE called QUAKERS, and their FAITH and
WORSHIP,

MATTHEW HIDE.

Attested by EYE and EAR-WITNESSES, whereof his
WIDOW is one.

Published, in Honour to GOD, for a Warning to Gainfayers,
and a Confirmation to the Honest-hearted. With an AP-
PENDIX, both to Foes and Friends, on this Occasion.

BY WILLIAM PENN,

“ Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that
“ I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh; I was ashamed,
“ yea, even confounded.” Jer. xxxi.

Published in the Year 1675.

WHEREAS after near twenty years public
opposition, made by Matthew Hyde, against
the People called Quakers, and their principle of the
light within, in their public assemblies, chiefly in and
about London; it hath pleased the Lord immediately
and secretly to smite and awaken him in his consci-
ence,

ence, and to bring the burden of his iniquity upon him a few days before his death (though he was not the worst of open opposers and disturbers) so that he was necessitated to make a solemn confession thereof, and unto the truth, in the presence of Almighty God, and several of the said people, his wife, and some others, before he could quietly or with satisfaction depart this life: this is given out as a true and faithful narrative of his last and dying words, as a testimony for God's truth and people, against all apostates, gainfayers and opposers thereof, that such may take warning, for whom there yet remains a place of repentance.

T H E

N A R R A T I V E.

ON the 19th of the 12th month, 1675, Cotton Oades, hearing that Matthew Hide was willing to speak to some of our friends, called Quakers, went to him, and told him, if he had any thing to say, to clear himself, he might speak; seeing he had opposed friends in their declarations and prayers.

M. Hide signified thus much, 'That he was sorry for what he had done; for they were the people of God.'

C. Oades asked him, if he had any thing in his mind to any particular friends; nominating G. Whitehead, and W. Gibson, or any other; and whether he would be willing any of them should be sent for?

M. Hide replied, 'As many as please may come.'

Whereupon Cotton Oades presently sent for George Whitehead, who accordingly went with the messenger to visit Matthew Hide after the ninth hour in the night. So the said George Whitehead, Cotton Oades, and

and John Ball, near the tenth hour in the night, visited Matthew Hide on his sick bed, though so weak, that it was very hard for him to utter words, yet these were understood from him, when spoken to, as followeth: C. O. told him, 'Here is George Whitehead come to see thee, Matthew.'

G. W. 'I am come in love and tenderness to see thee.'

M. Hide. I am glad to see you.

G. W. 'If thou hast any thing on thy conscience to speak, I would have thee to clear thy conscience.'

M. Hide. What I have to say, I speak in the presence of God: as Paul was a persecutor of the people of the Lord, so have I been a persecutor of *you*, his people, as the world are, who persecute the children of God: (with more words, which then could not be understood.)

G. W. 'Thy understanding being darkened, when darkness was over thee, thou hast gainsayed the truth and people of the Lord; and I knew that that LIGHT, which thou opposedst, would rise up in judgment against thee: I have often, with others, laboured with thee, to bring thee to a right understanding.'

M. Hide. This I declare, in the presence of God, and of you here, I have done *evil* in persecuting you, who are the children of God, and I am sorry for it: the Lord Jesus Christ shew mercy unto me, and the Lord increase your number, and be with you!

G. W. (after some pause) 'I would have thee, if thou art able to speak, to ease thy conscience as fully as thou canst: my soul is affected to hear thee thus confess thy evil, as the Lord hath given thee a sense of it. In repentance, there is mercy and forgiveness; in confessing and forsaking sin, there is mercy to be found with the Lord; who in the midst of judgment remembers mercy, that he may be feared.' (The said M. H. being then much oppressed, striving for breath, and lying on his back, so that it was very hard for him to speak, G. W. got

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John Ball to turn him on one side, that he might the better speak.)

M. Hide. I have done evil in opposing you in your prayers: the Lord be merciful unto me! and as I have been an instrument to turn many from God, the Lord raise up many instruments to turn many to him!

G. W. (after some silence) 'I desire thou mayst find mercy and forgiveness at the hand of the Lord. How is it with thy soul? Dost not thou find some ease?'

M. Hide. I hope I do: and if the Lord should lengthen my days, I should be willing to bear a testimony for you, as publickly as I have appeared against you.

(His wife then said, 'It is enough; what can be desired more?')

G. W. 'If the Lord should not lengthen out thy days, dost thou desire what thou sayest should be signified to others?'

M. Hide. Yes, I do; you may: I have said as much as I can say.

G. W. (after some silence) 'If this company be wearisome unto thee, I think we may withdraw.'

M. H. You may use your freedom.

G. W. 'I shall leave thee to the Lord, desiring he may shew mercy and forgiveness unto thee, as I hope he will.'

M. Hide. The Lord be with your spirits.

These things were expressed about two hours before his death, in the presence of George Whitehead, John Ball, Cotton Oades, George Browne, and the wife of Matthew Hide, and some others.

It is to be observed, before some of the people called Quakers came to him, I, perceiving him to be much troubled in his mind, asked him, 'If he would speak with any of those people?' He smote his hand upon his breast, and said, 'With all my heart.' I asked him again, 'If he would speak with some of the Quakers.' And he smote his hand upon his breast, and said, 'With all my soul;' so some were invited to come. Again, after they had been with him, he did oftentimes desire, 'That he might live till morning; it
' being

‘ being the first-day of the week ; and that he might bear, on that day, a testimony for the TRUTH, he had on that day so often opposed.’ He also said, ‘ He had since found some ease to his spirit.’ And I being a silver-spinster, and he understanding that I wrought to people that were great in the world, he took me by the hand, and did press it much upon me, ‘ That I should use the plain language, as *thee*, and *thou* ; and if they would not receive it, I should let my trade go.’ And after some more words to this purpose spoken by him, in a good understanding, he stretched himself out, and died very quietly.

To the substance of this relation concerning my husband’s expressions, on his death-bed, concerning the people called Quakers, I was an ear-witness, and Mary Fooks too.

Elizabeth Hide.

Mary Fooks.

To all atheistical, persecuting, and contentious opposers of the *universal light of Jesus in the conscience*, and particularly those that are disturbers and vilifiers of them that believe in him, at their public meetings to worship God, according to the illumination and motion of that blessed principle.

TO you all a warning, in the name and fear of God, that you leave off your vain thoughts, your chaffy, loose, and unfavoury words, and rebellious practices, against the light of Jesus in your own consciences ; and that you dread any more to revile, backbite, disturb, or slander his poor people, that have believed in him, and that follow him according to the shinings of his blessed light in their hearts : speak not evilly of that you do not know ; much less go you on to kick against those pricks in your own consciences, as Saul did, lest you become entirely hardened in your gain-sayings, and the Lord God cut you off in his sore displeasure. O that you would consider your latter

end, and repent, you vain mortal men! for you know not how soon that dismal trump may overtake any of you, 'Are ye ready? Are ye prepared? Have you the wedding-garment? Are you of them that have suffered with him, being dead and buried to self-will, pride, envy, revenge, and the lusts of this ungodly world, and risen with him in the life, glory, and raiment of the resurrection?' If so, where are your fruits? If you are not, (as ye are not, I affirm in God's name) then where is your authority for these evil fruits you bring forth, scoffing, mocking, jangling, disturbing and bawling against us, stirring up the scum of the multitude to abuse us? Consider, before it be too late, who is your master in all these things, and whose servants you are, in whose name and errand you go, and what spirit sets you thus to work against so glorious a principle, and so harmless a people, who not being contented with lifeless worships, human faiths, and mere traditional religions, cry to the God of heaven to appear and operate in their hearts, and teach them, by his own holy spirit, to be his disciples and children, according to his promise, yea, though it cross the world's life, spirit, customs and fashions; and therefore cannot longer serve God in the oldness of the letter, by mere imitation, or, after the manner of the loose Christians of this world, only with outside performances, but "in the newness of the spirit, in the immediate leadings and guidings of the Holy Ghost," according to Rom. viii. 14. though they were never so much made a reproach and by-word, and be encompassed about with loss and danger. I say, have a care of resisting, reviling and disturbing these poor people, these believers, these assertors, these followers and children, of the light of Jesus, begotten again of the everlasting day of righteousness, lest you treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous fierce judgments of God, and your portion be appointed you in that day with the workers of iniquity for ever.

And

And as I warn you to forsake your vain, frothy, envious, and contentious courses, so do I exhort you, in God's fear, to unfeigned repentance; and invite you, in love, to the *true* peace of conscience, even *that* conscience which is sprinkled from unbelief, hatred, malice, and all ungodliness, which is only obtained by an humble and sincere walking in the light of the Son of God, as 1 John i. taking heed to, and not despising, this holy and spiritual appearance of *Christ within*, to dethrone Satan, and destroy sin, and to bring in his own everlasting righteousness, as the Jews did Jesus, whom they only knew after the flesh, crying out, "Is not this the Carpenter's son? this fellow; and if thou art the Christ, or Son of God, show us a sign, and tell who smites thee, and come off from the cross, and save thyself." I say, cavil not thus at the light of Christ in your consciences; despise not his sufficiency with your carnal mind, neither turn his grace, mercy, and forbearance into a profane presumption, and bold tempting of the living God; for then very woful will your end be. Behold, read, ponder, and meditate on the latter end of this poor man! let his case be both a warning and visitation, to all that oppose the light of Christ within, and the children of it, that you may consider your latter end, find mercy, and be saved. When I read the narrative of his dying condition, O my heart was much broken before the Lord; and I could not but reverently magnify his glorious power, mercy, and truth, that had wrought so strange, so great, and so blessed a work for his name's defence, his people's vindication, and, I hope, for the poor man's soul too! O let him have the glory for ever; for who is like unto him, in heaven or in earth, whose goings are in the deep, and whose ways are past finding out, but in his own time!

And truly, pity rose in my soul towards all you whose day is not over, and a secret strong groan to God, that you might all see your folly, and repent, before you go hence, and be no more seen.

This man I have known many years, being one whom he hath often opposed in publick meetings. His main stroke was against the doctrine of "Christ, the true light, enlightening every man that comes into the world, with a divine and saving light:" the sufficiency and universality of this to salvation, he constantly and resolutely withstood; not furiously, madly, and frothily, like outrageous mockers; as some still too evidently and frequently shew themselves against us; but with great external sobriety and gravity, as well as zeal; reasoning, after his manner, and not bawling against us. Nor was his conversation *scandalous*, but honest and exemplary in worldly things towards men, for aught that I ever heard upon enquiry. So that his present *convictions*, as they were not the effect of any affrighting discourse, insinuations, or besetments of *ours* in his sickness, neither could they be interpreted to be any trouble for a dissolute life, in which he might be thought to condemn himself *generally* and *confusedly*: nor yet did his *remorse* only arise from the *way* of his opposing us, as if he still retained his *judgment*; but the very ground of the whole trouble and exercise of spirit, for which he was willing to see any of us, and utter the foregoing pathetical expressions, "was his *gainsaying* us, the people called "Quakers, in the way of our *faith* and *worship*;" and so much his own words testify. Let all take heed of the *reviling thief's* state upon the *cross*, lest they enter not into the paradise of God for ever.

And now, my dearly beloved friends and brethren, who have hearkened to the holy reproofs of this instructing light of JESUS in the conscience, and by it been redeemed from the wickedness of this world, and taught in deep and heavenly things, and made, through your cheerful obedience, to partake in measure of the great salvation of God, though it hath been through very many bitter exercises, and deep tribulations of body and spirit; O! what cause have you to keep covenant with the Lord, to abide in your heavenly habitation, in a living *faith*, stedfast hope, and constant

stant patience to the end; casting your care upon him, and committing your cause and concerns to him, who is not only able, but willing and ready, to succour you, and maintain the glory of his own famous and honourable name, deeply concerned in you. O! let us dwell with him for ever, that his Holy Spirit may more and more enliven us, his power strengthen us, and his great wisdom conduct us through the work of our day: it is true, "That many are the troubles of the righteous," but, blessed be our God for ever, "he will as certainly deliver out of them all."

And though we want not the evidence of his Holy Spirit, that his own right arm gathered us, and that we are his people, bought by his blood, redeemed by his power, and made partakers of his divine life; yet it ought to be no small evidence of the Lord's goodness, and therefore both matter of comfort and confirmation to us, that he hath constrained a testimony to his own blessed light within, and us his poor despised people, (that have believed in it, and, above all the families of the earth, contended and suffered for it) out of the mouth of an old and constant opposer of both, and that upon his *dying-bed* too, when no fears nor flatteries, no gains nor temptations from men, justly can be thought to have prevailed upon him, but the powerful workings only of that *very* light he had so long resisted: this smote him in secret; this made his *dying-bed* uneasy, and proved its own sufficiency upon him, awakening his conscience, opening his understanding, breaking his heart, and drawing a very plain, tender, and sincere confession from his mouth! O blessed be the name of our God for ever, who is a God glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, working wonders for them that commit their cause to him.

And whatever were his provocations to us, I can say it, in the fear of God, my heart was much more filled with pity than displeasure towards him; and this *very* repentance is both an effectual answer of my prayers, and a plain accomplishment of my prophecy,

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with some more of my brethren: for as I often earnestly, and more than ordinarily of late, desired of the Lord this poor man's *convincement* and *repentance*, and that with an *unusual* tenderness of spirit, even when he was strong in his gainsayings; so have I frequently told him, in the name of God, and presence of many people, at our meetings, (when he came on purpose to withstand us) 'That God would plead with him, ' by his righteous judgments; and that the time ' would come, wherein he should be forced to confess to the *sufficiency* of that light he then opposed; ' and to acknowledge that God was *with* us, of a ' truth:' all which, blessed be the name of the Lord, is fulfilled, by the foregoing narrative; where he confesseth himself a *Saul*, desires forgiveness, testifies to us that we are the Lord's people, and prays for our increase. Thus hath our God vindicated his glorious name.

Nor do I insist on this so much, as if we had been hitherto barren of the like instances that might encourage us; for a great volume would not contain what we could say, of the *living* and *dying testimonies* given by great and harsh *opposers* to this blessed way of God we are turned unto: but forasmuch as this man was so lately, and so publickly, a gainsayer, and so generally known of those that frequent our meetings to have been such; and for that it was his own desire, as well as that the case is extraordinary, and that the Lord's honour, and many mens souls, are concerned, therefore is this published. And I pray God, with my whole soul and spirit, that it may be a warning to all opposers, of what sort soever, that they gainsay not themselves into eternal destruction (for none of their weapons shall ever prosper; the Lord hath said it;) but that they may turn unto the light of Jesus in their own hearts, and follow the reproofs and instructions of it, "whose ways are ways of purity, and all his ~~paths~~ paths are peace;" for he visits the creatures to lead ~~out of sin~~ out of sin, which is the only cause of trouble: and my desire farther is, that we, who have believed therein, may

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may keep covenant, stand our ground, and not again turn into folly. O! have a care of a slothful mind; that which can sit at home and censure, but is not diligent in the work of the Lord: let us go on, and press forward, towards the glorious recompence. This keeps in the universal spirit, out of murmurings and grudgings, and herein shall we prosper, and be preserved for ever: and let this be the godly use we make of this great obligation which the Lord hath now eminently laid upon us, to watch and persevere, that we may hold out to the end, and give no just occasion to any to speak evil of this blessed way of the Lord, that hath so signally been borne witness to, (even by such as have spoken evil of it) when they came to die; as this narrative (though briefly, yet fully) proves.

And as to the persecution that now threatens, you know this, it comes all from the same root; and he that drew a testimony from this opposer (and persecutor, as he confesseth he was, will, in due time, give witness to his holy way, and you his people, from the consciences of your persecutors, as you know full well he hath frequently done in divers places of this nation. Therefore never heed it, neither be ye moved at it, but be of good cheer; for the shout of an immortal king is amongst us, who is the only *Sacred Majesty, Dread Sovereign, King, Prince, and Lord of conscience*, and no mortal man whatever: for *he only can be Lord of conscience*, who is *greater than conscience*, and author of conscience; but that no man is, because conscience is the chiefest part that constitutes that man; therefore no *man* can be *Lord of conscience*. And be it known to all powers on earth, it is this great Lord that hath reached to your souls, even Israel's God: wherefore keep you with him, hearken to his holy voice, and obey it diligently unto all holiness, and all shall go well with you in the end: "Say unto the righteous, it shall go *well* with them; but say unto the wicked, it shall go *ill* with them:" This God gave his prophet in charge of
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old, and it stands true to our day, and shall while a good and a bad man live upon the earth.

You know, my brethren, in whom you have believed, and have good experience of his power and faithfulness: call to mind his noble acts, and valiant deeds, his great salvation in all ages; how sure, how ready, how willing, and how able he hath been to deliver our ancestors; and you know he is the same now at this day: trust there for ever; for "he is greater that is in you, than he that is in the world;" and I know assuredly that all these things shall work together for good, to them that keep in the faith, the royal faith, the victorious faith, that faith that stands all trials, and surmounts all temptations, and, through patient sufferings, triumphs over rage, darkness, and the grave: it is this exceeding precious faith, that makes the good Christian, the good man, the good subject, and keeps man's conscience void of offence towards God and all men; and as we keep it, of right may we say, "The Lord is our light, whom should we fear? The Lord is the strength of our life, of whom should we be afraid?" O! those that flee before informers, and run at the sight of persecutors (yea, though an army of them) either never had, or have parted from, this *noble faith*, which is pure confidence in God, and intire resignation to his divine will, come what will come. Christ will not have one coward in his spiritual army: "Fear not what man can do unto you," was a great part of his instruction to his disciples, the pilgrim preachers of his holy gospel to the world: but consulters with flesh and blood, those that use base stratagems to save themselves, that will not abide the day, but sink from the shock of sufferings, and hide in stormy times, they betray God's prerogative, conscience's liberty, fling up the cause, and bring a spot upon "Conscientious separation;" such shall become an abhorrence, and utter detestation, in the sight of the pure jealous God, and all good people.

My

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My brethren, I hope that few or none of these will be found amongst us: howbeit, these things may be permitted for a winnowing, that many may be proved, that so their integrity may be the better manifested; for a sincere, holy, and self-denying people, God will have to delight himself in: "Blessed are they whose God is the Lord, and whose trust is in him for ever, for they shall never be moved."

Into his blessed care and protection, with myself, do I commit you all; and the Lord of heaven and earth preserve us all in his holy fear, love, and patience, to the end. Amen.

WILLIAM PENN.

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T O T H E

CHILDREN of LIGHT

I N T H I S

GENERATION,

Called of GOD to be Partakers of Eternal Life
in JESUS CHRIST, the Lamb of God, and
Light of the World.

Published in the Year 1678.

My endeared friends and brethren,

MANY days and weeks, yea, some months, hath my heart been heavy, and my soul unusually sad, for the sake of this nation, the land of our nativity! For I have not only long beheld, with a grieved eye, the many abominations and gross impieties that reign therein, the lusts, pleasures, wantonness, drunkenness, whoredoms, oaths, blasphemies, envy, treachery, and persecution of the just, but for some time I have had a deep sense that the overflowing scourge of God's wrath and indignation was just ready to break out upon the people, confusion, amazement, and misery! The weight of which hath caused me to cry within myself, ' Who shall save us? who shall deliver us? Are there none to stay the stroke? To blunt the edge? To stop the fury, and intercede for the people, and mediate for this poor land, that the Lord may not utterly depart, and take his glory and his name from it, and make it a desolation for the wild beasts

‘ beasts of the field, and fowls of the air; a land of judgment, and not of promise; of curses, and not of blessings.’

My friends, whilst the sense of this distress, that is coming as a dreadful visitation from the hand of the displeased God, upon this ungodly land, to stain its glory, bring down its pride, and punish its forgetfulness of the Lord, and his many deliverances, lay so heavy upon my spirit, the Lord presented before me all the truly conscientious and well-inclined people in these nations; and more especially YOU, his *despised*, but *chosen* generation, for whose sake he would yet have mercy. And, in the midst of his judgments, THIS I received for you from the Lord, as his holy will and counsel; and it often sprung in my heart, with a very fresh and strong life,

TO THY TENTS, O ISRAEL!
TO THY TENTS, O ISRAEL!

GOD is thy TENT; *to thy* GOD, O ISRAEL!

Prepare, O friends, to stand in this day before the Lord, (that is in the first place) for *ye* also shall have your exercise: yea, great is that work which *ye* have to do for the Lord, by his *powerful* but very *peaceable* Spirit; for God will, by all these hurries, confusions, and vexations that are at the door, drive people from their false gods, and bring them home to HIMSELF. He will throw down wickedness, and establish righteousness: he will waste sin, but *truth* shall grow. He will debase the mountain of empty profession, but the “mountain of his holiness shall be exalted.” He hath determined to raise up, and renown, the seed of *light, life, and truth*, in the hearts of people: holy patience, meekness, wisdom, love, faith, purity, and perseverance (so much wanting in the world) shall be seen to dwell *in* it, and only to come *from* it. And my witness is, That *ye* are the people, through whom this *heavenly seed of righteousness* must clearly and steadfastly

fastly so shine unto others, in these uneven and rough times that are come, and coming, as that your heavenly Father may be glorified by you.

Wherefore, in the name of the Lord, be ye all disencumbered of the world, and discharged of the cares of it: fly, as for your lives, from the snares therein, and get you into your watch tower, the NAME of the LORD! Which is not a *dead* name, or a mere *literal* name, but a *living, spiritual, and very powerful name*; a *strong tower* indeed, yea, an *invincible fortress*; where dwell ye with God, and in him who speaketh peace to his children, and ordains quietness for them that trust in him. He will make you to lie down safely, even then when darkness and confusion shall be thick about you; yea, ye shall *live* in the fire, that will *consume* the stubble of the world, and your garments shall not be so much as singed; for the SON of GOD, whom the flames, as well as winds and seas, obey, will be in the *midst* of you.

Next, friends, this know; we are the people, above all others, that must stand in the gap, and pray for the putting away of the wrath, so as that this land be not made an utter desolation; and God expects it at our hands. Prepare ye therefore to meet and sanctify the Lord in his coming and judgments! Why stand any of you gazing? Let none gaze or look out, I beseech you; that is the enemy's work, to weaken you within; but be ye retired, be ye centered in the Eternal One: and meditate upon the Lord, and his living pure law, that ye may be wise in heart, and travail in spirit for this poor land, and that for enemies as well as friends. The Lord is ready to hear you for this people, when you are ready to intercede: and I testify, *Abraham* is amongst you, *God's friend*, and his just *Lot* too; yea, *Jacob* that prevailed; and one that is greater than all, *JESUS*, the Lamb of God, whose blood speaketh better things than that of *Abel*, in whom is the mediation and atonement. Be therefore encouraged to wait upon the Lord, and to bow before him; and humbly to mediate, in the life of *JESUS*,
with

with him: I know he will put it in your hearts so to do, if ye wait upon him; for he will not cast off this land, as he did Sodom; he hath a right seed, a noble people in it, that he hath and yet will gather: many sheep there be, not yet of *our* fold, whom he will bring in; and the foul weather and the storms will but help to drive them home to JESUS, the living and true witness, and light *within*; that he, whom God hath ordained to reign, may be *great* in them.

And lastly, my dear friends and brethren, by how much this day draws nigh, by so much the more do ye stand loose in your affections to the world, but fast in the faith; and assemble yourselves together, and let God arise in you, and his power and spirit of life among you, that ye may not only wrestle, but in the end prevail, that it may be seen that "salvation is of the Jews," the Jews *inward*, in spirit and in truth: and truly the time hastens, that "ten shall take hold of the skirt of *such* a Jew; and they shall be saved." But wo to the hypocrite in that day, the formalist, the Jew outward, the circumcision in the flesh, and fleshly Christian, that cannot resist the temptations of this world; the temporizer; one that runs with the tide; he will be divided: for there will be more tides, more interests on foot at once, than one: wherefore perplexity will take hold on him, his policy will be confounded; he will not know what to do to be safe, nor what to join with; this "double-minded man" will be unstable in his counsels and in his actions, his sandy foundation will be shaken. Therefore, as I said, Wo to the hypocrite, and to the covetous man too, for his god will fail him; the thief, the moth and rust will invade his bags, and surprize his treasure: his anguish will be great in this day: but, my dear brethren, as the power and spirit of our Lord God will preserve and establish us, if we sincerely and entirely confide therein, and that above our *solicitation*, or need of *carnal consultation* or *contrivances*, which we have therefore laid aside; so shall it vindicate us, in due time, in the eyes of all nations, and present us a people

ple owned, beloved, and protected of God, in whom we have firmly believed. Nor is this presumption, as some may think; who being not so well acquainted with that entire resignation, and supreme faith (of which Jesus is the Author) that removes mountains into the sea, conclude, from mere natural and human considerations, against us; yet we know him in whom we have believed; and the same that hath cured us of our diseases, the same said unto us, "Arise, and walk in this way of FAITH; trust in *me*, and not in another." And truly, this is much of that wonder which men shall have in their minds and mouths about us in those latter days; 'In troubles not to be *dejected*, and in jeopardies not to be concerned to make to ourselves *defences*:' as the lilies, that neither toil nor spin, yet feed and grow, so we may both be preserved, and become victorious, without worldly force or projections: for we must shew ourselves to be that little city and hill of God, that hath only *his* salvation for our walls and bulwarks; by whom he will renown his arm, and magnify his power, above the arts and contrivances of men. Our weapons and our armour is *spiritual*; it hath prevailed, and it will prevail, if we keep in the "*faith* which was first delivered to us:" a blessed shield, by which the just live.

And therefore, my dear friends, let us be careful not to mingle with the crowd, lest *their* spirit enter us, instead of *our* spirit entering *them*, and we thereby come to fall into the same temptations they are liable to, of *fear*, and flying to the *hills* and *mountains* to protect them, confiding in the arm of flesh to deliver them: no, no; they must come to *us*, we must not go to *them*. Yet can we not be insensible of their infirmities, as well as we shall not be free from some of their sufferings; we must make their case as our own, and travail alike in spirit for them as for ourselves. Let us stand in the counsel of our God, and he will make us preachers forth to them of the works of his divine power, and the virtue of that faith which

comes from heaven; yea, he will make us as *saviours* to the people, that they may come to know the holy law and word of the Lord, their Creator, in their hearts, and have their minds and souls turned to him, and stayed upon him, that iniquity may no more abound, nor ungodliness find a place; but that in truth, righteousness, and peace, they may be established, and the land keep its *sabbath* to the Lord for ever! Then shall God lift up the "light of his countenance upon us," and water us from heaven, and bless us with all temporal and spiritual blessings; and we shall be yet called, "THE ISLAND SAVED BY THE LORD." Amen, Amen.

This was upon my soul from God to you: I could not visit you all with a distinct message upon many accounts: besides, the time is short, and the confusion appears to me to be at hand: therefore have I sent it by way of epistle, with the brotherly salutation of unfeigned and unalterable love to you all, in your respective meetings and families. And the Lord God of our visitation and redemption, stir you up to these things, and keep us all in his holy fear, wisdom, love, and patience, through all those travails and exercises, to the end of our days; that having finished our testimonies, our heads may go down to the grave in peace, and our souls be received into the rest which is reserved for the righteous with God, and with his blessed Lamb for ever.

I am

Your brother and companion through the many tribulations of our day and testimony,

W. PENN.

Worminghurst in Suffex, the 4th
of the 9th month, 1678.

I desire that this epistle may be read, in the fear of the Lord, in your several meetings.

ENGLAND'S

ENGLAND'S GREAT INTEREST
IN THE
C H O I C E
OF THIS
NEW PARLIAMENT.

Dedicated to all her FREEHOLDERS and ELECTORS.

Published in the Year 1679.

SINCE it hath pleased God and the king to begin to revive and restore to us our ancient right of *frequent parliaments*, it will greatly concern us, as to our present interest, and therein the future happiness of our posterity, to act at this time with all the wisdom, caution, and integrity we can. For besides that it is our own business, and that if, by a neglect of this singular opportunity, we desert ourselves, and forsake our own mercies, we must expect to be left of God, and good men too. It may be there has never happened, not only in the memory of the living, but in the records of the dead, so odd and so strange a conjuncture as this we are under. It is made up of so many unusual and important circumstances (all affecting us to the very heart) that whether we regard the long sitting of the late parliament, or its abrupt and most unexpected dissolution, or the prorogation of the last, and its surprising dissolution, or the strong jealousies of the people, and that universal agitation that is now upon the spirit of the nation, and the reasons and motives thereof (so far as we can reach them) there

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there seems never to have been a time, wherein this kingdom ought to shew itself more serious and diligent in the business of its own safety.

To be plain with you, 'All is at stake:' and therefore I must tell you, that the work of this parliament is,

First, To pursue the discovery and punishment of the *plot*: for that has been the old snake in the grass, the Trojan horse, with an army in the belly of it.

Secondly, To remove, and bring to justice, those evil counsellors, and corrupt and arbitrary ministers of state, that have been so industrious to give the king wrong measures, to turn things out of their ancient and legal channel of administration, and alienate his affections from his people.

Thirdly, To detect and punish the pensioners of the former parliament, in the face of the kingdom: this breach of trust being treason against the fundamental constitution of our government.

Fourthly, To secure to us the execution of our ancient laws by *new* ones; and, among the rest, such as relate to *frequent parliaments*, the only true check upon *arbitrary ministers*, and therefore feared, hated, and opposed by them.

Fifthly, That we be secured from popery and slavery, and that Protestant Dissenters be eased.

Sixthly, That, in case this be done, the king be released from his burdensome debts to the nation, and eased in the business of his revenue. And let me be free with you, if you intend to save poor England, you must take this general measure, viz. 'To guide and fix your choice upon men, that you have reason to believe are well-affected, able, and bold, to serve the country in these respects.'

The words of the writ, (at least the import of them) are, 'To chuse wise men, fearing God, and hating covetousness:' and what to do? says the same writ, 'To advise the king of the weighty matters of the kingdom.' Let us not then play the fools or knaves, to neglect or betray the common interest

terest of our country by a base election: let neither fear, flattery, nor gain bias us. We must not make our publick choice the recompence of private favours from our neighbours; they must excuse us for that: the weight of the matter will very well bear it. This is our inheritance, all depends upon it: men do not use to lend their wives, or give their children, to satisfy personal kindneses; nor must we make a swop of our birth-right, (and that of our posterity too) for a mess of pottage, a *feast*, or a *drinking-bout*; there can be no proportion here: and therefore none must take it ill, that we use our freedom about that, which, in its constitution, is the great bulwark of all our ancient English liberties. Truly, our not considering what it is to chuse a parliament, and how much all is upon the hazard in it, may, at last, lose us fatally by our own choice. For I must needs tell you, if we miscarry, it will be our own fault; we have nobody else to blame: for such is the happiness of our constitution, that we cannot well be destroyed, but by *ourselves*: and what man in his wits would sacrifice his throat to his own hands?

We, the commons of England, are a great part of the fundamental government of it; and three rights are so peculiar and inherent to us, that if we will not throw them away for fear or favour, for meat and drink, or those other little present profits that ill men offer to tempt us with, they cannot be altered or abrogated. And this I was willing to give you a brief hint of, that you may know what sort of creatures you are; and what your power is; lest, through ignorance of your own strength and authority, you turn slaves to the humours of those, that properly and truly are but your servants, and ought to be used so.

The first of these three fundamentals is *property*, that is, 'right and title to your own lives, liberties, and estates:' in this, every man is a sort of little sovereign to himself: no man has power over his *person*, to imprison or hurt it, or over his *estate*, to invade or usurp it: only your own transgression of the laws,

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(and those of your own making too) lays you open to loss; which is but the punishment due to your offences, and this but in proportion to the fault committed. So that the power of England is a *legal* power, which truly merits the name of *government*. That which is not legal, is a *tyranny*, and not properly a government. Now the *law* is umpire between king, lords, and commons, and the right and property is one in kind through all degrees and qualities in the kingdom: mark that.

The second fundamental, that is your birthright and inheritance, is *legislation*, or the power of making laws: 'No law can be made or abrogated in England 'without you.' Before Henry the Third's time, your ancestors, the freemen of England, met in their own *persons*; but their numbers much increasing, the vastness of them, and the confusion that must needs attend them, making such assemblies not practicable for business, this way of *representatives* was first pitched upon as an expedient, both to maintain the common right, and to avoid the confusion of those mighty numbers. So that now, as well as then, 'No law 'can be made, no money levied, nor a penny legally 'demanded (even to defray the charges of the government) without your *own consent*:' than which, tell me, what can be freer, or what more secure to any people?

Your third great fundamental right and privilege is executive, and holds proportion with the other two, in order to complete both your freedom and security, and that is, 'Your share in the *judicatory* power, in 'the execution and application of those laws that you 'agree to be made.' Inasmuch as no man, according to the ancient laws of this realm, can be adjudged in matter of *life, liberty, or estate*, but it must be by the judgment of his *peers*, that is, twelve men of the neighbourhood, commonly called a *JURY*; though this hath been infringed by two acts, made in the late long parliament, one against the Quakers in particular, and the other against Dissenters in general, called,

' An

'An act against seditious conventicles,' where persons are adjudged offenders, and punishable without a jury; which, it is hoped, this ensuing parliament will think fit in their wisdom to repeal; though with less severity, than one of the same nature (as to punishing men without juries) was by Henry the Eighth, who, for executing of it, hanged Empson and Dudley.

Consider with yourselves, that there is nothing more your interest, than for you to understand your *right* in the government, and to be constantly jealous over it; for your well-being depends upon its preservation.

In all ages there have been ill men; and we, to be sure, are not without them now; such as, being conscious to themselves of ill things, and dare not stand a parliament, would put a final dissolution upon the very constitution itself, to be safe, that so we might never see one another.

But this being a task too hard for them to compass, their next expedient is, to make them for their turn, by directing and governing the elections; and herein they are very artificial, and too often successful: which indeed is worse for us than if we had none. For thus the constitution of parliaments may be destroyed by parliaments, and we, who by law are *free*, may hereby come to be made *slaves* by law. If then you are *free*, and *resolve* to be so, if you have any regard to God's Providence, in giving you a claim to so excellent a constitution, if you would not void your own *rights*, nor lay a foundation of *vassalage* to your unborn followers, the poor posterity of your loins, for whom God and nature, and the constitution of the government, have made you *trustees*, then seriously weigh these following particulars.

I. In your present election, receive no man's *gift*, or *bribe*, to chuse him; but be assured, that he will be false to *you*, that basely tempts you to be false to your *country*, yourselves, and your children. How can you hope to see God with peace, that turn mercenaries in a matter, on which depends the well-being of an whole kingdom, for present and future times?

Q 4

Since,

Since, at a pinch, one good man gains a vote, and saves a kingdom: and what does any county, or burghs-town in England know, but all may depend upon their making a good choice? But then to sell the Providence of God, and the dear-bought purchase of your painful ancestors for a little *money*, (that after you have got it, you know not how little a while you may be suffered to keep it) is the mark of a wretched mind. Truly, such ought not to have the power of a freeman, that would so abuse his own, and hazard other mens freedom by it: he deserves to be cast over-board, that would sink the vessel, and thereby drown the company embarked with him.

Honest gentlemen will think they give enough for the choice, that pay their electors in a constant, painful, and chargeable attendance: but such as give *money* to be chosen, would *get* money by being chosen; they design not to serve *you*, but themselves *of you*; and then fare you well. As you will answer it to Almighty God, I intreat you to shew your abhorrence of this infamous practice: it renders the very constitution contemptible, that any should say, 'I can be chosen, if I will spend money, or give them drink enough:' and this is said not without reason; elections, that ought to be serious things, and gravely and reasonably performed, being generally made the occasions of more rudeness and drunkenness, than any of the wild May-games in use among us.

Thus by making men *law-breakers*, they are, it seems, made fit to chuse *law-makers*, their choice being the purchase of *excess*. But must we always owe our parliaments to *rioting* and *drunkenness*? And must men be made incapable of all *choice* before they chuse their *legislators*? I would know of any of you all, if in a difference about a private property, an horse or a cow, or any other thing, you would be as easy, indifferent, and careless in chusing your *arbitrators*? Certainly you would not: with what reason then can you be unconcerned in the qualifications of men, upon whose *fitness* and

and *integrity* depends all you and your posterity may enjoy? Which leads me to the other particulars.

II. Chuse no man that has been a *reputed pensioner*; it is not only against your interest, but it is disgraceful to you, and the parliament you chuse. The representatives of a nation ought to consist of the most wise, sober, and valiant of the people; not men of mean spirits, or fordid passions, that would sell the interest of the people that chuse them, to advance their own, or be at the beck of some great man, in hopes of a lift to a good employ: pray beware of these. You need not be straitened; the country is wide, and the gentry numerous.

III. By no means chuse a man that is an *officer at court*, or whose employment is *durante bene placito*, that is, at *will* and *pleasure*. Nor is this any reflection upon the king, who being one part of the government, should leave the other free, and without the least awe or influence, to bar or hinder its proceedings. Besides, an *officer* is under a temptation to be biassed; and, to say true, an *office* in a parliament man, is but a softer and safer word for a *pension*: the pretence it has above the other, is the danger of it.

IV. In the next place, chuse no *indigent person*; for those may be under a temptation of abusing their trust, to gain their own ends: for such do not prefer *you*, which should be the end of their choice, but *raise themselves by you*.

V. Have a care of *ambitious men* and *non-residents*, such as live about town, and not with their estates; who seek honours and preferments above, and little, or never, embetter the country with their expenses or hospitality, for they intend *themselves*, and not the advantage of the country.

VI. Chuse no *prodigal* or *voluptuous persons*; for besides that they are not regular enough to be law-makers, they are commonly *idle*; and though they may wish well to your interest, yet they will lose it, rather than their pleasures; they will scarcely give their attendance,

tendance, they must not be relied on. So that such persons are only to be preferred before those that are sober, to do *mischiefs*; whose debauchery is of the *mind*; men of unjust, mercenary, and sinister principles; who, the soberer they be to *themselves*, the worse they are to *you*.

VII. Review the members of the *last* parliaments, and their *inclinations* and *votes*, as near as you can learn them, and the conversation of the gentlemen of your own country, that were *not* members, and take your measures by both, by that which is your true and just interest, at this critical time of the day, and you need not be divided or distracted in your choice.

VIII. Rather take a *stranger*, if recommended by an unquestionable hand, than a neighbour ill-affected to your *interest*. It is not pleasing a neighbour, because rich and powerful, but saving *England*, that you are to eye: neither pay or return private obligations at the cost of the nation; let not such engagements put you upon dangerous elections, as you love your country.

IX. Be sure to have your eye upon *men of industry* and *improvement*. For those that are ingenious, and laborious to propagate the *growth* of the country, will be very tender of weakening or impoverishing it: you may *trust* such.

X. Let not your choice be flung upon men of *fearful dispositions*, that will let good-sense, truth, and your real interest in any point sink, rather than displease some one or other great man. If you are but sensible of your *own real great power*, you will wisely chuse those, that will, by all just and legal ways, firmly keep, and zealously promote it.

XI. Pray see that you chuse *sincere Protestants*; men that do not play the Protestant in *design*, and are indeed *disguised Papists*, ready to pull off their mask, when time serves: you will know such by their laughing at the *plot*, disgracing the evidence, admiring the traitors constancy, that were forced to it, or their religion and party were gone beyond an excuse or an equivoca-

equivocation. The contrary, are men that thank God for this discovery, and in their conversation zealously direct themselves in an opposition to the Papal interest, which indeed is a combination against good sense, reason, and conscience, and to introduce a blind obedience without (if not against) conviction. And that principle which introduces implicit faith and blind obedience in religion, will also introduce implicit faith and blind obedience in government. So that it is no more the *law* in the one than in the other, but the will and power of the *superior*, that shall be the rule and bond of our subjection. This is that fatal mischief Popery brings with it to civil society, and for which such societies ought to beware of it, and all those that are friends to it.

XII. Lastly, Among these, be sure to find out, and cast your favour upon, *men of large principles*, such as will not sacrifice their neighbour's property to the forwardness of their own party in religion: pick out such men, as will inviolably maintain civil rights, for all that will live soberly and civilly under the government.

Christ did not revile those that reviled him, much less did he persecute those that did not revile him. He rebuked his disciples, that would have destroyed those that did not follow and conform to them, saying, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of: I came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Which made the apostle to say, "That the weapons of their warfare were not carnal, but spiritual." This was the ancient Protestant principle, and where Protestants persecute for religion, they are false to their own profession, and turn Papists even in the worst sense, against whom their ancestors did so stoutly exclaim. Read the book of martyrs of all countries in Europe, and you will find I say true: therefore beware also of that Popery. Consider, that such partial men do not love England, but a sect; and prefer imposed uniformity, before virtuous and neighbourly unity. This is that
disturber

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disturber of kingdoms and states; and until the *good* man, and not the *opinionative* man, be the Christian in the eye of the government, to be sure, while force is used to propagate or destroy faith, and the outward comforts of the widow and fatherless are made a forfeit for the peaceable exercise of their consciences to God, He that sits in heaven, and judgeth righteously, whose eye pities the oppressed and poor of the earth, will with-hold his blessings from us.

O lay to heart the grievous spoils and ruins that have been made upon your harmless neighbours, for near these twenty years, who have only desired to enjoy their consciences to God, according to the best of their understandings, and to eat the bread of honest labour, and to have but a penny for a penny's-worth among you. Whose ox or ass have they taken? Whom have they wronged? Or when did any of them offer you violence? Yet sixty pounds have been distrained for twelve; two hundred pounds for sixty pounds. The flocks have been taken out of the fold, the herd from the stall; not a cow left to give milk to the orphan, nor a bed for the widow to lie on; whole barns of corn swept away, and not a penny returned; and thus bitterly prosecuted even by laws made against Papists. And what is all this for, unless their worshipping of God according to their conscience? For they injure no man, nor have they offered the least molestation to the government.

Truly, I must take the liberty to tell you, if you will not endeavour to redress these evils in your choice, I fear God will suffer you to fall into great calamity by those you hate. You are afraid of Popery, and yet many of you practise it; for why do you fear it, but for its compulsion and persecution? And will you compel or persecute *yourselves*, or chuse such as *do*? If you will, pray let me say, you hate the *Papists*, but not *Popery*. But God defend you from so doing, and direct you to do as you would be done by; that chusing such as love England, her people, and the

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civil rights, foundations may be laid for that security and tranquillity, which the children unborn may have cause to rise up and bless your names and memories for. Take it in good part; I mean nothing but justice and peace to all; and so conclude myself,

Your honest monitor, and Old England's
true friend,

PHILANGLUS.

O N E



O N E P R O J E C T

F O R T H E

G O O D O F E N G L A N D :

T H A T I S,

O U R C I V I L U N I O N I S O U R C I V I L S A F E T Y .

Humbly dedicated to the

G R E A T C O U N C I L , t h e P A R L I A M E N T

O F

E N G L A N D .

Published in the Year 1679.

RELIGION, as it is the noblest end of man's life, so it were the best bond of human society, provided men did not err in the meaning of that excellent word. Scripture interprets it to be "loving God above all, and our neighbours as ourselves;" but practice teacheth us, that too many merely resolve it into *opinion* and *form*; in which, not the *text*, but the *comment*, too often prevails: whence it comes to pass, that those bodies of men, who have but one common civil interest, are miserably distracted in favour of their adopted notions, upon which they are impatient to bestow an earthly crown. And this is the reason of that mischief and uncertainty that attend government. No sooner one opinion prevails upon another,

another, (though all hold the text to be sacred) but human society is shaken, and the civil government must receive and suffer a revolution; infomuch, that when we consider the fury and unnaturalness of some people for religion, (which shews they have none that is true, religion making men most natural as well as divine) we have reason to bewail the mis-understanding, as well as mis-living, of that venerable word.

But since it is so hard to disabuse men of their wrong apprehensions of religion, and the true nature and life of it, and consequently as yet too early in the day to fix such a religion upon which mankind will readily agree as a common basis for civil society, we must recur to some lower, but true, principle for the present, and I think there will be no difficulty of succeeding.

It is this, 'That civil interest is the foundation and end of civil government; and where it is not maintained intire, the government must needs decline.' The word INTEREST has a good and bad acceptation: when it is taken in an ill sense, it signifies a pursuit of *advantage* without regard to *truth* or *justice*; which I mean not: the good signification of the word, and which I mean, is 'a *legal endeavour* to keep *rights*, or 'augment honest *profits*,' whether it be in a private person or a society. By GOVERNMENT, I understand a 'just and equal *constitution*,' where *might* is not *right*, but *laws* rule, and not the *wills* or *power* of men; for that were plain tyranny.

This government must have a supreme authority in itself to determine, and not be superseded or controuled by any other power; for then it would not be a government, but a subjection; which is a plain contradiction.

Having thus explained the terms of the principle I have laid down, I repeat it, viz. 'That civil interest 'is the foundation and end of civil government,' and prove it thus: the *good* of the *whole* is the rise and end of government: but the *good* of the whole must needs be the *interest* of the whole; and consequently the *interest* of the whole, is the reason and end of government.

ment. None can stumble at the word *good*; for every man may easily and safely interpret that to himself, since he must needs believe, it is good for him to be preserved in an undisturbed possession of his civil rights, according to the free and just laws of the land; and the construction he makes for himself will serve his neighbour, and so the whole society.

But as the good of the people is properly the civil interest of the people, and that the reason and end of government; so is the maintenance of that civil interest *intire*, the preservation of government. For where people are *sure* of their *own*, and are protected from violence or injury, they cheerfully yield their obedience, and pay their contribution to the support of that government. But, on the contrary, where men are insecure of their civil rights, nay, where they are daily violated, and themselves in danger of ruin, and that for no sin committed against the nature of civil interest, (to preserve which, government was instituted) we ought to suppose their affections will flag, that they will grow dead-hearted, and that what they pay or do, may go against the grain: and, to say true, such unkindness is ready to tempt them to believe they should not of right contribute to the maintenance of such governments, as yield them no security or civil protection. Which unhappy flaw in the civil interest, proves an untoward crack in the government; men not being cordially devoted to the prosperity of that government that is exercised in their destruction; and how far that fraction upon the common interest of the people may affect the government I cannot tell, but to be sure it is insecure to any government, to have the people (its strength) divided, as they will be, where their interest is so disjointed by the government; one protected, the other exposed. Wherefore, wise governments have ever taken care to preserve their people, as knowing they do thereby preserve their own interest, and that how numerous their people, so large their interest. For not only Solomon has told us, "That the honour

“ of a prince is in the multitude of his people,” but experience teaches, that plenty of people is the riches and strength of a wise and good government; as that is, where vice is corrected, and virtue encouraged, and all taken in and secured in civils, that have the same civil interest with the government.

But as the good and interest of the whole is the rise and end of government, so must it suppose that the whole (which takes in all parties) concurs in seeking the good of the government; for the reason of the government will not suffer it to protect those that are enemies to its constitution and safety; for so it would admit of something dangerous to the society; for the security of which, government was at first instituted.

It will follow, that those that own another temporal power superior to the government they properly belong to, make themselves subjects not of the government they are born under, but to that authority which they avow to be superior to the government of their own country, and consequently men of another interest; because it is their interest to pursue the advantages of that power they acknowledge to be sovereign: but those that own, embrace and obey the government of their own country as their temporal supreme authority, and whose interest is one and the same with that of their own proper government, ought to be valued and protected by that government.

The principle thus far lies general: I will now bring it to our own case:

ENGLAND is a country populous and Protestant; and though under some dissents within itself, yet the civil interest is the same, and in some sense the *religious* too. For, first, all English Protestants, whether conformists or nonconformists, agree in this, that they only owe allegiance and subjection unto the civil government of *England*, and offer any security in their power to give of their truth in this matter. And, in the next place, they do not only consequentially disclaim the Pope's supremacy, and all adhesion to
foreign

foreign authority under any pretence, but therewith deny and oppose the Romish religion, as it stands degenerated from scripture, and the first and purest ages of the church; which makes up a great negative union.

And it cannot be unknown to men read in the reasons of the reformation, that a *protestation* made by the German reformers against the *imperial edicts* of Charles the fifth, imposing *Romish traditions*, gave beginning to the word *Protestant*.

In short, It is the interest of the ruling or church-Protestants of England, that the Pope should have no claim or power in England. It is also the interest of the Dissenting-Protestants, that the Pope should have no claim or power here in England, because they are subject to the same mischiefs and sufferings in their civil and religious rights that the church-Protestants are liable to: if then both are like to lose by Pope and foreign authority, their interest must needs be *one* against Pope and foreign authority; and if they have but one interest, it will follow, that the church-Protestant cannot prejudice the dissenting-Protestant, but he must weaken and destroy his *own* interest.

The civil interest of English Protestants being thus the same, and their religious interest too, so far as concerns a negative to the usurpation and error of Rome; I do humbly ask, if it be the interest of the government to expose those to misery, that have no other civil interest than that of the government? Or if it be just or equal, that the weaker should be persecuted by the more powerful Protestants, whose interest is positively the same in civils, and in religion *negatively*? One would think it were reasonable that they should not suffer by Protestants, who, if Popery have a day, are likely to suffer with them, and that upon the same principles. Experience tells us, that the wisest architects lay their foundations broad and strong, and raise their squares and structure by the most exact rules of art, that the fabrick may be secure against the violence of storms; but if people must be

destroyed by those of the same interest, truly that interest will stand but tottering, and every breath of opposition will be ready to shake it.

It was the inconfutable answer Christ made to the blasphemers of that power by which he wrought miracles; "A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand:" What he said then, let me on another occasion say now, 'an interest divided against itself must fall.'

I know some men will take fire at this, and by crying 'The church, the church,' hope to silence all arguments of this nature: but they must excuse me, if I pay no manner of regard to their zeal, and hold their devotion both ignorant and dangerous at this time. It is not the way to fill the church, to destroy the people. A church without people is a contradiction; especially when the scripture tells us, that it is the *people* that make the *church*.

And it is not without an appearance of reason that some good and wise men are apprehensive, that the greatest sticklers for persecuting Protestant Dissenters, in favour of the church of England, are men addicted and devoted to the church of Rome, or at least animated by such as are; who, despairing of doing any great feats, if known, hide themselves under these pretences; but the meaning of it is to debilitate the Protestant cause in general, by exciting the church of England to destroy all other Protestant interests in these kingdoms, that so nothing may remain for Popery to conflict with, but the few zealous abettors of that church.

And that this may not look disingenuous, or like a trick of mine, I will enforce it by a demonstration. It is plain fact, that the church of Rome hath, ever since the reformation, practised the restoration of her religion and power in these kingdoms. It is as evident, that *religion* is with her a word for *civil interest*; that is, that she may have the *rule* over men, both body and soul. For it is *government* she aims at, to have the

the reins of *power* in her hand, to give *law*, and wield the *sceptre*.

To do this, she must either have a *greater* interest than the Protestants that are now in possession, or else *divide* their interest, and so weaken them by themselves, and make them instruments to her ends. That her own force is inconsiderable, is clear: she has nothing within doors to give her hope, but the *discord* of Protestants. It follows then, that she must of necessity bestir herself, and use her arts to inflame the reckoning among Protestants, and carry their dissents about *religious* matters to a *division* in the *civil* interest. And it is the more to be feared, because whatever she has been to others, she has been ever true to herself.

If this then be the only domestick expedient left her, we are sure she will use it; and if so, it must needs be of great importance with all Protestants to let fall their private animosities, and take all possible care that their dissents about faith or worship, (which regard the other world) divide not their affection and judgment about the common and civil interest of their country; because if *that* be kept intire, it equally frustrates the designs of Rome, as if you were of *one* religion. For since, as I said before, *religion*, with the great men of that church, is nothing else but a softer word for *civil empire*, preserve you but your civil interest from *fraction*, and you are, in that sense, of *one religion* too; and that such an one, as you need not fear the temptation of Smithfield, if you will but be true to it.

This being the case, I would take leave to ask the *zealous* gentlemen of the English church, ‘ If conformity to the *fashion* of their *worship* be dearer to them than *England’s interest* and the cause of *Protestancy*? If their love to church-government be greater, than to the church and her religion, and to their country and her laws? Or, lastly, Whether in case they are sincere in their allegations for the church, (which, I confess ingenuously, I am apt to suspect) it is to be supposed that the present church-men (*conformists* I mean)

mean) are better able of *themselves* to secure Protestantcy, and our civil interest, against the attempts of Rome, than in *conjunction* with the *civil interest* of all *Protestant Dissenters*? If they say, 'Yes;' I would have them at the same time, for the same reason, to give it under their hands, that it is a standing rule in arithmetick, that ONE is more than SIX, and that hitherto we have been all mistaken in the art of numbers.

Being brought to this pitch, I conceive they must say, that they had rather deliver up their church to the power and designs of *Popery*, than suffer *Dissenters* to live freely among them, though *Protestants*, of one *negative* religion, and of the *same* civil interest; or else hasten to break those bonds that are laid upon dissenters of truly tender (and by experience) of peaceable consciences; and by law establish the free exercise of their worship to Almighty God, that the fears, jealousies, disaffection, and distraction, that now affect the one common interest of Protestants, may be removed; for it seems impossible to preserve a *distinct* interest from *both*. But to which of these they may incline, I must not determine; and yet, I hope, they will not be of the mind of a late monk of *Cullen*, who in his publick exercise exhorted the civil magistrates to chuse to have their city *poor* and catholick, that is *Popish*, rather than *great* and *opulent* by the admission of *trading Hereticks*: but if they should, may our magistrates have at least *their* prudence; for the *Culleners* gave him the hearing, but were as true to their *interest*, as the monk to his *superstition*.

Under favour, the *civil government* is greatly concerned to discountenance such bigotry; for it thins the people, lessens trade, creates jealousies, and endangers the peace and wealth of the whole. And, with submission, of what should the civil magistrate be more tender, than of suffering the civil interest of a great people to be disturbed and narrowed for the humour of any one party of them? For since the civil interest lies as large, as the *people* of that interest, the
people

people must be preserved, in order to preserve that *common interest*. Other notions ever did divide and weaken empire, and in the end they have rarely missed to pull the old house about their ears, who have governed themselves by such disproportionable measures: by all means, interest the affections of the people in the prosperity of the government, by making the government a SECURITY to their particular rights and properties.

I ask, 'If more custom comes not to the king, and more trade to the kingdom, by encouraging the labour and traffick of an *Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Independent, Quaker* and *Anabaptist*, than by an *Episcopalian* only?' If this be true, why should the rest be rendered incapable of trade, yea, of living? What schism or heresy is there in the labour and commerce of the *Anabaptist, Quaker, Independent* and *Presbyterian*, more than in the labour and traffick of the *Episcopalian*?

I beseech you give me leave: is there ever a *church-man* in England, that in distress would refuse the courtesy of one of these *Dissenters*? If one of them should happen to fall into a pond or ditch, would he deny to be helped out by a *Dissenter's* hand? Is it to be supposed, he would in such a pickle be stomachful, and chuse to lie there, and be smothered or drowned, rather than owe aid to the good-will of a poor *fanatick*? Or if his house were on fire, may we think that he would have it rather burnt to the ground, than acknowledge its preservation to a *non-conformist*? Would not the *act* be orthodox, whatever were the *man*? So in case of being sick, imprisoned, beset, benighted, out of the way, far from kindred or acquaintance, with an hundred other cases that may happen daily, can we think that such men would ask questions for conscience sake, or charge *schism* upon the *relief* given them? No, no; *self* will always be true to its *interest*, let *superstition* mutter what it will.

But since the *industry, rents, and taxes* of the *Dissenters* are as current as their neighbours, who loses

by such narrowness more than England, than the government and the magistracy? for till it be the interest of the farmer to *destroy* his *flock*, to *starve* the *horse* he rides, and the *cow* that gives him *milk*, it cannot be the interest of England to let a great part of her sober and useful inhabitants be destroyed about things that concern another world. And it is to be hoped, that the wisdom and charity of our governors will better guide them, both to their own real interest, and their people's preservation, which are inseparable; that so they may not starve them for *religion*, that are as *willing as able* to work for the good of *king and country*.

I beseech you, let *nature* speak; who is so much a better friend to human society, than false or froward *opinion*, that she often rectifies the mistakes of a prejudiced education; so that we may say, how kind, how gentle, how helpful does she teach us to be to each other, till that make-bate OPINION (falsly called *religion*) begins the jangle, and foments to hatred.

All the productions of nature are by *love*; and shall religion propagate by *force*? If we consider the poor *hen*, she will teach us humanity. Nature does not only learn her to hatch, but to be tender over, her feeble chickens, that they may not be a prey to the *kite*. All the *seeds* and *plants* that grow for the use and nourishment of man, are produced by the kind and warm influences of the *sun*. Nothing but *kindness* keeps up *human race*: men and women do not beget children in *spite*, but *affection*. It is wonderful to think by what friendly and gentle ways nature produces and matures the creatures of the world; and that *religion* should teach us to be *froward* and *cruel*, is lamentable: this were to make her the *enemy*, instead of the *restorer*, of nature. But, I think, we may without offence say, that since *true religion* gives men *greater* mildness and goodness than they had before, *that religion* which teaches them *less*, must needs be *false*. What shall we say then, but that *even nature* is a truer guide to peace, and better informs us to preserve civil interest, than *false religion*, and consequently, that we ought to be
true

trade to the natural and just principles of society, and not suffer one of them to be violated for humour or opinion.

Let us go together as far as our *way* lies, and preserve our unity in those principles which maintain our civil society. This is our common and our just interest; all Protestant Dissenters agree in this; and it is both wise and righteous to admit no faction upon this pact, no violence upon this concord. For the consequence of permitting any thing to break in upon the principles of human society, that is *foreign* to the nature of it, will distract and weaken that society.

We know, that in all *plantations* the wisdom of planters is well aware of this: and let us but consider, that the *same* ways that *plant* countries, must be kept to for *preserving* the plantation, else it will quickly be depopulated.

That country which is false to its first principles of government, and mistakes or divides its common and popular interest, must unavoidably decay. And let me say, that had there been this freedom granted eighteen years ago, *Protestancy* had been too potent for the enemies of it; nor had there been those divisions for *Poperity* to make its advantage by; at least, not in the civil interest of the nation. And where that has been preserved intire, it has been never able to prevail: witness the careful government of *Holland*, where the preservation of their civil interest from faction hath secured them against the growth of *Poperity*, though it be almost tolerated by them: so powerful are the effects of an united civil interest in government. Now because the civil interest of this nation is the *preservation* of the *free* and *legal* government of it from all subjection to *foreign claim*, and that the several sorts of Protestants are united, as in the common protestancy, that is, a *general renunciation* of Rome, so in the maintenance of this civil government as a common security, (for it strikes at both their rights, civil and sacred; their conscience, religion and law, to admit any foreign jurisdiction here) it must follow, that had these

these several, as well English as Protestant parties; been timely encouraged to this united civil interest, they had secured the government from this danger, by rendering it too formidable for the attempt.

But there is a twofold mistake that I think fit to remove. First, that the difference betwixt *Protestants* and their *Dissenters* is generally managed as if it were *civil*. Secondly, The difference betwixt *Papist* and *Protestant* is carried on as if it were chiefly *religious*.

To the first, I say, it is plausible, but false; it is an artifice of ill men to inflame the government against good people, to make base ends by other mens ruin: whereas they that dissent, are at a *Ne plus ultra* on the behalf of the English government, as well as themselves. They neither acknowledge, nor submit to any other authority. They hold the one common *civil* head; and not only acquiesce in the distribution of justice by law, but embrace it as the best part of their patrimony. So that the difference between *Protestants* and their *Dissenters* is purely *religious*, and mostly about church-government, and some forms of worship, apprehended to be not so pure and apostolical as could be desired: and here it is, that *tenderness* should be exercised, if in any case in the world, or St. Paul is mistaken.

But as to the second, under correction, the case is altered; for though it be mostly managed on the side of *religion*, the great point is merely *civil*, and should never be otherwise admitted or understood. For want of this caution, *Protestants* suffer themselves to be drawn into tedious controversies about religion, and give occasion to the professors and favourers of that way to exclaim against them, as *persecutors* for religion, who had reprobated such severity in the *Papists* to their ancestors (a most plausible, and very often a successful, plea); when, in reality, the difference is not so much *religious* as *civil*. Not but that there is a vast contrariety in doctrine and worship too: but, this, barely, should not be the cause of our so great distance, and that provision the law makes against them;

them; but rather that fundamental *inconsistency* they carry with them to the security of the English government and constitution unto which they belong, by acknowledging a *foreign* jurisdiction in these kingdoms. So that drawing into question and danger the constitution and government, to which scripture, and nature, and civil pact, oblige their fidelity and obedience, there seems a discharge upon the civil government from any farther care of *their* protection, who make it a piece of *conscience* to seek its *ruin*, and which is worse, a *principle*, not to be informed of *better things*; for even here not reason or law, but the Pope, must be judge.

This being the brief and modest state of the case, I must return to my first great principle, 'That *civil interest* is the foundation and end of *civil government*:' and that how much men desert the *interest* of a kingdom, so much they wound and subvert the *government* of it. I appeal to all wise and considerate men of the truth of this, by the present posture of affairs and their proper cause.

To come then to our point: Shall Englishmen *by* Englishmen, and Protestants *by* Protestants, be free or oppressed? That is, 'Whether shall we receive as *Englishmen* and *Protestants*, those that have no other *civil interest* than that which is purely *English*, and who sincerely profess and embrace the same *protestation*, for which the ancient reformers were stiled *Protestants*; or, for the sake of humour or base ends, *disown* them, and expose them and their families to *utter misery*?'

I would hope better of our great church-mens charity and prudence: but if they should be so unhappy as to keep to their old measures, and still play the gaudy, but empty, name of *church* against the *civil interest* and *religion* of the nation, they will shew themselves deserted of God; and then how long it will be before they will be seen and left of all sober men, let them judge. For, to speak freely, after all this *light* that is now in the world, no *ignorance* can excuse such
zeal,

zeal; nor will wise men believe it to be any thing more than a trick to weaken Protestantism, that her declared enemy may with less hazard gain the chair. And there is not so much reason to fear professed Roman-Catholics, as those gentlemen, who valuing themselves by their respects to the church, and tenderness of its independent honour, have the opportunity, with less suspicion, of letting in *Popery* at the back-door. These are men that pay off the *fanatick* in the name of the *church*, but for the good of the *Pope*, to whose account those endeavours must be placed.

But it will go a great way to our deliverance, if we are not careless to observe the secret workings of those that have vowed our misery; and, of them, such as are in masquerade, and wear the guise of friends, are most dangerous. But some men are purblind, they can see danger as near as their nose; but in a difficulty that is not a foot from them, they are presumptive, restive, and not to be governed. Could some church-men but see the irreparable mischiefs that will attend them (if sincere to their present profession) unless prevented by a modest and Christian *condescension* to Dissenting Protestant Christians, they would never suffer themselves to be misguided by stiff and rigid principles at this time of day.

If Christianity, that most meek and self-denying religion, cannot prevail upon them, methinks the power of interest, and that *self-interest* too, should have some success; for in those cases they use not to be obstinate.

But I expect it should be told me, 'That this is the way to ruin the *church*, and let in an *anarchy* in religion:' *Cujus contrarium verum*. I am glad to obviate this, before I leave you, seeing the contrary is most true; for it leaves the church and church-men as they are, with this distinction, that whereas now conformity is *coercive*, which is Popish, it will be then *persuasive*, which is Christian. And there may be some hopes, when the parsons, destitute of the magistrate's

strate's sword, shall of necessity inforce their religion by good doctrine and holy living: nor ought they to murmur, for that which satisfied Christ and his apostles, should satisfy them: *his* kingdom is not of *this* world; therefore they should not *fight* for him, if they would be his servants, and the children of his kingdom. Christ, and not civil force, is the rock his church is built upon. Nor indeed has any thing so tarnished the cause of Protestantcy, as the professors of it betaking themselves to *worldly* arms to propagate their religion. David could not wear Saul's armour; and true Protestants cannot use Popish weapons, *imposition* and *persecution*. In short; it is the very interest of the church of England, to preserve the civil interest *intire*, or else Popery will endanger all: but that cannot be, unless *all* of that civil interest be *preserved*; therefore Protestant Dissenters should be *indulged*.

But some will say, 'There is a difference, even among Dissenters: some will give a security to the civil government by taking the oaths; others will not: and be it through tenderness, how do we know but *Papists* will shelter themselves under the wings of such Dissenters? And so, in tolerating Protestant Dissenters to fortify Protestantcy, in reality *Popery* will be hereby sheltered *incognito*.'

I answer, first, That such oaths are little or no security to any government; and though they may give some allay to the jealousy of governors, they never had the effect desired. For neither in private cases, nor yet in publick transactions, have men adhered to their oaths, but their interest. He that is a knave, was never made honest by an oath: nor is it an oath, but honesty, that keeps honest men such. Read story, and consult our modern times; tell me what government stood the firmer or longer for them? Men may take them for their own advantage, or to avoid loss and punishment: but the question is, what real benefit or security comes thereby to the government? It is certain they have often insnared a *good* man, but never caught *one knave* yet: we ought not to put so
great

great a value upon oaths, as to render the security of our government so low and hazardous.

God's providence, and the wisdom of our ancestors, have found out a better test for us to rest upon, and that is, our *common interest*, and the *laws of the land DULY executed*: these are the security of our government.

For example: A man *swears* he will *not* plot, yet *plots*: pray what security is this oath to the government? But though it is evident that this be *no* security, that *law* which hangs him for plotting, is an *unquestionable* one. So that it is not for wise governors, by swearing men to the government, to think to secure it; but all having *agreed* to the laws by which they are to be governed, let any man *break* them at his *peril*. Wherefore *good laws*, and a *just execution* of them, and not *oaths*, are the *natural* and *real* security of a government.

But next: Though some may scruple the oaths, it is not for the sake of the matter so much as form; which, you know, is not the case of Roman Catholics, (pray distinguish); and those very persons, whoever they be, of Protestant Dissenters, I dare say they will very cheerfully promise their allegiance on the *same penalties*, and subscribe *any* renunciation of *pope* and *foreign authority*, which the art of man can pen: nor should it be hard for you to believe they should *subscribe* what they have always *lived*.

To that part of the objection which mentions the danger of *Papists* concealing themselves under the character of *Protestant Dissenters*; under favour I say it is most reasonable to believe, that those who will deny their faith upon record, (as those that subscribe your declaration do) will swallow the oaths too: for the declaration flatly denies the *religion*, but the oaths only the *pope's supremacy*, which even some of themselves pretend to reject. Therefore those that can sincerely *subscribe* the declaration cannot be *Papists*.

If it be yet objected, 'That *Papists* may have *dispensations* to subscribe the test, or a *pardon*, when
' they

‘ they have done it ;’ I answer, they may as well have dispensations to take the *oaths*, or pardons when they *have* taken them ; and these last six months prove as much. There is no fence against this snail. At this rate they may as well be *Protestants*, as *Protestant-Dissenters* ; *ministers* or *bishops* in *churches*, as *speakers* or *preachers* in *meeting-houses* : this objection only shews the weakness of both oaths and declarations for the purpose intended ; and not that they can hide themselves more under one people than another. For they that can have a dispensation or pardon for one act, can have it for another ; especially when the matter of the declaration is of a more general weight to them, than that of the oath : all which confirms my former judgment of the insecurity of such oaths to any government.

Give me leave then upon this to ask you, if you will bring a certain ruin upon any Protestant Dissenters for the sake of such an uncertain security to yourselves ? For this is the question : I beseech you to weigh it as becomes wise and good men : shall they be reprobated for tenderly refusing, what, being performed, cannot save or secure you ?

Consider, you have *no* reason to believe, but those that are *allowed* to subscribe the *declaration*, or that will be pardoned when they have done it, may be allowed to take the *oaths*, or will be pardoned or absolved when they have taken them : but you *are* certain, on the other side, that the imposing of the oaths will be a great snare to many Protestant Dissenters, that love the government, and renounce both pope and Popery : they will be ruined ; which, to me, is of the nature of an argument for those people : for their not taking the oaths, proves plainly, they have no dispensations, nor hopes of absolution, and therefore no Papists : shall they then lie under the severities intended against Papists, who have none of their dispensations or absolutions to deliver them from ? This is (with submission, but in plain terms) to make the case of the kingdom worse ; for it destroys those who
are

are not guilty, and whom, I believe, you would not destroy.

Having brought the matter to this, I shall first offer you a *new* test: next, the ways of taking it, with most aggravation against the party rejecting or breaking it: and lastly, how you may secure yourselves from Papists disguising themselves amongst Protestant-Dissenters; that so nothing may remain a *remora* in the way, that shall not be removed, to leave you a plain and even path to peace and safety.

The New T E S T.

I A. B. do solemnly and in good conscience, in the sight of God and men, acknowledge and declare, that King Charles the Second is lawful king of this realm, and all the dominions thereunto belonging. And that neither the pope nor see of Rome, nor any else by their authority, have right in any case to depose the king, or dispose of his kingdom, or upon any score whatever to absolve his subjects of their obedience, or to give leave to any of them to plot or conspire the hurt of the king's person, his state or people; and that all such pretences and power are false, pernicious, and damnable.

And I do farther sincerely profess, and in good conscience declare, that I do not believe that the pope is Christ's vicar, or Peter's lawful successor, or that he or the see of Rome, severally or jointly, are the rule of faith or judge of controversy, or that they can absolve sins: nor do I believe that there is a purgatory after death; or that saints should be worshipped, or images in any sense be worshipped. I believe, that there is any transubstantiation of the Lord's supper, or elements of bread and wine, or after the consecration thereof by any whatsoever. But I do firmly believe, that the sacrament of the communion of the Roman-Catholick church

church is both superstitious and idolatrous. And all this I do acknowledge, intend, profess, and declare without any equivocation, or reserved or other sense, than the plain and usual signification of these words, according to the real intention of the law-makers, and the common acceptance of all true Protestants.

This is the test I offer; large in matter, because comprehensive of oaths and test too, yet brief in words.

The next thing is the ways of taking it with most aggravation upon the refusers or violaters of it.

1. That in all cities and great towns, notice be given by the magistrates thereof to the inhabitants of every ward or parish to appear on such a day, be it New-years-day, or Ash-Wednesday rather (when the pope curses all Protestants) at their publick hall, or other places of commerce, where the magistrates shall first openly read, subscribe, and seal the test. Then that it be read again by the proper officer of the place to the people, and that those that take it, do audibly pronounce the words after him that reads it; and when they have so done, that they subscribe and seal it. That such subscriptions be registered, and copies of each parish subscription transmitted to the parish, and affixed upon some publick place for all that will to see.

2. That in the countries, the parishes of each hundred or rape may be likewise summoned to appear upon the day aforesaid, at the head market-town in the said hundred or rape; and that the justices of the peace within that part of the county shall first read, subscribe, and seal the said test, in view of the people; and then that the people say, subscribe, and seal the test, as is before expressed. Which being done, let the said subscriptions be collected into one volume, and kept in the county-court as a book of record; and that to each parish be transmitted a

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copy of the said parish subscription, to be affixed upon some publick place within the said parish, for all to see.

Lastly, Let this be done annually, that is, upon every New-year's-day, or Ash-Wednesday, as a perpetual testimony of the people's affection to the king and government, and their abhorrence of the practices of Rome.

The abuse of this discrimination should be very penal: for it is a great lie upon a man's own conscience, and a cheat put upon the government: your wisdom can best proportion and direct the punishment; but it can scarcely be too severe, as our business stands.

But as, in case of such hypocrisy, a severe penalty should be inflicted, so pray let provision be made, that if any person so subscribing, should be afterwards called by the name of Jesuit or Papist, without very good proof, it should be deemed and punished in open sessions, for a slander and breach of peace; yet so as that the penalty may be remitted at the request of the abused party.

I should think that this business, carefully done, might render needless my answer to the last objection, viz. 'Which way shall we be able to prevent Papists from passing for Protestant Dissenters, that so the security propounded to the government be not bafled by disguise?' For no Papist can subscribe this, but he will lie in the face of the government and country, and that yearly, and upon record too; which is ten times more than a transient oath, muttered with one word spoken, and another dropt. However, that we may carry it as far as human prudence can go,— yet offer two expedients:

First, That upon jealousy of any person's being a Papist, or popishly inclined, who is known to frequent the assemblies of Protestant Dissenters, four of that party, of most note and integrity, unto which he pretends to adhere, should be summoned to appear before

before those justices of the peace unto whom the complaint is made, to testify their knowledge of the person suspected, his education, principles, and manner of life: which way of inspection, as it goes as far as man can reach, so can it scarcely fail; for those persons will not only discover their own hypocrisy if they conceal him, but expose themselves and their friends to ruin. So that to say true, the government has the interest and security of an entire party, for the discovery of every such suspected person.

But if this will not do, then,

Secondly, Be you pleased to refer the discrimination of suspected persons to the good old way of the government, that is, 'The enquiry and judgment of twelve men of the neighbourhood;' to wit, *a jury*: provided always, that they be such as have taken, or will themselves take, the test; else, that they may be excepted against by the party suspected.

Indeed a good expedient may be made out of both, for the first may be the evidence to the last, and I think you will hardly fail of your ends.

I shall conclude with this request, first, to Almighty God, that he would please to make us truly and deeply sensible of his present mercies to us, and to reform our hearts and lives to improve them thankfully. And, secondly, to you, that we may be loving, humble, and diligent, one to and for another: for as from such amendments we may dare promise great and sudden felicity to England, so if looseness in life, and bitterness in religion, be not speedily reprehended and reformed, and the common civil interest maintained entire, God will, I justly fear, repent he has begun to do us good, adjourn the day of our deliverance to that of our repentance and moderation, and overcast these happy dawns of his favour, by a thick and dismal cloud of confusion and misery: which God avert!

These things that I have written, are no wild guesses, or may-be's, but the disease and cure, the danger and safety, of England: in treating of which, that

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God who made the world knows, I have not gratified any private spleen or interest (for I am sorry at the occasion) but singly and conscientiously intended his honour, and the lasting good of England, to which all personal and party considerations ought ever to submit.

Amicus Plato, amicus Aristoteles, sed magis amica veritas, i. e. Anglia.

Your own faithful and most affectionate

PHILANGLUS.

A BRIEF

A B R I E F
EXAMINATION AND STATE
O F
LIBERTY SPIRITUAL,
BOTH WITH RESPECT TO
PERSONS in their PRIVATE CAPACITY,
AND IN THEIR
CHURCH SOCIETY and COMMUNION.

Written for the Establishment of the Faithful, Information of the Simple-hearted, and Reproof of the Arrogant and High-minded.

By a Lover of TRUE LIBERTY, as it is in JESUS.

WILLIAM PENN.

To go amongst the People of the Lord called Quakers.

“ If the SON make you FREE, ye shall be free INDEED.”
John viii. 36.

“ If we walk in the Light as he is in the Light, we have Fellowship one with another, and the Blood of Jesus Christ
“ his Son cleanseth us from all Sin.” 1 John i. 7.

him; to wit, to be a Saviour and a leader, to save us from our corruptions, and guide us in the narrow way of his holy cross, and through the strait gate of self-denial, which leads to eternal life. And as many as have entered at this door, are come to have unity with God, and one with another; to love him above all, and their neighbours as themselves; yea, to prefer each other before themselves. Such will not violate the great law of their Lord and master; "Love one another;" the new, and yet the old commandment: these dwell in love, and so they dwell in God; for "God is love." It was the beloved disciple's testimony, and it comes up to what another man of God hath said, namely, "The church that dwells in God:" if she dwells in God, then in love; consequently her members are in union, of one mind in church matters, since she has but one head to rule her.

Peruse this brief discourse in this love, and it may be to edification. My aim is to assert the truth, detest error, and point in true brotherly kindness at those shoals and sands which some by mistake, or over boldness, have and may run upon. O friends! I greatly desire, that the spirit of love, wisdom, and a sound understanding, of meekness, judgment, and mercy, may ever rest upon you; that blamelessly you may be kept an holy family, at unity with itself, to the Lord God your Redeemer, that he over all may in you, through you, and by you, be exalted, honoured and praised, who is worthy and blessed for ever,

A

BRIEF EXAMINATION

O F

SPIRITUAL LIBERTY.

Published in the Year 1681.

Quest. **W**HAT is spiritual liberty?
Answ. It is two-fold; there is a true and a false liberty, as a true and false spirit, the right discerning of which concerns every one's eternal well-being.

Qu. What is true spiritual liberty?

Answ. Deliverance from sin by the perfect law in the heart, "The perfect law of liberty," James ii. otherwise called, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, that makes free from the law of sin and death;" elsewhere stiled, "The law of truth writ in the heart," which makes free indeed, as saith Christ, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." So that the liberty of God's people stands in the truth, and their communion in it, and in the perfect spiritual law of Christ Jesus, which delivers and preserves them from every evil thing that doth or would embondage. In this blessed liberty, it is not the will nor wisdom of man, neither the vain affections and lusts, that rule or give law to the soul; for the minds of all such as are made free by the truth, are by the truth conducted in doing and suffering through their earthly pilgrimage.

Qu. What is false liberty?

Answ.

Answ. A departing from this blessed Spirit of truth, and a rebelling against this perfect law of liberty in the heart, and being at liberty to do our own wills; upon which cometh reproof and judgment.

Qu. But are there not some things wherein we ought to be left to our own freedom?

Answ. "We are not our own, for we are bought with a price;" and in all things ought we to glorify God with our bodies, souls, and spirits, which are the Lord's.

Qu. But must we have a motion or command from the Spirit of truth for all things that we do?

Answ. That may be *according to* the truth, which may not be by the immediate *motion* or *command* of the truth; for that is *according to* the truth, that is not *against* the mind of the truth, either particularly or generally expressed. The truth commands me to "do all to the praise and glory of God;" but not that I should wait for a motion to do every *particular* thing. For example: the variety of actions in trading, commerce, and husbandry, the variety of flesh, fish, and fowl for food, with more of the same nature, in all which there is a choice and liberty, but still according to the truth, and within the holy bounds and limits of it.

Qu. Then it seems there are some things left to our freedom.

Answ. Yes; but it must be according to the mind of God's truth: there are things enjoined, such as relate to our duty to God, to our superiors, to the household of faith, and to all men and creatures, these are *indispensable*. There are also things that may be done or left undone, which may be called *indifferent*; as what sort of meat I will eat to-day, whether I will eat flesh, fish, or herbs, or what hours I will eat my meals at, with many such outward things of life and converse; yet even in such cases I ought to act according to the truth, in the temperance and wisdom of it.

Qu. But doth not freedom extend farther than this? For since God hath given me a manifestation of his

his Spirit to profit withal, and that I have the gift of God in myself, should I not be left to act according as I am free and persuaded in my own mind, in the things that relate to God; left, looking upon myself as obliged by what is revealed unto another, though it be not revealed unto me, I should be led out of my own measure, and act upon another's motion, and so offer a blind sacrifice to God?

Ans. This is true in a sense; that is, if thou art such an one that canst do nothing *against* the truth, but *for* the truth, then mayest thou safely be left to thy freedom in the things of God: and the reason is plain, because thy freedom stands in the perfect law of liberty, in the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and in the truth, which is Christ Jesus, which makes thee free indeed; that is, perfectly free from all that is bad, and perfectly free to all that is holy, just, lovely, honest, comely, and of good report; but if thou pleadest thy freedom against such things, yea, obstructest and slightest such good, wholesome and requisite things, thy freedom is naught, dark, perverse, out of the truth, and against the perfect law of love and liberty.

Qu. But must I conform to things whether I can receive them or no? Ought I not to be left to the grace and Spirit of God in my own heart?

Ans. To the first part of the question, nay; to the last, yea. But now let us consider what is the reason thou canst not receive them: is the fault in the things themselves? Are they inconsistent with truth, or will not the truth own or assent unto them, or is the fault in thee? That is to say, is it thy weakness, or thy carelessness? If thy weakness, it is to be borne with, and to be informed; if thy carelessness, thou oughtest to be admonished; for it is a dangerous principle, and pernicious to true religion, and, which is worse, it is the root of ranterism to assert, 'That nothing is a duty incumbent upon thee, but what thou art persuaded is thy duty;' for the *feared* conscience pleads his liberty against all duty, the *dark* conscience

is here unconcerned, the *dead* conscience is here uncondemned; unless this distinction be allowed of, that there may be an ignorance or an insensibility from inability or incapacity, or a dark education; and an ignorance and insensibility, from carelessness, disobedience, prejudice, &c. So that though thou art not to conform to any thing ignorantly, yet thou art seriously to consider why thou art ignorant, and what the cause of such ignorance may be: certainly it cannot be in God, nor in his gift to thee; it must then needs be in thyself, who hast not yet received a sense for or against the matter, about which thou art in doubt. To the second part of the question; ‘Ought I not to be left to the grace of God in my own heart?’ Answ. That is of all things most desirable, since they are well left that are there left; for there is no fear of want of unity, where all are left with the One Spirit of Truth; they must be of one mind, they cannot be otherwise. So that to plead this against unity, is to abuse the very plea, and to commit the greatest contradiction to that very doctrine of scripture, viz. ‘That all should be guided by the grace and spirit of God in themselves;’ for the end of that doctrine is certainty. “They shall all know me, saith the Lord, from the least to the greatest. And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them,” Jer. xxxii. 39. “And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh,” Ezekiel xi. 19. “And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul.” Acts iv. 32. Is not this unity too? “I will restore unto you a pure language; they shall be of one heart, and of one mind, and great shall be their peace.” Therefore I must say to thee, Friend, What if thou wilt not be left with the grace and Spirit of God in thyself, nor wait for its mind, or be watchful to its revelations, nor humble and quiet

quiet till thou hast received such necessary manifestations, but pleadest against the counsel of the Spirit of the Lord in other faithful persons, under the pretence of being left to his Spirit in thyself; by which means thou opposest the Spirit to the Spirit, and pleadest for dis-unity, under the name of liberty; I ask thee, May not I exhort thee to the practice of that I am moved to press thee to the practice of? If not, thou art the imposer, by restraining me from my Christian liberty; and not only so, but away goeth preaching, and with it the scriptures, that are both appointed of God for “exhortation, reproof, and instruction.”

Qu. But are there not various measures, diversities of gifts, and several offices in the body?

Answ. True; but therefore are not the members of one mind, one will, and one judgment, in common and universal matters, especially relating to the family and church of God? And indeed there cannot be a falser reasoning than to conclude *discord* from *diversity*, *contrariety* from *variety*. Is there contrariety of *bloods*, *lives*, *feelings*, *seeings*, *bearings*, *tastings*, *smellings*, in one and the same *body*, at one and the same *time*? No such matter: experience is a demonstration against all such insinuations. So that though it be granted, that there is diversity of gifts, yet there is no disagreement in sense; and though variety of offices, yet no contrariety in judgment concerning those offices. Well say the holy scriptures of truth, “There is but One God: the Lord our God is but One Lord: there is but One God and Father of all things (that are good); and there is but One Lord, one faith, and one baptism;” and his light, life, and Spirit is at unity with itself in all: what comes from the light, life, or Spirit in one, it is the same in truth and unity to the rest, as if it did rise in themselves: this is seen in our assemblies every day, and will be throughout all generations in the church of God, among those that live in the lowly truth, in which the pure sense and sound judgment stand: “God is not the God of confusion, but order:” every one in his order is satisfied.

fied, hath unity and true fellowship, with whatever comes from the life of God in another: for this precious life reacheth throughout the heritage of God, and is the common life that giveth the common feeling and sense to the heritage of God. Degree or measure *is* the same life can never contradict or obstruct that which is *from* the same life for the common benefit of the family of God. "The Lord is the unmeasurable and incomprehensible glorious Being of Life," yet have we unity with him in all his works, who are come to his divine measure of light and truth in our own hearts, and live therein; and shall we not have unity with that which proceeds from a fellow-creature? In short, the saints way is in the light, wherein there is neither doubt nor discord; yea, they are children of the light, and called *light*, and "The *lights* of the world;" and can it be supposed that such should disagree and contradict each other in their exterior order and practice in the church before the world? O the blessed seamless garment of Jesus! Where that is known, these things can never rise. But yet again, "The just man's path is" not only a light, but a "*shining* light," brightness itself: certainly there can be no stumbling. It is also said, that "light is sown for the righteous;" then the righteous shall never want light upon any occasion: and saith that beloved evangelist and apostle of our Lord Jesus Christ, "They that walk in the light have fellowship one with another," 1 John i. Whence it is easy to conclude, they that go out of the fellowship, go out of the light: but if they that walk in the light, have fellowship one with another, what shall we say of those that plead being left to the light to justify their not having fellowship one with another? And, which is yet worse, who suppose people may conscientiously and justifiably dissent within themselves, and that by reason of the variety of the degrees of the Spirit and grace that are given of God unto them; as if the lesser degree may dissent from the greater, because of its *being* able to comprehend it. And to make this principle

principle more authentick, such tell us, 'This is the ancient principle of truth;' and object, 'How will you else be able to maintain the Quakers principles?' The fallacy of all which, lieth (as I said before) in not rightly distinguishing between diversity and disagreement, variety and contrariety; for this diversity hath *concord*, and this variety hath *unity*. And it is a blindness that hath too much of late happened to some, by going from the one life and spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, first to fall into disagreements, and then plead for it, under the notion of diversity of measures. I would ask all such persons, who arrogate to themselves such a peculiar knowledge of the ancient principles of truth, or the Quakers first principles; 1st, 'Whether they believe there be a Christian body? 2dly, 'Whether this body hath an head? 3dly, 'Whether Christ be not this head? 4thly, 'Whether this head be without eyes, ears, smell, and taste, and this body without sense and feeling?' If not, 'Whether this head seeth, heareth, smelleth, tasteth, *differingly*, and *contrarily* to itself? and whether this body hath a contrary feeling at the same time about the same thing?' And if it be true, that the church of Christ, redeemed by his most precious blood to live to him, see with the same eye, hear with the same ear, speak with the same mouth, live by the same breath, and are led by the same spirit, where is this disagreement, contrariety, or dissent about the things of his church?

Qu. But the members of Christ's church in the primitive times had different apprehensions; as the apostles, and the people gathered by them.

Answ. Pray let me know who they were, and in what cases?

Qu. The persons were PAUL and PETER, and those Christians that differed about meats; and the scripture is plain in the case.

Answ. The difference between Peter and Paul (in the Acts) testifies the weakness of Peter, and the place justifies Paul's reproof of his too great compliance with

with the Jews in some of their rites; which makes *against* liberty of various practices in the church of Christ, and not for *indulging* them. That instance about the difference of Christians as to *meats*, &c. has nothing in it to the end for which it is alledged; for this related not to *church-order* or *communion*, but *private* and *personal freedoms*, what each might do with respect to themselves; that is, they might make laws to themselves, in things that only concerned private persons, and it centered there; e. g. 'What I will eat, when I will eat,' things to myself, and for myself, as a man having power over my own appetite: the liberty in things private, personal, and indifferent, makes nothing for dissenting about church matters in things of communion and society, and that also are not indifferent, (as to eat *fish*, or eat *flesh*, or eat *herbs*, plainly is) but necessary; as to be careful and orderly about the external business of the church: these are no Jewish rites, nor shadowy ceremonies; no meats nor drinks that are private and personal, where weakness is apt to mistake (that were an unnecessary and an unchristian yoke to bear) but things comely, orderly, and of good report, that tend to purity, peace and diligence in things acceptable to God, and requisite among his people in their temporal and christian capacity. And herein the apostle Paul exercised his godly authority; and we find that not only those that opposed themselves to it, as thinking he took too much upon him, demanded a *mark* of Christ's speaking in him, but are in scripture branded with "contention." But the true believers, that had in themselves a mark of Christ's speaking in him, were of *one mind*, and avoided such as were given to *contention*; for it was not the custom of the churches of Christ. Thus were Christ's people of *one heart*, in things relating to their communion. Yet a little farther; they that have the mind of Christ, are of one mind; for Christ is not divided: they that have Christ for their head, have one counsellor and prophet, one *seer* and bishop, they disagree not in their judgments
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in things relating to him, and the good of his church; they have one and the same guide; for the one spirit, into which they have all drank, and by it are baptized into one body, leads them all. Now to every member is a "measure of the same spirit given to profit with;" and though every member is not an *eye*, nor an *ear*, nor a *mouth*, yet every member hath unity with the *eye*, with the *ear*, with the *mouth*, in their proper and respective acts, and they one with the other: the *eye* sees for the *mouth*; the *mouth* speaks for the *eye*; and the *ear* hears for both: this variety hath no discord; but in this diversity of gifts and offices, each member is sensible of the other, and moves and acts by one and the same life, spirit, and guidance, which is omnipresent, proportionable to every member in its distinct office. It must be granted, that there are helps in the church, as well as that there is a church at all; and the Holy Ghost has compared those helps (as is before-mentioned) to several members and senses of man's body, as an *eye*, an *hand*, a *foot*, *bearing*, *smelling*, &c. All then cannot be the *eye*, neither can all be the *hand*, for then they would confound their office, and act disagreeably to the ordination of the great orderer of his church. And if I will not comply with him that God hath made an *eye*, because I am not that *eye*, or an *hand*, because I am not that member myself, nor a party to the action or performance of that member, I resist the Lord, though under pretence of resisting man for the Lord's sake. And truly, this is the rock that some of our own time, as well as persons of former ages, have split upon; they have not been contented with their own station in the body, they have not kept to their own gift, nor been taken up with the duty of their own place in the church. If he that is a *foot* would be an *hand*, and the *hand* covets to be an *eye*, envying others their allotted station, through height of mind, and walking loose from the holy cross, there can be no such thing as concord and fellowship in the church of Christ.

Farthermore, since the spirit of the Lord is one in all, it ought to be obeyed through another, as well as in one's self: and this I affirm to you, that the same lowly frame of mind that receives and answers the mind of the spirit of the Lord in a man's self, will receive and have unity with the mind of the same spirit through another: and the reason is plain; because the same self-evidencing power and virtue that ariseth from the measure of the spirit of truth in one's self, and that convinceth a man in his own heart, doth also attend the discovery of the mind of the same spirit, when delivered by another; for the words of the "Second Adam, the quickening spirit," through another, are spirit and life, as well as in thy own particular: this is discerned by the spiritual man that judgeth all things, although the carnal man pleadeth being left to his *freedom*; and it may be talks of being left to the *spirit* in himself too; the better to escape the sense and judgment of the spiritual man. It is my earnest desire, that all that have any knowledge of the Lord, would have a tender care how they use that plea against their faithful brethren, that God put into their mouths against the persecuting priests and hirelings of the world, namely, 'I must mind the spirit of God in myself:' for though it be a great truth that all are to be left thereunto, yet it is as true, that he whose soul is left with the spirit of truth in himself, differs not from his brethren that are in the same spirit; and as true it is, that those who err from the spirit of truth, may plead being left to the spirit in *themselves*, against the motion and command of the spirit through another, when it pleaseth not his or her high mind and perverse will; for a saying may be true or false, according to the subject matter it is spoken upon, or applied to: we own the assertion, we deny the application: there lies the snare. It is true, the people of God ought to be left to the guidings of the spirit of God in *themselves*; but for this to be so applied, as to disregard the preachings or writings of Christ's enlightened servants,
because

because by them applied properly to the preaching or writing of false prophets and seducers, will by no means follow. I say the doctrine is true, but not exclusively of all external counsel or direction; therefore false in application, where men are allowed to have had the fear of God, and the mind of his spirit, and are not proved to have acted in their own wills and wisdom, or without the guidance of the spirit of God, about the things of his church and kingdom.

Qu. But though this be true, which hath been alleged for heavenly concord, yet what if I do not presently see that service in a thing, that the rest of my brethren agree in? In this case, what is my duty and theirs?

Answ. It is thy duty to wait upon God in silence and patience, out of all fleshly consultations; and as thou abidest in the simplicity of the truth, thou wilt receive an understanding with the rest of thy brethren, about the thing doubted. And it is their duty, whilst thou behavest thyself in meekness and humility, to bear with thee, and carry themselves tenderly and loving towards thee: but if, on the contrary, thou disturbest their godly care and practice, and growest contentious, and exaltest thy judgment against them, they have power from God to exhort, admonish, and reprove thee; and (if thou perseverest therein) in his name to refuse any farther fellowship with thee, till thou repentest of thy evil.

Qu. But, lest I should mistake, when thou speakest of true liberty, that it stands in being made free by the truth from all unrighteousness, dost thou mean, that no other persons ought to have the liberty of exercising their dissenting consciences, but that force may be lawful to reduce such as are reputed erroneously conscientious?

Answ. By no means: it were a great wickedness against God, who is Lord of the souls and spirits of men, and ought to preside in all consciences, who, as the apostle saith, "Is the only potentate, and hath "immortality." For though I give the true liberty

of soul and conscience to those only that are set free by the power of Christ, from the bondage of sin, and captivity of death, yet do I not intend that any person or persons should be in the least harmed for the external exercise of their dissenting consciences in worship to God, though erroneous: for though their consciences be blind, yet they are not to be forced; such compulsion giveth no sight, neither do corporal punishments produce conviction: this we, above all people, in our day, have withstood, in speaking, writing, and suffering; and, blessed be God, continue so to do with faithfulness. For faith is the gift of God, and forced sacrifices are not pleasing to the Lord.

Qu. But according to thy argument, it may be my fault, that I have not the gift of faith; and upon this presumption, it may be, thou wilt inflict some temporal penalties upon me.

Answ. No such matter; for such kind of faults are not to be punished with temporal or worldly penalties; for whether the errors be through weakness or wilfulness, not relating to moral practice, all external coercion and corporal punishment is excluded. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but "spiritual."

Qu. But what then is the extent of the power of the church of Christ, in case of schism or heresy?

Answ. The power that Christ gave to his church was this, 'That offenders, after the first and second admonition, (not repenting) should be rejected: not imprisoned, plundered, banished, or put to death; this belongs to the whore and false prophet: O! all these things have come to pass for want of humility, for want of the ancient fear, and keeping in the quiet habitation of the just: the truth in you all shall answer me. And this I affirm, from the understanding I have received of God, not only that the enemy is at work to scatter the minds of friends, by that loose plea, 'What hast thou to do with me? Leave me to my freedom, and to the grace of God in myself,'

and

and the like: but this proposition and expression, as now understood and alleged, is a deviation from, and a perversion of, the ancient principle of truth; for this is the plain consequence of this plea, if any one (especially if they are but lately convinced) shall say, 'I see no evil in paying tithes to hireling priests, ' in that they are not claimed by Divine right, but by ' the civil laws of the land. I see no evil in marrying ' by the priest, for he is but a witness. Furthermore, ' I see no evil in declining a publick testimony in suf- ' fering times, or hiding in times of persecution, for ' I have Christ's and Paul's examples. I see no evil ' in worshipping and respecting the persons of men; ' for whatever others do, I intend a sincere notice that ' I take of those I know, and have a good esteem ' for. Lastly, I see no evil in keeping my shop shut ' upon the world's holidays and mafs-days, (as they ' call them) though they are rather lewdly and su- ' perstitiously than religiously kept; for I would not ' willingly give any offence to my neighbours. And ' since your testimony is against imposition, and for ' leaving every one to the measure of the grace which ' God hath given him, not only no man hath power ' to reprove or judge me, but I may be as good a ' friend as any of you, according to my measure.' And now, here is measure set up against measure, which is confusion itself.—Babel indeed! this is that very rock both professors and profane would long since have run us upon, namely, 'That a way is ' hereby opened to all the world's libertines, to plead ' the light within for their excesses:' which indeed grieves the spirit of God, and was severely judged by our friends in the beginning, and is still reprov'd by them that keep their habitation; though some are become as wandering stars, through their own pride, and the prevalency of the hour of temptation that hath overtaken them; whereas had they kept in the channel of love and life, in the orb and order of the celestial power, they had shined as fixed stars in the firmament of God for ever. And from the deep sense that

I have of the working of the enemy of Zion's peace, to rend and divide the heritage of God, who under the pretence of crying down *man*, forms, and prescriptions, is crying down the heavenly man Christ Jesus, his blessed order and government, which he hath brought forth by his own revelation and power through his faithful witnesses, this I farther testify, First, That the enemy, by these fair pretences, strikes at the godly care and travail that dwells upon the spirits of many faithful brethren, that all things might be preserved sweet, comely, virtuous, and of good report in the church of God. Secondly, That there never was greater necessity of this godly care than at this day, since we were a people, wherein the cross, by too many, is not so closely kept to as in days past, and in which there is not only a great convincement, but a young generation descended of friends, who though they retain the form their education hath led them into, yet many of them adorn not the gospel with that sensible, weighty, and heavenly conversation as becomes the children of the undefiled religion, and the seed of that precious faith which works by the love that overcomes the world. And the Lord God of heaven and earth, that hath sent his Son Christ Jesus a light into our hearts and consciences, to whose search and judgment all ought to (and must) bring their deeds, and render up their account, beareth holy record, that for this end hath he moved upon the spirits of his servants, and for this good end only have his servants given forth, recommended, and put in practice, those things that are now in godly use among his people, whether in this or other nations, relating to mens and womens meetings, and their divers and weighty services. And farther; in the fear of the Almighty God, I shall add, that heavenly peace and prosperity dwell with those who are found in an holy and zealous practice of them: wherefore I warn all, that they take heed of a slighting and obstinate mind, and that they have a care how they give way to the outcry of some, *falsly*, intituled, 'Liberty of conscience against imposition,'

‘*liberty,*’ &c. for the end thereof is to lead back again, and give ease to the carnal mind, which, at last, will bring death again upon the soul to God, and the living society of his children. And indeed, it is a great shame that any who have ever known the truth of God in the inward parts, and the sweet society of brethren, especially those who were early in the work of this blessed day and heavenly dispensation, should so far depart from the fear and awe of the Lord, as to use such unfavoury, as well as untrue expressions: this is very far from that meek spirit of Jesus, and the first love, which they pretend to have so singularly kept in; which beareth all things, suffereth all things, and endureth all things, and teacheth to keep the word of patience in the hour of tribulation; nay, but this is judging of spiritual things with a carnal and prejudiced mind, stumbling at the matter for the sake of the persons through whom it comes, not eying nor weighing the spirit the thing arises from, but the person by whom it is spoken, which darkens the eye of the understanding, and blinds, by prejudice, the mind that should discern, taste, and judge; from whence many mischiefs have sprung to the church of Christ in divers ages: nor is it the least evil this spirit of strife is guilty of, even at this day, that it useth the words, ‘*Liberty of conscience and imposition,*’ against the brethren, in the same manner as our suffering friends have been always accustomed to intend them against the persecuting priests and powers of the earth; as if it were the same thing to admonish and reprove conceited, high-minded, loose or contentious persons in the church, as to compel conformity in matters of faith and worship, by worldly violence, upon the persons and estates of conscientious dissenters: O such iniquity God will not leave unreprieved!

This, dear friends, I send amongst you, as a token of my true love, in the revelation of the free spirit of our God and Father; who have ever been a friend to true liberty, as in the state according to law, so in the church according to scripture, and as it standeth

in the truth of Jesus, that makes them who love it free indeed. Let us all keep low, and remember the Rock from whence we were hewn, and dwell in a tender and reverent sense of the daily mercies and providences of the Lord, looking well to our own growth and prosperity in his heavenly way and work; then shall the desire of our hearts be more and more after him, and the remembrance of his name; and, with our love to God, will our love increase one towards another, helping and aiding one another: and I no ways doubt, but God that has brought us out of the land of Ægypt, and out of the house of bondage, and delivered us from the mouth of the lion and the paw of the bear, will preserve his people from this uncircumcised spirit that is not in covenant with God, nor under the yoke of his holy royal law of 'true spiritual liberty:' for they that keep and walk in the light of Jesus, are fenced from the power of this crooked serpent, that seeks whom he may betray; nor are any stung by him but the unwatchful, the listeners and hearkeners after his jealous whispers, and detracting insinuations: they are such as make their dwelling in the earth, where his region is, and where he creeps and twists, who is earthly, sensual, and devilish, and so is all the wisdom that comes from him.

My dear friends: keep, I pray you, in the simplicity of the truth, and cross of Jesus, and wait for your daily bread, and to be daily renewed from the Lord; look to your increase about eternal riches, and be sure to lay up treasure in heaven that fadeth not away, that your faith and hope may have eternal foundations, which the cross occurrences of time, and fears of mortality cannot move: and beware of that loose and irreverent spirit, which has not those in high esteem among you, that are faithful in the Lord's work, and that labour in his blessed word and doctrine. I plainly see a coldness and shortness on this hand; and be the pretence as it will, it is not pleasing to the Lord. They that love Christ, his servants are dear to them, and they bear a tender regard to their
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their trials, travels, spendings and sufferings, who seek not yours, but you, that you may all be "presented blameless at the coming of the great God; and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" that so the gospel-ministry and testimony may be held up with holy fervent love; and godly esteem, to the keeping under every raw and exalted mind, and whatever may slight and turn against it; lest God, that has richly visited us with his fatherly visitations, and day-springing from on high, should remove his blessing from amongst us, and place his "candlestick" among other people. Be wise therefore, O friends! for behold he is at the door that must have an account of your stewardship: be watchful, keep to your first love and works, that so you may endure to the end, and be saved; and having overcome, you may have right to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

The God of peace, who hath brought our dear Lord Jesus from the dead, and us with him, more abundantly enrich you with all wisdom and knowledge, in the revelation of himself, through faith in his Son, by whom in these last days he hath spoken to us, who is the blessed and only Potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality; to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

Your friend and brother, in the tribulation and salvation of the enduring kingdom of our God,

WILLIAM PENN.

Worminghurst in Suffex,
the 20th of the 9th
month, 1681.

A LETTER

11

A
L E T T E R
FROM
WILLIAM PENN,
PROPRIETOR and GOVERNOR
OF
PENNSILVANIA in AMERICA,
TO

The COMMITTEE of the Free Society of TRADERS of that Province, residing in LONDON;

CONTAINING

A GENERAL DESCRIPTION of the said Province, its Soil, Air, Water, Seasons, and Produce, both Natural and Artificial, and the Good Increase thereof. With an Account of the NATIVES, or ABORIGINES.

Published in the Year 1683.

My kind friends:

THE kindness of yours by the ship Thomas and Anne, doth much oblige me; for by it I perceive the interest you take in my health and reputation, and the prosperous beginning of this province, which you are so kind as to think may much depend upon them. In return of which, I have sent you a long letter,

letter, and yet containing as brief an account of myself, and the affairs of this province, as I have been able to make.

In the first place, I take notice of the news you sent me, whereby I find some persons have had so little wit, and so much malice, as to report my death; and, to mend the matter, dead a *Jesuit* too. One might have reasonably hoped, that this distance, like death, would have been a protection against spite and envy; and indeed, absence being a kind of death, ought alike to secure the name of the absent as the dead, because they are equally unable, as such, to defend themselves: but they that intend mischief, do not use to follow good rules to effect it. However, to the great sorrow and shame of the inventors, I am still alive, and *no Jesuit*, and, I thank God, very well. And without injustice to the authors of this, I may venture to infer, that they that wilfully and falsely report, would have been glad it had been so. But I perceive many frivolous and idle stories have been invented since my departure from England, which, perhaps, at this time, are no more alive than I am dead.

But if I have been unkindly used by some I left behind me, I found love and respect enough where I came; an universal kind welcome, every sort in their way. For here are some of several nations, as well as divers judgments: nor were the natives wanting in this, for their kings, queens, and great men, both visited and presented me; to whom I made suitable returns, &c.

For the province, the general condition of it take as followeth.

I. The country itself, in its soil, air, water, seasons, and produce, both natural and artificial, is not to be despised. The land containeth divers sorts of earth, as sand yellow and black, poor and rich: also gravel both loamy and dusty; and in some places a fait fat earth, like to our best vales in England, especially by inland

inland brooks and rivers; God in his wisdom having ordered it so, that the advantages of the country are divided, the back-lands being in general three to one richer, than those that lie by navigable waters. We have much of another soil, and that is a black hael-mould, upon a stony or rocky bottom.

II. The air is sweet and clear, the heavens serene, like the south parts of France, rarely overcast; and as the woods come, by numbers of people, to be more cleared, that itself will refine.

III. The waters are generally good; for the rivers and brooks have mostly gravel and stony bottoms, and in number hardly credible. We have also mineral waters, that operate in the same manner with Barnet and North-Hall, not two miles from Philadelphia.

IV. For the seasons of the year, having by God's goodness now lived over the coldest and hottest that the oldest liver in the province can remember, I can say something to an English understanding.

First, Of the fall, for then I came in: I found it from the 24th of October, to the beginning of December, as we have it usually in England in September, or rather like an English mild spring. From December, to the beginning of the month called March, we had sharp frosty weather; not foul, thick, black weather, as our north-east winds bring with them in England; but a sky as clear as in summer, and the air dry, cold, piercing and hungry; yet I remember not that I wore more clothes than in England. The reason of this cold is given, from the great lakes that are fed by the fountains of Canada. The winter before was as mild, scarce any ice at all; while this, for a few days, froze up our great river Delaware. From that month, to the month called June, we enjoyed a sweet spring, no gusts, but gentle showers, and a fine sky. Yet this I observe, that the winds here, as there, are more inconstant spring and fall, upon that turn of nature, than in summer or winter. From thence, to this present month, which
endeth

endeth the summer, (commonly speaking) we have had extraordinary heats, yet mitigated sometimes by cool breezes. The wind that ruleth the summer-season, is the south-west; but spring, fall, and winter, it is rare to want the wholesome north-western seven days together: and whatever mists, fogs, or vapours, foul the heavens by easterly or southerly winds, in two hours time are blown away; the one is followed by the other: a remedy that seems to have a peculiar providence in it to the inhabitants; the multitude of trees, yet standing, being liable to retain mists and vapours, and yet not one quarter so thick as I expected.

V. The natural produce of the country, of vegetables, is trees, fruits, plants, flowers. The trees of most note, are the black walnut, cedar, cypress, chefnut, poplar, gumwood, hickery, sassafras, ash, beech, and oak of divers sorts, as red, white, and black; Spanish chefnut and swamp, the most durable of all: of all which, there is plenty for the use of man.

The fruits that I find in the woods, are the white and black mulberry, chefnut, walnut, plumbs, strawberries, cranberries, hurtleberries, and grapes of divers sorts. The great red grape (now ripe) called by ignorance, 'The fox-grape,' (because of the relish it hath with unskilful palates) is in itself an extraordinary grape, and by art, doubtless, may be cultivated to an excellent wine, if not so sweet, yet little inferior to the Frontinac, as it is not much unlike in taste, ruddiness set aside; which in such things, as well as mankind, differs the case much: there is a white kind of muskadel, and a little black grape, like the cluster-grape of England, not yet so ripe as the other; but they tell me, when ripe, sweeter, and that they only want skilful vinerons to make good use of them: I intend to venture on it with my Frenchman this season, who shews some knowledge in those things. Here are also peaches very good, and in great quantities, not an Indian plantation without them; but whether naturally here at first I know not: however,

ever, one may have them by bushels for little; they make a pleasant drink, and I think not inferior to any peach you have in England, except the true Newington. It is disputable with me, whether it be best to fall to fining the fruits of the country, especially the grape, by the care and skill of art, or send for foreign stems and sets, already good and approved. It seems most reasonable to believe, that not only a thing groweth best, where it naturally grows, but will hardly be equalled by another species of the same kind, that doth not naturally grow there. But to solve the doubt, I intend, if God give me life, to try both, and hope the consequence will be as good wine as any European countries, of the same latitude, do yield.

VI. The artificial produce of the country, is wheat, barley,* oats, rye, pease, beans, squashes, pumpkins, water-melons, musk-melons, and all herbs and roots that our gardens in England usually bring forth.

VII. Of living creatures; fish, fowl, and the beasts of the woods, here are divers sorts, some for food and profit, and some for profit only: for food, as well as profit, the elk, as big as a small ox; deer bigger than ours; beaver, racoon, rabbits, squirrels, and some eat young bear, and commend it. Of fowl of the land, there is the turkey, (forty and fifty pounds weight) which is very great; pheasants, heath-birds, pigeons, and partridges in abundance. Of the water, the swan, goose, white and grey; brands, ducks, teal, also the snipe and curlew, and that in great numbers; but the duck and teal excel, nor so good have I ever eat in other countries. Of fish, there is the sturgeon, herring, rock, shad, cathead, sheepshead, eel, smelt, perch, roach; and in inland rivers, trout, some say,

* Note, That Edward Jones, son-in-law to Thomas Wynn, living on the Schuylkill, had with ordinary cultivation, for one grain of English barley, seventy stalks and ears of barley: and it is common in this country, from one bushel sown, to reap forty, often fifty, and sometimes sixty: and three pecks of wheat sows an acre here.

salmon,

salmon, above the falls. Of shell-fish, we have oysters, crabs, cockles, conchs, and muscles; some oysters six inches long; and one sort of cockles as large as the stewing-oysters; they make a rich broth. The creatures for profit only, by skin or furr, and that are natural to these parts, are the wild cat, panther, otter, wolf, fox, fisher, minx, musk-rat: and of the water, the whale for oil, of which we have good store; and two companies of whalers, whose boats are built, will soon begin their work, which hath the appearance of a considerable improvement. To say nothing of our reasonable hopes of good cod in the bay.

VIII. We have no want of horses, and some are very good, and shapely enough; two ships have been freighted to Barbadoes with horses and pipe-staves, since my coming in. Here is also plenty of cow-cattle, and some sheep; the people plow mostly with oxen.

IX. There are divers plants, that not only the Indians tell us, but we have had occasion to prove by swellings, burnings, cuts, &c. that they are of great virtue, suddenly curing the patient: and for smell, I have observed several, especially one, the wild myrtle; the other I know not what to call, but are most fragrant.

X. The woods are adorned with lovely flowers, for colour, greatness, figure and variety: I have seen the gardens of London best stored with that sort of beauty, but think they may be improved by our woods: I have sent a few to a person of quality this year for a trial.

Thus much of the country; next of the natives, or Aborigines.

XI. The natives I shall consider in their persons, language, manners, religion, and government, with my sense of their original. For their persons, they are generally tall, straight, well-built, and of singular proportion; they tread strong and clever, and mostly walk

walk with a lofty chin: of complexion, black, but by design, as the gypsies in England. They grease themselves with bears-fat clarified; and using no defence against sun or weather, their skins must needs be swarthy. Their eye is little and black, not unlike a straight-looking Jew. The thick lip and flat nose, so frequent with the East-Indians and Blacks, are not common to them; for I have seen as comely European-like faces among them of both, as on your side the sea; and truly an Italian complexion hath not much more of the white, and the noses of several of them have as much of the Roman.

XII. Their language is lofty, yet narrow; but, like the Hebrew, in signification full; like short-hand in writing, *one word serveth in the place of three*, and the rest are supplied by the understanding of the hearer: imperfect in their tenses, wanting in their moods, participles, adverbs, conjunctions, interjections: I have made it my business to understand it, that I might not want an interpreter on any occasion: and I must say, that I know not a language spoken in Europe, that hath words of more sweetness or greatness, in accent or emphasis, than theirs: for instance, *Ottocockon, Rancocas, Oriatton, Sbak, Marian, Poquestien*; all which are names of places, and have grandeur in them. Of words of sweetness, *anna*, is mother; *iffimus*, a brother, *netcap*, friend, *usque oret*, very good, *pane*, bread, *meisa*, eat, *matta*, no, *batta*, to have, *payo*, to come; *Sepassen, Passjon*, the names of places; *Tamane, Secane, Menanse, Secatereus*, are the names of persons. If one ask them for any thing they have not, they will answer, *Mattá ne battá*, which to translate is, *Not I have*, instead of, *I have not*.

XIII. Of their customs and manners, there is much to be said; I will begin with children: so soon as they are born, they wash them in water, and while very young, and in cold weather to chuse, they plunge them in the rivers to harden and embolden them. Having wrapped them in a clout, they lay them on a

straight thin board, a little more than the length and breadth of the child, and swaddle it fast upon the board to make it straight; wherefore all Indians have flat heads: and thus they carry them at their backs. The children will go very young, at nine months commonly; they wear only a small clout round their waste, till they are big; if boys, they go a fishing till ripe for the woods, which is about fifteen; then they hunt, and after having given some proofs of their manhood, by a good return of skins, they may marry, else it is a shame to think of a wife. The girls stay with their mothers, and help to hoe the ground, plant corn, and carry burthens; and they do well to use them to that young, which they must do when they are old; for the wives are the true servants of the husbands; otherwise the men are very affectionate to them.

XIV. When the young women are fit for marriage, they wear something upon their heads for an advertisement, but so as their faces are hardly to be seen, but when they please: the age they marry at, if women, is about thirteen and fourteen; if men, seventeen and eighteen; they are rarely elder.

XV. Their houses are mats, or barks of trees, set on poles, in the fashion of an English barn, but out of the power of the winds, for they are hardly higher than a man; they lie on reeds or grafs. In travel, they lodge in the woods about a great fire, with the mantle of duffils they wear by day wrapped about them, and a few boughs stuck round about them.

XVI. Their diet is maize, or Indian corn, divers ways prepared; sometimes roasted in the ashes, sometimes beaten and boiled with water, which they call *bomine*; they also make cakes, not unpleasent to eat: they have likewise several sorts of beans and pease, that are good nourishment; and the woods and rivers are their *larder*.

XVII. If an European comes to see them, or calls
: lodging at their house, or *wigwam*, they give him the
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the best place, and first cut. If they come to visit us, they salute us with an *itab*, which is as much as to say, *Good be to you*; and set them down, which is mostly on the ground, close to their heels, their legs upright; it may be they speak not a word, but observe all passages: if you give them any thing to eat or drink, well, for they will not ask; and be it little or much, if it be with kindness, they are well pleased, else they go away fullen, but say nothing.

XVIII. They are great concealers of their own resentments, brought to it, I believe, by the revenge that hath been practised among them: in either of these they are not exceeded by the Italians. A tragical instance fell out since I came into the country: a king's daughter thinking herself slighted by her husband, in suffering another woman to lie down between them, rose up, went out, plucked a root out of the ground, and eat it, upon which she immediately died; and for which, last week, he made an *offering* to her kindred, for atonement, and liberty of marriage; as two others did to the kindred of their wives, that died a natural death: for till *widowers* have done so, they must not marry again. Some of the young women are said to take undue liberty before marriage, for a portion; but when married, chaste: when with child they know their husbands no more, till delivered; and during their month, they touch no meat they eat but with a stick, lest they should defile it; nor do their husbands frequent them, till that time be expired.

XIX. But in liberality they excel; nothing is too good for their friend: give them a fine gun, coat, or other thing, it may pass twenty hands before it sticks: light of heart, strong affections, but soon spent: the most merry creatures that live, feast and dance perpetually; they never have much, nor want much: wealth circulateth like the blood, all parts partake; and though none shall want what another hath, yet exact observers of property. Some kings have sold,

others presented me with several parcels of land: the pay, or presents I made them, were not hoarded by the particular owners, but the neighbouring kings and their clans being present when the goods were brought out, the parties chiefly concerned consulted what, and to whom they should give them. To every king then, by the hands of a person for that work appointed, is a proportion sent, so sorted and folded, and with that gravity, that is admirable. Then that king subdivideth it in like manner among his dependents, they hardly leaving themselves an equal share with one of their subjects: and be it on such occasions as festivals, or at their common meals, the kings distribute, and to themselves last. They care for little, because they want but little, and the reason is, a little contents them: in this they are sufficiently revenged on us; if they are ignorant of our pleasures, they are also free from our pains. They are not disquieted with bills of lading and exchange, nor perplexed with chancery-suits and exchequer reckonings. We sweat and toil to live: their pleasure feeds them; I mean their hunting, fishing, and fowling, and this table is spread every where: they eat twice a day, morning and evening; their seats and table are the ground. Since the Europeans came into these parts, they are grown great lovers of strong liquors, rum especially; and for it exchange the richest of their skins and furs. If they are heated with liquors, they are restless till they have enough to sleep; that is their cry, *Some more, and I will go to sleep*; but, when drunk, one of the most wretched spectacles in the world.

XX. In sickness, impatient to be cured, and for it give any thing, especially for their children, to whom they are extremely natural: they drink at those times a *teran*, or decoction of some roots in spring-water; and if they eat any flesh, it must be of the female of any creature. If they die, they bury them with their apparel, be they man or woman, and the nearest of kin fling in something precious with them,

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as a token of their love: their mourning is blacking of their faces, which they continue for a year: they are choice of the graves of their dead; for lest they should be lost by time, and fall to common use, they pick off the grass that grows upon them, and heap up the fallen earth with great care and exactness.

XXI. These poor people are under a dark night in things relating to religion, to be sure the tradition of it; yet they believe a GOD and *immortality*, without the help of metaphysics; for they say, 'There is a great king that made them, who dwells in a glorious country to the southward of them; and that the souls of the good shall go thither, where they shall live again.' Their *worship* consists of two parts, sacrifice and cantico: their sacrifice is their first-fruits; the first and fattest buck they kill goeth to the fire, where he is all burnt, with a mournful ditty of him that performeth the ceremony, but with such marvelous fervency, and labour of body, that he will even sweat to a foam. The other part is their cantico, performed by round dances, sometimes words, sometimes songs, then shouts, two being in the middle that begin, and by singing, and drumming on a board, direct the chorus: their postures in the dance are very antick, and differing, but all keep measure. This is done with equal earnestness and labour, but great appearance of joy. In the fall, when the corn cometh in, they begin to feast one another: there have been two great festivals already, to which all come that will: I was at one myself; their entertainment was a great feat by a spring, under some shady trees, and twenty bucks, with hot cakes of new corn, both wheat and beans, which they make up in a square form, in the leaves of the stem, and bake them in the ashes; and after that they fall to dance. But they that go must carry a small present in their money, it may be six-pence, which is made of the bone of a fish; the black is with them as *gold*, the white, *silver*; they call it all *wampum*.

XXII. Their government is by kings, which they call *Sachama*, and those by succession, but always of the mother's side: for instance, the children of him that is now king, will not succeed, but his brother by the mother, or the children of his sister, whose *saw* (and after them the children of her daughters) will reign, for no woman inherits: the reason they render for this way of descent, is, that their issue may not be spurious.

XXIII. Every king hath his council, and that consists of all the old and wise men of his nation, which perhaps is two hundred people; nothing of moment is undertaken, be it war, peace, selling of land or traffick, without advising with them; and, which is more, with the young men too. It is admirable to consider, how powerful the kings are, and yet how they move by the breath of their people. I have had occasion to be in council with them upon treaties for land, and to adjust the terms of trade: their order is thus: the king sits in the middle of an half moon; and hath his council, the old and wise on each hand; behind them, or at a little distance, sit the younger fry, in the same figure. Having consulted and resolved their business, the king ordered one of them to speak to me; he stood up, came to me, and in the name of his king saluted me, then took me by the hand, and told me, 'He was ordered by his king to speak to me; and that now it was not he, but the king that spoke, because what he should say, was the king's mind.' He first prayed me, 'To excuse them that they had not complied with me the last time; he feared there might be some fault in the interpreter, being neither Indian nor English; besides, it was the Indian custom to deliberate, and take up much time in council, before they resolve; and that if the young people and owners of the land had been as ready as he, I had not met with so much delay.' Having thus introduced his matter, he fell to the bounds of the land they had agreed to dispose

dispose of, and the price; which now is little and dear, that which would have bought twenty miles, not buying now two. During the time that this person spoke, not a man of them was observed to whisper or smile; the old grave, the young reverent in their deportment: they speak little, but fervently, and with elegance: I have never seen more natural sagacity, considering them without the help, (I was going to say, the spoil) of tradition; and he will deserve the name of wise, that out-wits them in any treaty about a thing they understand. When the purchase was agreed, great promises passed between us of 'kindness and good neighbourhood, and that the Indians and English must live in love, as long as the sun gave light.' Which done, another made a speech to the Indians, in the name of all the *sachamakers* or kings, first to tell them what was done; next, to charge and command them 'To love the Christians, and particularly live in peace with me, and the people under my government: that many governors had been in the river, but that no governor had come himself to live and stay here before; and having now such an one that had treated them well, they should never do him or his any wrong.' At every sentence of which they shouted, and said, Amen, in their way.

XXIV. The justice they have is pecuniary; in case of any wrong or evil fact, be it murder itself, they atone by feasts, and presents of their *wampum*, which is proportioned to the quality of the offence or person injured, or of the sex they are of: for in case they kill a woman, they pay double, and the reason they can render, is, 'That she breedeth children, which men cannot do.' It is rare that they fall out, if sober; and if drunk, they forgive it, saying, 'It was the *drink*, and not the *man*, that abused them.'

XXV. We have agreed, that in all differences between us, six of each side shall end the matter: do not abuse them, but let them have justice, and you win them: the worst is, that they are the worst for

the Christians, who have propagated their vices, and yielded them tradition for ill, and not for good things. But as low an ebb as these people are at, and as glorious as their own condition looks, the Christians have not outlived *their* fight, with all their pretensions to an *higher* manifestation: what good then might not a good people graft, where there is so distinct a knowledge left between good and evil? I beseech God to incline the hearts of all that come into these parts, to outlive the knowledge of the natives, by a fixed obedience to their *greater* knowledge of the will of God; for it were miserable indeed for us to fall under the just censure of the poor Indian conscience, while we make profession of things so far transcending.

XXVI. For their original, I am ready to believe them of the Jewish race; I mean, of the stock of the *Ten Tribes*, and that for the following reasons; first, they were to go to a "land not *planted* or *known*," which, to be sure, Asia and Africa were, if not Europe; and He that intended that extraordinary judgment upon them, might make the passage not uneasy to them, as it is not impossible in itself, from the easternmost parts of Asia, to the westernmost of America. In the next place, I find them of like countenance, and their children of so lively a resemblance, that a man would think himself in Duke's-place or Bury-street in London, when he seeth them. But this is not all; they agree in *rites*, they reckon by *moons*; they offer their *first-fruits*, they have a kind of *feast of tabernacles*; they are said to lay their altar upon *twelve stones*; their *mourning* a year, *customs* of women, with many things that do not now occur.

So much for the natives; next the old planters will be considered in this relation, before I come to our colony, and the concerns of it.

XXVII. The first planters in these parts were the Dutch, and soon after them the Swedes and Finns. Dutch applied themselves to traffick, the Swedes Finns to husbandry. There were some disputes between

between them some years, the Dutch looking upon them as intruders upon their purchase and possession, which was finally ended in the surrender made by John Rizeing, the Swedish governor, to Peter Styresant, governor for the states of Holland, anno 1655.

XXVIII. The Dutch inhabit mostly those parts of the province that lie upon or near to the bay; and the Swedes the freshes of the river Delaware. There is no need of giving any description of them, who are better known there than here; but they are a plain, strong, industrious people, yet have made no great progress in culture or propagation of fruit-trees, as if they desired rather to have enough, than plenty or traffick. But, I presume, the Indians made them the more careless, by furnishing them with the means of profit, to wit, skins and furs, for rum, and such strong liquors. They kindly received me, as well as the English, who were few, before the people concerned with me came among them: I must needs commend their respect to authority, and kind behaviour to the English; they do not degenerate from the old friendship between both kingdoms. As they are people proper, and strong of body, so they have fine children, and almost every house full; rare to find one of them without three or four boys, and as many girls; some six, seven, and eight sons: and I must do them that right, I see few young men more sober and laborious.

XXIX. The Dutch have a meeting-place for religious worship at Newcastle; and the Swedes, three, one at Christina, one at Tenecum, and one at Wicoco, within half a mile of this town.

XXX. There rests that I speak of the condition we are in, and what settlement we have made, in which I will be as short as I can; for I fear, and not without reason, that I have tired your patience with this long story. The country lieth bounded on the east by the river and bay of Delaware, and eastern sea; it hath the advantage of many creeks, or rivers rather, that
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run into the main river or bay; some navigable for great ships, some for small craft: those of most eminency are Christina, Brandywine, Skilpot, and Schuylkill; any one of which have room to lay up the royal navy of England, there being from four to eight fathom water.

XXXI. The lesser creeks or rivers, yet convenient for sloops and ketches of good burthen, are Lewis, Mespilion, Cedar, Dover, Cranbrook, Feverham, and Georges below, and Chichester, Chester, Toacawny, Pemmapecka, Portqueffin, Neshimenck and Pennberry in the Freshes, many lesser that admit boats and shallops. Our people are mostly settled upon the upper rivers, which are pleasant and sweet, and generally bounded with good land. The planted part of the province and territories is cast into six counties, Philadelphia, Buckingham, Chester, Newcastle, Kent, and Suffex, containing about four thousand souls. Two general assemblies have been held, and with such concord and dispatch, that they sat but three weeks, and at least seventy laws were passed without one dissent in any material thing. But of this more hereafter, being yet raw and new in our geer: however, I cannot forget their singular respect to me in this infancy of things, who by their own private expences so early considered mine for the publick, as to present me with an impost upon certain goods imported and exported: which after my acknowledgment of their affection, I did as freely remit to the province and the traders to it. And for the well-government of the said counties, courts of justice are established in every county, with proper officers, as justices, sheriffs, clerks, constables, &c. which courts are held every two months: but to prevent law-suits, there are three peace-makers chosen by every county-court, in the nature of common arbitrators, to hear and end differences betwixt man and man; and spring and fall there is an orphan's court in every county, to inspect and regulate the affairs of orphans and widows.

XXXII.

XXXII. Philadelphia, the expectation of those that are concerned in this province, is at last laid out, to the great content of those here, that are any ways interested therein: the situation is a neck of land, and lieth between two navigable rivers, Delaware and Schuylkill, whereby it hath two fronts upon the water, each a mile, and two from river to river. Delaware is a glorious river, but the Schuylkill being an hundred miles boatable above the falls, and its course north-east towards the fountain of Susquahannah (that tends to the heart of the province, and both sides our own) it is like to be a great part of the settlement of this age. I say little of the town itself, because a platform will be shewn you by my agent, in which those who are purchasers of me, will find their names and interests: but this I will say for the good providence of God, that of all the many places I have seen in the world, I remember not one better seated; so that it seems to me to have been appointed for a town, whether we regard the rivers, or the conveniency of the coves, docks, springs, the loftiness and soundness of the land and the air, held by the people of these parts to be very good. It is advanced within less than a year to about fourscore houses and cottages, such as they are, where merchants and handicrafts are following their vocations as fast as they can, while the countrymen are close at their farms: some of them got a little winter-corn in the ground last season, and the generality have had an handsome summer-crop, and are preparing for their winter-corn. They reaped their barley this year in the month called May; the wheat in the month following; so that there is time in these parts for another crop of divers things before the winter-season. We are daily in hopes of shipping to add to our number; for, blessed be God, here is both room and accommodation for them; the stories of our necessity being either the fear of our friends, or the scare-crows of our enemies; for the greatest hardship we have suffered, hath been salt meat, which
by

by fowl in winter, and fish in summer, together with some poultry, lamb, mutton, veal, and plenty of venison the best part of the year, hath been made very passable. I bless God, I am fully satisfied with the country and entertainment I get in it; for I find that particular content which hath always attended me, where God in his providence hath made it my place and service to reside. You cannot imagine my station can be at present free of more than ordinary business, and as such, I may say, it is a troublesome work; but the method things are putting in will facilitate the charge, and give an easier motion to the administration of affairs. However, as it is some mens duty to plow, some to sow, some to water, and some to reap; so it is the wisdom as well as the duty of a man, to yield to the mind of Providence, and cheerfully, as well as carefully, embrace and follow the guidance of it.

XXXIII. For your particular concern, I might entirely refer you to the letters of the president of the society; but this I will venture to say, your provincial settlements both within and without the town, for situation and soil, are without exception: your city-lot is an whole street, and one side of a street, from river to river, containing near one hundred acres, not easily valued, which is, besides your four hundred acres in the city-liberties, part of your twenty thousand acres in the country. Your tannery hath such plenty of bark, the saw-mill for timber, and the place of the glass-house are so conveniently posted for water-carriage, the city-lot for a dock, and the whalery for a sound and fruitful bank, and the town Lewis by it to help your people, that by God's blessing the affairs of the society will naturally grow in their reputation and profit. I am sure I have not turned my back upon any offer that tended to its prosperity; and though I am ill at projects, I have sometimes put in a share with her officers, to countenance and advance her interest. You are already informed what is
fit

fit for you farther to do, whatsoever tends to the promotion of wine, and to the manufacture of linen in these parts, I cannot but wish you to promote it; and the French people are most likely in both respects to answer that design: to that end, I would advise you to send for some thousands of plants out of France, with some able vinerons, and people of the other vocation: but because I believe you have been entertained with this and some other profitable subjects by your president, I shall add no more, but to assure you, that I am heartily inclined to advance your just interest, and that you will always find me,

Your kind cordial friend,

W. P E N N.

Philadelphia, the 16th of the 6th
month, called August, 1683.

A P E R-



A

PERSUASIVE TO MODERATION

T O

CHURCH DISSENTERS,

I N

PRUDENCE and CONSCIENCE.

Humbly submitted to the KING, and his Great COUNCIL.

Published in the Year 1686.

T H E E P I S T L E.

HAVING of late time observed the heat, aversion, and scorn with which some men have treated all thoughts of ease to Church-dissenters, I confess I had a more than ordinary curiosity to examine the grounds those gentlemen went upon: for I could not tell how to think moderation should be a vice, where Christianity was a virtue, when the great Doctor of that religion commands, that "our moderation be known unto all men;" and why? "for the Lord is at hand:" and what to do, but to judge our rancour, and retaliate and punish our bitterness of spirit. And, to say true, it is a severe reflection we draw upon ourselves, that though Pagan emperors could endure the addresses of primitive Christians, and Christian Cæsars receive

receive the apologies of infidels for indulgence, yet it should be thought, of some men, an offence to seek it, or have it of a Christian prince, whose interest I dare say it is, and who himself so lately wanted it: but the consideration of the reason of this offence will increase our admiration; for they tell us, 'It is dangerous to the prince to suffer it,' while the prince is himself a *Dissenter*: this difficulty is beyond all skill to remove, that it should be against the interest of a *dissenting* prince to indulge *dissent*. For though it will be granted there are Dissenters on *differing* principles from those of the prince, yet they are *still* Dissenters; and dissent being the prince's interest, it will naturally follow, that those Dissenters are in the interest of the prince, whether they think on it or no.

Interest will not lie: men embarked in the same vessel, seek the safety of the whole in their own, whatever other differences they may have. And self-safety is the highest worldly security a prince can have; for though all parties would rejoice their own principles prevailed, yet every one is more solicitous about its own safety, than the others verity. Wherefore it cannot be unwise, by the security of all, to make it the interest as well as duty of all, to advance that of the publick.

Angry things, then, set aside, as matters now are, what is *best* to be done? This I take to be the wise man's question, as to consider and answer it will be his business, *moderation* is a Christian duty, and it has ever been the prudent man's practice. For those governments that have used it in their conduct, have succeeded best in all ages.

I remember it is made in Livy the wisdom of the Romans, that they relaxed their hand to the *Privernates*, and thereby made them most faithful to their interest. And it prevailed so much with the *Petilians*, that they would endure any extremity from Hannibal, rather than desert their friendship, even then when the Romans discharged their fidelity, and sent them the despair of knowing they could not relieve them. So did

did one act of *humanity* overcome the *Falisci* above arms: which confirms that noble saying of Seneca, *Mitius imperanti melius paretur*; the mildest conduct is best obeyed: a truth celebrated by Grotius and Campanella; practised, doubtless, by the bravest princes: for CYRUS exceeded, when he built the Jews a temple, and himself no Jew: ALEXANDER astonished the princes of his train with the profound veneration he paid the high priest of that people: and AUGUSTUS was so far from suppressing the *Jewish worship*, that he sent *betacombs* to *Jerusalem* to increase their devotion. *Moderation* filled the reigns of the most renowned *Cæsars*: and story says, they were *Neros* and *Caligulas* that loved *cruelty*.

But others tell us that Dissenters are mostly *antimonarchical*, and so not to be indulged; and that the agreement of the church of England and Rome in monarchy and hierarchy, with their nearness in other things, should oblige her to grant the Roman Catholics a special ease, exclusive of the other Dissenters. But, with the leave of those worthy gentlemen, I would say, nobody is against that which is for him: and that the aversion apprehended to be in some against the monarchy, rather comes from interest than principle: for governments were never *destroyed* by the interests they *preserve*.

In the next place, it is as plain that there is a fundamental difference between those churches in religion and interest. In *religion*, it appears by a comparison of the *thirty-nine articles* with the doctrine of the *council of Trent*. In *interest* they differ fundamentally, because our church is in the actual possession of the churches and livings that the other church claims. What better mixture then can these two churches make than that of iron and clay? Nor do I think it well judged, or wise, in any that pretend to be sons of the church of England, to seek an accommodation from the topick of affinity, since it is that some of her Dissenters have always objected, and she as constantly denied to be true.

I say, this way of reconciling or indulging Roman Catholicks stumbles far greater numbers of people of nearer creeds, and gives the church of England the lie. But suppose the trick took, and they only of all Dissenters had indulgence, yet, their paucity considered, I am sure, a pair of Sir Kenelm Digby's breeches would fit with as good a grace upon the late lord Rochester's dwarf. Upon the whole matter, let men have *ease*, and they will keep it; for those that might plot to *get* it, would not plot to *lose* it. Men love the bridge they need and pass: and that prince who has his people fast by interest, holds them by the strongest human tie; for other courses have failed as often as they have been tried. Let us then once try a true liberty: never did the circumstances of any kingdom lie more open and fair to so blessed an accommodation than we do at this time.

But we are told, 'The king has promised to maintain the church of England!' I grant it: but if the church of England claims the king's promise of *protection*, her Dissenters cannot forget that of his *clemency*: and as they were both great, and admirably distinguished, so by no means are they inconsistent or impracticable.

Will not his justice let him be wanting in the one? And can his greatness of mind let him leave the other behind him in the storm, unpitied and unhelped? Pardon me; we have not to do with an *insensible* prince, but one that has been *touched* with our infirmities: more than any body fit to judge our cause, by the share he once had in it. Who should give *ease* like the prince that has *wanted* it? To suffer for his *own* conscience, looked great; but to deliver other mens were glorious. It is a sort of paying the vows of his adversity, and it cannot therefore be done by any one else with so much justice and example.

Far be it from me to solicit any thing in diminution of the just rights of the church of England: let her rest protected where she is. But I hope none will be thought to intend her wrong, for refusing to understand

stand the king's promise to *her* in a *ruinous* sense to all *others*; and I am sure she would understand her own interest better, if she were of the same mind. For it is morally impossible that a conscientious prince can be thought to have tied himself to *compel* others to a communion, that *himself* cannot tell how to be of; or that any thing can oblige him to shake the firmness of those he has confirmed by his own royal example.

Having then so illustrious an instance of integrity, as the hazard of the loss of three crowns for *conscience*, let it at least excuse Dissenters constancy, and provoke the friends of the succession to moderation, that no man may lose his birth-right for his persuasion, and us to live dutifully, and so peaceably, under our own vine, and under our own fig-tree, with 'Glory to God on high, to the king honour, and good-will to all men.'

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P E R S U A S I V E

T O

M O D E R A T I O N.

Moderation, the subject of this discourse, is, in plainer English, ‘liberty of conscience to Church-dissenters:’ a cause I have, with all humility, undertaken to plead, against the prejudices of the times.

That there is such a thing as conscience, and the liberty of it, in reference to faith and worship towards God, must not be denied, even by those that are most scandalized at the ill use some seem to have made of such pretences. But to settle the terms: By *conscience*, I understand, ‘the apprehension and persuasion a man has of his duty to God:’ by *liberty of conscience*, I mean, ‘a free and open profession and exercise of that duty, especially in worship:’ but I always premise this conscience to keep within the bounds of morality, and that it be neither *frantick* nor *mischievous*, but a *good subject*, a *good child*, a *good servant*, in all the affairs of life; as exact to yield to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, as jealous of withholding from God the thing that is God’s.—In brief, he that acknowledges the civil government under which he lives, and that maintains no principle hurtful to his neighbour in his civil property.

For he that in any thing violates his duty to these relations, cannot be said to observe it to God, who

ought to have his tribute out of it. Such do not reject their prince, parent, master, or neighbour, but God, who enjoins that duty to them. Those pathetic words of Christ will naturally enough reach the case, "In that ye did it not to them, ye did it not to me:" for duty to such relations hath a divine stamp; and divine right runs through more things of the world, and acts of our lives, than we are aware of; and sacrilege may be committed against more than the church. Nor will a dedication to God, of the robbery from man, expiate the guilt of disobedience: for though zeal could turn gossip to theft, his altars would renounce the sacrifice.

The conscience then that I state, and the liberty I pray, carrying so great a salvo and deference to publick and private relations, no ill design can, with any justice, be fixed upon the author, or reflection upon the subject, which by this time, I think, I may venture to call a *toleration*.

But to this so much craved, as well as needed, toleration, I meet with two objections of weight, the solving of which will make way for it in this kingdom. And the first is, a disbelief of the possibility of the thing. 'Toleration of dissenting worships from that established, is not practicable,' say some, 'without danger to the state, with which it is interwoven.' This is political. The other objection is, 'That admitting Dissenters to be in the wrong, (which is always premised by the national church) such latitude were the way to keep up the disunion, and instead of compelling them into a better way, leave them in the possession and pursuit of their old errors.' This is religious. I think I have given the objections fairly; it will be my next business to answer them as fully.

The strength of the first objection against this liberty, is the danger suggested to the state; the reason is, 'The national form being *interwoven* with the frame of the government.' But this seems to me only said, and not only (with submission) not proved, but

but not true: for the established religion and worship are no other ways interwoven with the government, than that the government makes profession of them, and by divers laws has made them the current religion, and required all the members of the state to conform to it.

This is nothing but what may as well be done by the government for any other persuasion, as that. It is true, it is not easy to change an established religion, nor is that the question we are upon; but state-religions have been changed without the change of the states. We see this in the governments of Germany and Denmark upon the reformation: but more clearly and near ourselves, in the case of Henry the Eighth, Edward the Sixth, Queen Mary, and Elizabeth; for the monarchy stood, the family remained and succeeded, under all the revolutions of state-religion; which could not have been, had the proposition been generally true.

The change of religion, then, does not necessarily change the government, or alter the state; and if so, *a fortiori*, indulgence of Church-dissenters does not necessarily hazard a change of the state, where the present state-religion or church remains the same; for that I premise.

Some may say, 'That it were more facile to change from one national religion to another, than to maintain the monarchy and church, against the ambition and faction of divers dissenting parties.' But this is improbable at least. For it were to say, That it is an easier thing to change a whole kingdom, than, with the sovereign power, followed with armies, navies, judges, clergy, and all the conformists of the kingdom, to secure the government from the ambition and faction of Dissenters, as differing in their interests within themselves, as in their persuasions; and were they united, have neither power to awe, nor rewards to allure to their party. They can only be formidable, when headed by the sovereign. They may stop a gap, or make, by his accession, a balance:

otherwise, until it is harder to fight broken and divided troops, than an entire body of an army, it will be always easier to maintain the government under a toleration of Dissenters, than in a total change of religion, and even then itself has not failed to have been preserved. But whether it be more or less easy, is not our point; if they are many, the danger is of exasperating, not of making them easy; for the force of our question is, 'Whether such indulgence be safe to the state?' And here we have the first and last, the best and greatest evidence for us, which is fact and experience, the journal and resolves of time, and treasure of the sage.

For, first, The Jews, that had most to say for their religion, and whose religion was *twin* to their state, (both being joined, and sent with wonders from heaven) *indulged* strangers in their religious dissent. They required but the belief of the *Noachical* principles, which were common to the world: no *idolater*, and but a *moral man*, and he had his *liberty*, *aye*, and some *privileges* too, for he had an apartment in the temple, and this without danger to the government. Thus Maimonides, and others of their own rabbies, and Grotius out of them.

The wisdom of the Gentiles was very admirable in this, that though they had many sects of philosophers amongst them, each dissenting from the other in their principles, as well as discipline, and that not only in physical things, but points metaphysical; in which some of the fathers were not free, the school-men deeply engaged, and our present academies but too much perplexed; yet they *indulged* them and the best livers with singular kindness: the greatest statesmen and captains often becoming patrons of the sects they best affected, honouring their readings with their presence and applause. So far were those ages, which we have made as the original of wisdom and politeness, from thinking toleration an error of state, or dangerous to the government. Thus Plutarch, Strabo, Laertius, and others.

To

To these instances I may add the latitude of old Rome, that had almost as many deities as houses: for Varro tells us of no less than *thirty thousand* several *sacra*, or religious rites, among her people, and yet without a quarrel. Unhappy fate of Christianity! the best of religions, and yet her professors maintain less charity than idolaters, while it should be peculiar to them. I fear, it shews us to have but little of it at heart.

But nearer home, and in our own time, we see the effects of a discreet indulgence, even to emulation. Holland, that Bog of the world, neither sea nor dry land, now the rival of tallest monarchs; not by conquests, marriages, or accession of royal blood, the usual ways to empire, but by her own superlative clemency and industry; for the one was the effect of the other: she cherished her people, whatsoever were their *opinions*, as the reasonable stock of the country, the heads and hands of her trade and wealth; and making them easy in the main point, their conscience, she became great by them: this made her fill with people, and they filled her with riches and strength.

And if it should be said, 'She is upon her declension for all that:' I answer, All states must know it; nothing is here immortal. Where are the Babylonian, Persian, and Grecian empires? And are not Lacedæmon, Athens, Rome, and Carthage gone before her? Kingdoms and commonwealths have their births and growths, their declensions and deaths, as well as private families and persons: but it is owing neither to the armies of France, nor navies of England, but her own domestick troubles.

Seventy-two sticks in her bones yet: the growing power of the prince of Orange, must, in some degree, be an ebb to that state's strength; for they are not so unanimous and vigorous in their interest as formerly: but were they secure against the danger of their own ambition and jealousy, any body might insure their glory at five per cent. But some of their greatest men, apprehending they are in their climacterical juncture,

give up the ghost, and care not, if they must fall, by what hand it is.

Others chuse a stranger, and think one afar off will give the best terms, and least annoy them: whilst a considerable party have chosen a domestick prince, kin to their early successes by the fore-father's side (the gallantry of his ancestors) and that his own greatness and security are wrapt up in theirs, and therefore modestly hope to find their account in his prosperity. But this is a kind of digression; only before I leave it, I dare venture to add, that if the prince of Orange changes not the policies of that state, he will not change her fortune, and he will mightily add to his own.

But perhaps I shall be told, 'That no body doubts
' that toleration is an agreeable thing to a common-
' wealth, where every one thinks he has a share in the
' government; aye, that the one is the consequence
' of the other, and therefore most carefully to be
' avoided by all monarchical states.' This indeed were shrewdly to the purpose, in England, if it were but true. But I do not see how there can be one true reason advanced in favour of this objection; monarchies, as well as commonwealths, subsisting by the preservation of the people under them.

But, first, If this were true, it would follow, by the rule of contraries, that a republick could not subsist with *unity* and *hierarcy*, which is monarchy in the *church*; but it must, from such monarchy in *church*, come to monarchy in *state* too. But Venice, Genoa, Lucca, seven of the cantons of Switzerland, (and Rome herself, for she is an aristocracy) all under the loftiest hierarchy in church, and where is no toleration, shew, in fact, that the contrary is true.

But, secondly, This objection makes a commonwealth the better government of the two, and so overthrows the thing it would establish. This is effectually done, if I know any thing; since a commonwealth is hereby rendered a more copious, powerful, and beneficial government to mankind, and is made better to
answer

answer contingencies and emergencies of state; because this subsists either way; but *monarchy* not; if the objection be true. The one prospers by union in worship and discipline, and by toleration of the dissenting churches from the national. The other only by an universal conformity to a national church. I say, this makes monarchy (in itself, doubtless, an admirable government) less *powerful*, less *extended*, less *propitious*, and finally less *safe* to the people under it, than a commonwealth, in that no *security* is left to monarchy under diversity of worships; which yet no man can defend or forbid but it may often arrive, as it hath in England more than five times in the two last ages. And truly it is natural for men to chuse to settle where they may be safest from the power and mischief of such accidents of state.

Upon the whole matter, it is to reflect the last mischief upon monarchy, which the worst enemies it has could hope to disgrace or endanger it by; since it is to tell the people under it, that they must either *conform*; or be *destroyed*, or, to save themselves, turn *hypocrites*; or change the frame of the government they live under. A perplexity both to monarch and people, than which nothing can be greater, but the comfort of knowing the objection is false. And that which ought to make every reasonable man of this opinion, is the cloud of witnesses that almost every age of monarchy affords us.

I will begin with that of Israel, the most exact and sacred pattern of monarchy, begun by a valiant man; translated to the best, and improved by the wisest of kings, whose ministers were neither fools, nor fanatics; here we shall find provision for Dissenters: their *profane domicilii* were so far from being compelled to their national rites, that they were expressly forbid to observe them. Such were the Egyptians that came with them out of Egypt, the Gibeonites and Canaanites, a great people, that, after their several forms, worshipped in an apartment of the same temple. The Jews with a *liturgy*; they *without* one: the Jews had *priests*, but these *none*: the Jews had *variety* of ob-

lations; these people *burnt-offerings* only. All that was required of them was the *natural religion* of Noab, in which the acknowledgment and worship of the *true God* was, and it still ought to be, the main point: nay, so far were they from coercive conformity, that they did not so much as oblige them to observe their *sabbath*, though one of the ten commandments: Grotius and Selden say more. Certainly this was great indulgence, since so unsuitable an usage looked like profaning their devotion, and a common nuisance to their national religion. One would think by this, that their care lay on the side of preserving their cult from the touch or accession of Dissenters, and not of *forcing* them, by undoing penalties, to conform. This must needs be evident: for if *God's* religion and monarchy, (for so we are taught to believe it) did not, and would not, at a time when religion lay less in the *mind*, and more in *ceremony*, compel conformity from Dissenters, we hope we have got the best precedents on our side.

But if this instance be of most authority, we have another very exemplary, and to our point pertinent; for it shews what monarchy may do: it is yielded us from the famous story of Mordecai. He, with his Jews, were in a bad plight with the king Ahasuerus, by the ill offices Haman did them: the arguments he used were drawn from the common topicks of *faction* and *sedition*, 'That they were an odd and dangerous people, under different laws of their own, and refused obedience to his; so denying his *supremacy*.' Dissenters with a witness! things most tender to any government.

The king thus incensed, commands the laws to be put in execution, and decrees the ruin of Mordecai with all the Jews: but the king is timely intreated, his heart softens, the decree is revoked, and Mordecai and his friends saved. The consequence was, as extreme joy to the Jews, so peace and blessings to the king. And that which heightens the example, is the greatness and infidelity of the prince: had the instance been in a *Jew*, it might have been placed to his greater
light

light or *piety*: in a petty prince, to the *paucity* or *intireness* of his territories: but that an *heathen*, and king of one hundred and seven and twenty provinces, should, throughout his vast dominions, not *fear*, but *practise* toleration with good success, has something admirable in it.

If we please to remember the tranquillity and success of those heathen Roman emperors, that allowed indulgence; that Augustus sent hecatombs to Jerusalem, and the wisest honoured the Jews, and at least spared the divers sects of Christians, it will certainly oblige us to think, that princes, whose religion is nearer of kin to those of the Dissenters of our times, may not unreasonably hope for quiet from a discreet toleration, especially when there is nothing peculiar in Christianity to render princes unsafe in such an indulgence. The admirable prudence of the emperor Jovianus, in a quite contrary method to those of the reigns of his predecessors, settled the most imbroiled time of the Christian world, almost to a *miracle*; for though he found the heats of the Arians and Orthodox carried to a barbarous height, (to say nothing of the Novatians, and other dissenting interests) the emperor esteeming those calamities the effect of coercing conformity to the prince's or state's religion, and that this course did not only waste Christians, but expose Christians to the scorn of Heathens, and so scandalize those whom they should convert, he resolutely declared, 'That he would have none *molested* for the *different* exercise of their *religious worship*.' Which (and that in a trice, for he reigned but seven months) calmed the impetuous storms of dissention, and reduced the empire, before agitated with the most uncharitable contests, to a wonderful security and peace: thus a kindly *amity*, brought a civil unity to the state; which endeavours for a forced unity never did to the church, but had formerly filled the government with incomparable miseries, as well as the church with incharity: and which is sad, I must needs say, that those leaders of the church that should have been the teachers and examples of
peace.

peace, in so singular a juncture of the church's ferment, did, more than any, blow the trumpet, and kindle the fire, of *division*. So dangerous is it to *superfue* upon the text, and then impose it, upon penalty, for *faith*.

'Valentinian the emperor,' we are told by Socrates Scholasticus, 'was a great honourer of those that favoured his own faith; but so, as he molested not the Arians at all.' And Marcellinus farther adds to his honour, 'That he was much renowned for his moderate carriage during his reign; insomuch, that amongst sundry sects of religion, he troubled no man for his conscience, imposing neither this nor that to be observed; much less, with menacing edicts and injunctions, did he *compel* others, his subjects, to bow the neck, or conform to that which *himself* worshipped, but left such points as clear and untouched as he found them.'

Gratianus, and Theodosius the Great, indulged divers sorts of Christians; but the Novatians of all the dissenters were preferred: which was so far from inscuring, that it preserved, the tranquillity of the empire. Nor till the time of Celestine, bishop of Rome, were the Novatians disturbed; and the persecution of them, and the assumption of the secular power, began much at the same time. But the Novatians at Constantino-ple were not dealt withal; for the Greek bishops continued to permit them the quiet enjoyment of their dissenting assemblies; as Socrates tells us, in his fifth and seventh books of the Ecclesiastical Story.

I shall descend nearer our own times; for notwithstanding no age has been more furiously moved, than that which Jovianus found, and therefore the experiment of indulgence was never better made; yet to speak more in view of this time of day, we find our contemporaries, of remoter judgments in religion, under no manner of difficulty in this point. The grand seignior, great mogul, czars of Muscovia, king of Persia, the great monarchs of the east; have long allowed and prospered with a toleration: and who does

does not know that this gave great Tamerlane his mighty victories? In these western countries we see the same thing.

Cardinal d'Offat, in his 92d Letter to Villeroy, secretary to Henry the Fourth of France, gives us doctrine and example for the subject in hand; 'Besides,' says he, 'that necessity has no law, be it in what case it will; our Lord Jesus Christ instructs us by his gospel,' "To let the tares alone, lest removing them may endanger the wheat:" 'that other catholick princes have allowed it without rebuke: that particularly the duke of Savoy, who (as great a zealot as he would be thought for the Catholick religion) tolerates the hereticks in three of his provinces, namely, Angroyne, Lucerne, and Perone: that the king of Poland does as much, not only in Swedeland, but in Poland itself: that all the princes of the Austrian family, that are celebrated as pillars of the catholick church, do the like, not only in the towns of the empire, but in their proper territories, as in Austria itself, from whence they take the name of their honour; in Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia, Lusatia, Stirria, Carniolia and Croatia the like: that Charles the fifth, father of the king of Spain, was the person that taught the king of France, and other princes, how to yield to such emergencies: that his son, the present king of Spain, who is esteemed Arch-Catholick, and that is, as the Atlas of the catholick church, *tolerates* notwithstanding, at this day, in his kingdoms of Valentia and Granada, the Moors themselves in their Mahometism, and has offered to those of Zealand, Holland, and other hereticks of the low countries, the *free exercise* of their pretended religion, so that they will but acknowledge and obey him in *civil* matters.' It was of those letters of this extraordinary man, (for so he was, whether we regard him in his ecclesiastical dignity, or his greater christian and civil prudence) that the great lord Falkland said, 'A minister of state should no more be without Cardinal d'Offat's letters, than a parson
' with-

‘without his bible.’ And indeed, if we look into France, we shall find the indulgence of those Protestants hath been a flourishing to that kingdom, as their arms a succour to their king. It is true, that since they helped the ministers of his greatness to success, that haughty monarch has changed his measures, and resolves their conformity to his own religion, or their ruin: but no man can give another reason for it, than that he thinks it for his turn to please that part of his own church, which are the present necessary and unwearied instruments of his absolute glory. But let us see the end of this conduct; it will require more time to approve the experiment.

As it was the royal saying of Stephen, king of Poland, ‘That he was a king of *men*, and not of *conscience*; a commander of *bodies*, and not of *souls*;

so we see a toleration has been practised in that country of a long time, with no ill success to the state; the cities of Cracovia, Racovia, and many other towns of note, almost wholly dissenting from the common religion of the kingdom, which is Roman Catholick, as the others are Socinian and Calvinist, mighty opposite to that, as well as to themselves.

The king of Denmark, in his large town of Altona, but about a mile from Hamburg, and therefore called so, that is, *All-to-near*, is a pregnant proof to our point. For though his seat be so remote from that place, another strong and insinuating state so near, yet under his indulgence of divers persuasions, they enjoy their peace, and he that security, that he is not upon better terms in any of his more immediate and uniform dominions. I leave it to the thinking reader, if it be not much owing to this freedom, and if a contrary course were not the way for him to furnish his neighbours with means to depopulate that place, or make it uneasy and chargeable to him to keep?

If we look into other parts of Germany, where we find a stout and warlike people, fierce for the thing they opine, or believe, we shall find the prince palatine of the Rhine has been safe, and more potent by his indulgence;

indulgence; witness his improvements at Manheim: and as (believe me) he acted the prince to his people in *other* things, so in *this* to the empire; for he made bold with the constitution of it, in the latitude he gave his subjects in this affair.

The elector of Brandenburg is himself a Calvinist, his people mostly Lutheran; yet in part of his dominions, the Roman Catholics enjoy their churches quietly.

The duke of Newburg, and a strict Roman Catholic, brother-in-law to the present emperor, in his province of Juliers, has not only at Dewsburg, Mulheim, and other places, but in Dusseldorp itself, where the court resides, Lutheran and Calvinist, as well as Roman Catholic assemblies.

The elector of Saxony, by religion a Lutheran, in his city of Budissin, has both Lutherans and Roman Catholics in the same church, parted only by a grate.

In Augsburg, they have two chief magistrates, as their duumvirate; one must always be a Roman Catholic, and the other a Lutheran.

The bishop of Osnabrug is himself a Lutheran; and in the town of his title, the Roman Catholics, as well as Lutherans, have their churches: and, which is more, the next bishop must be a Catholic too; for, like the buckets in the well, they take turns: *one way*, to be sure, so that one be but in the *right*.

From hence we will go to Sultzbach, a small territory, but has a great prince, I mean in his own extraordinary qualities; for, among other things, we shall find him act the moderator among his people. By profession he is a Roman Catholic, but has *simultaneum religionis exercitium*; not only Lutherans and Roman Catholics enjoy their different worships, but *alternatively* in one and the same *place*, the same *day*; so balancing his affection by his wisdom, that there appears neither partiality in him, nor envy in them, though of such opposite persuasions.

I will end these foreign instances with a prince and bishop all in one, and he a Roman Catholic too,

and that is the bishop of Mentz; who admits, with a very peaceable success, such Lutherans, with his Catholics, to enjoy their churches, as live in his town of Erford. Thus doth practice tell us, that neither monarchy nor hierarchy are in danger from a toleration. On the contrary, the laws of the empire, which are the acts of the emperor and the sovereign princes of it, have tolerated these three religious persuasions, viz. the Roman Catholick, Lutheran, and Calvinist; and they may as well tolerate three more, for the same reasons, and with the same success. For it is not their greater nearness or consistency in doctrine, or in worship; on the contrary, they differ much, and by that, and other circumstances, are sometimes engaged in great controversies, yet is a toleration practicable, and the way of peace with them.

And, which is closest to our point, at home itself, we see that a toleration of the Jews, French, and Dutch, in England, all dissenters from the national way; and the connivance that has been in Ireland, and the downright toleration in most of the king's plantations abroad, prove the assertion, 'that toleration is not dangerous to monarchy.' For experience tells us, where it is in any degree admitted, the king's affairs prosper most; people, wealth, and strength being sure to follow such indulgence.

But after all that I have said, in reason and fact, why toleration is safe to monarchy, story tells us that worse things have befallen princes in countries under ecclesiastical union, than in places under divided forms of worship; and so *tolerating* countries stand to the prince upon more than equal terms with *conforming* ones. And where princes have been exposed to hardship in tolerating countries, they have as often come from the conforming, as non-conforming party; and so the Dissenter is upon equal terms, to the prince or state, with the Conformist.

The first is evident in the Jews, under the conduct of Moses; their dissention came from the men of their own

own tribes, such as Corah, Dathan and Abiram, with their partakers. To say nothing of the Gentiles.

The miseries and slaughters of Mauritius the emperor prove my point, who by the greatest *church-men* of his time was withstood; and his servant, that perpetrated the wickedness, by *them* substituted in his room, because more officious to their grandeur. What power, but that of the *church*, dethroned Childerick, king of France, and set Pepin in his place? The miseries of the emperors Henry the Fourth and Fifth, father and son, from their rebellious subjects, raised and animated by the power of Conformists, dethroning both, as much as they could, are notorious. It is alleged, that Sigismund, king of Swedeland, was rejected by that Lutheran country, because he was a Roman Catholick.

If we come nearer home, which is most suitable to the reasons of the discourse, we find the *church-men* take part with William Rufus and Henry the First, against Robert their elder brother; and after that, we see some of the greatest of them made head against their king, namely Anselm archbishop of Canterbury, and his party, as did his successor Thomas à Becket to the second Henry. Stephen usurped the crown when there was a *church union*: and king John lived miserable for all that, and at last died by one of his own religion too. The dissentions that agitated the reign of his son Henry the Third, and the barons war, with bishop Grossteed's blessing to Mumford their general; the deposition and murder of the second Edward and Richard, and sixth Henry, and his son the prince; the usurpation of Richard the Third, and the murder of the sons of Edward the Fourth, in the tower of London; the civil war that followed between him and the earl of Richmond, afterwards our wife Henry the Seventh; were all perpetrated in a country of *one religion*, and by the hands of Conformists. In short, if we will but look upon the civil war that so long raged in this kingdom between the houses of York and Lancaster, and consider that they professed but *one* and the

same religion, and both backed with numbers of church-men too (to say nothing of the miserable end of our king's princely ancestors in Scotland, especially the first and third James) we shall find cause to say, 'That church-uniformity is not a security for 'princes to depend upon.'

If we will look next into countries where Dissenters from the national church are tolerated, we shall find the Conformist not less culpable than the Dissenter.

The disorders among the Jews, after they were settled in the land that God had given them, came not from those they tolerated, but themselves. They cast off Samuel, and the government of the judges. It was the children of the national church, that fell in with the ambition of Absalom, and animated the rebellion against their father David. They were the same that revolted from Solomon's son, and cried in behalf of Jeroboam, "To your tents, O Israel!"

Not two ages ago, the church of France too generally fell in with the family of Guise, against their lawful sovereign Henry the Fourth: nor were they without countenance of the greatest of their belief, who stiled it an *holy war*; at that time, fearing, not without a cause, the defection of that kingdom from the Roman see. In this conjuncture, the Dissenters made up the best part of that king's armies, and by their loyalty and blood preserved the blood royal of France, and set the crown on the head of that prince. That king was twice assassinated, and the last time murdered, as was Henry the Third, his predecessor; but they fell, one by the hand of a *churchman*, the other at least by a *conformist*.

It is true, that the next civil war was between the Catholics and the Huguenots, under the conduct of cardinal Richlieu, and the duke of Rohan: but as I will not justify the action, so their liberties and cautions, so solemnly settled by Henry the Fourth, as the reward of their singular merit, being by the ministry of that cardinal invaded, they say they did but defend their *security*, and that rather against the *cardinal*, than the

the *king*, whose softness suffered him to become a property to the great wit and ambition of that person: and there is this reason to believe them, that if it had been otherwise, we are sure that king Charles the First would not in the least have countenanced the quarrel.

However, the cardinal, like himself, wisely knew when to stop: for though he thought it the interest of the crown, to moderate their greatness, and check their growth, yet having fresh in memory the story of the foregoing age, he saw it was wise to have a balance upon occasion. But this was more than recompensed in their fixed adherence to the crown of France, under the ministry and direction of the succeeding cardinal, when their persuasion had not only number, and many good officers, to value itself upon, but yielded their king the ablest captain of the age, namely, Turenne: it was an Huguenot then, at the head of almost an Huguenot army, that fell in with a cardinal himself (see the union interest makes) to maintain the imperial crown of France, and that on a Roman Catholick's head: and, together with their own indulgence, that religion, as *national* too, against the pretences of a Roman Catholick army, headed by a prince brave and learned, of the same religion.

I mention not this to prefer one party to another; for contrary instances may be given elsewhere, as interests have varied. In Swedeland, a prince was rejected by Protestants; and in England and Holland, and many of the principalities of Germany, Roman Catholicks have approved themselves loyal to their kings, princes, and states. But this suffices to us that we gain the point; for it is evident in countries where Dissenters are tolerated, the insecurity of the prince and government may as well come from the conforming as dissenting party, and that it comes not from Dissenters because *such*.

But how happy and admirable was this civil union between the cardinal and Turenne! Two most opposite religions, both followed by people of their own persua-

sion: one says his *mass*, the other his *directory*: both invoke *one Deity*, by several *ways*, for *one success*; and it followed with glory, and a peace to this day. O why should it be otherwise now! What has been, may be; methinks wisdom and charity are on that side still.

It will doubtless be objected, 'That the dissenting party of England fell in with the state-dissenter in our late civil, but unnatural war:' and this seems to be against us, yet three things must be confessed: first, that the war rather made the Dissenters, than the Dissenters made the *war*. Secondly, that those that were then in being, were not *tolerated*, as in France, but *prosecuted*. And, lastly, that they did not *lead*, but *follow*, great numbers of church-goers, of all qualities, in that unhappy controversy; and which began upon other topicks than liberty for Church-dissenters: and though they were herein blameable, reason is *reason*, in all climates and latitudes. This does not affect the question: such calamities are no *necessary* consequences of church-dissent, because they would then follow in *all* places where Dissenters are tolerated, which we see they do not: but these may sometimes indeed be the effects of a violent endeavour at *uniformity*, and that under *all* forms of government, as I fear they were partly here under our monarchy. But then, this teaches us to conclude, that a toleration of those, that a contrary course makes uneasy and desperate, may prevent or cure intestine troubles; as anno forty-eight it ended the strife, and settled the peace of Germany. For it is not now the question, 'How far men may be provoked, or ought to resent it;' but, 'Whether government is safe in a toleration, especially monarchy?' And to this issue we come in fact, 'That it is safe, and that Conformists (generally speaking) have, for their interests, as rarely known their duty to their prince, as Dissenters for their consciences.' So that the danger seems to lie on this side, of forcing *uniformity* against *faith*, upon severe penalties, rather than of a discreet *toleration*.

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In the next place, I shall endeavour to shew the prudence and reasonableness of a toleration, by the great benefits that follow it.

Toleration, which is an 'admission of dissenting worships, with impunity to the Dissenters,' secures *property*, which is *civil right*; and that eminently the *line and power of the monarchy*: for if no man suffer in his civil right for the sake of such dissent, the point of *succession* is settled without a civil war, or a recantation; since it were an absurd thing to imagine, that a man born to *five pounds a year*, should not be liable to forfeit his inheritance for *non-conformity*, and yet a *prince of the blood*, and an *heir to the imperial crown*, should be made incapable of inheritance for his *church-dissent*.

The security then of property, or civil right, from being forfeitable for religious dissent, becomes a security to the royal family, against the difficulties lately laboured under in the business of the succession. And though I have no commission for it, besides the great reason and equity of the thing itself, I dare say, there can hardly be a Dissenter at this time of day so void of sense and justice, as well as duty and loyalty, as not to be of the same mind. Else it were to deny that to the *prince*, which he needs, and prays for, *from him*. Let us not forget the story of Sigismund of Swedeland, of Henry the fourth of France, and especially of our own queen Mary. Had property been fixed, the line of those royal families could not have met with any let or interruption. It was this consideration that prevailed with judge Hales, though a strong Protestant, after king Edward's death, to give his opinion for queen Mary's succession, against that of all the rest of the judges to the contrary: which noble precedent was recompensed in the loyalty of archbishop Heath, a Roman Catholick, in favour of the succession of queen Elizabeth, and the same thing would be done again, in the like case, by men of the same integrity.

I know it may be said, ‘ That there is little reason
 ‘ now for the prince to regard this argument in favour
 ‘ of Dissenters, when it was so little heeded in the case
 ‘ of the presumptive heir to the crown.’ But as this
 was the act and heat of conforming men within-doors,
 so if it were, in counsel or desire, the folly and injustice
 of any Dissenters without doors, shall many intire par-
 ties pay the reckoning of a few busy offenders? They
 would humbly hope, that the singular mildness and
 clemency, which make up so great a part of the king’s
 publick assurances, will not leave him in his reflection
 here.

It is the mercies of princes, that, above all their
 works, give them the nearest resemblance to divinity
 in their administration. Besides, it is their glory to
 measure their actions by the reason and consequence of
 things, and not by the passions that possess and animate
 private breasts: for it were fatal to the interest of a
 prince, that the folly or undutifulness of any of his
 subjects should put him out of the way, or tempt him
 to be unsteady to his principle and interest: and yet,
 with submission, I must say, it would be the conse-
 quence of coercion: for, by exposing *property* for
opinion, the prince exposes the consciences and property
 of his own family, and plainly *disarms* them of all de-
 fence, upon any *alteration* of judgment. Let us remember,
 That several of the same gentlemen, who at first sacri-
 ficed *civil rights* for *non-conformity* in common Dissenters,
 fell at last to make the *succession* of the *crown* the price
 of dissent in the next *heir* of the *royal blood*. So
 dangerous a thing it is to hazard property to serve a
 turn for any party, or suffer such examples in the case of
 the meanest person in a kingdom.

Nor is this all the benefit that attends the *crown* by
 the preservation of *civil rights*; for the *power* of the
monarchy is kept more *intire* by it. The king has the
 benefit of his whole people; and the reason of their
 safety is owing to their *civil*, and not *ecclesiastical*
 obedience: their loyalty to *Cæsar*, and not conformity
 to the *church*. Whereas the other opinion would have
 it,

it, 'That no conformity to the *church*, no property in 'the *state*:' which is to clog and narrow the civil power; for at this rate, *no church-man, no Englishman*; and, *no conformist, no subject*. A way to *alien* the king's people, and practise an *exclusion* upon him, from, it may be, a fourth part of his dominions. Thus it may happen, that the ablest statesman, the bravest captain, and the best citizen, may be disabled, and the prince forbid their employment to his service.

Some instances of this we have had since the late king's restoration: for upon the first Dutch war, Sir William Penn being commanded to give in a list of the ablest sea officers in the kingdom, to serve in that expedition, I do very well remember he presented our present king with a catalogue of knowingest and bravest officers the age had bred, with this subscribed, 'These men, if his majesty will please to admit of their *persuasions*, I will answer for their skill, courage, and *integrity*.' He picked them by their ability, not their opinions; and he was in the right; for that was the best way of doing the king's business. And of my own knowledge, *conformity* robbed the king at that time of *ten men*, whose greater knowledge and valour, than any other *ten* of that fleet, had, in their room, been able to have saved a battle, or perfected a victory. I will name three of them: the first was old vice admiral Goodson, than whom nobody was more stout, or a seaman. The second, captain Hill, that in the Sapphire beat admiral Everson hand to hand, who came to the relief of old Trump. The third, was captain Potter, who in the Constant Warwick took captain Beach, after eight hours smart dispute. And as evident it is, that if a war had proceeded between this kingdom and France seven years ago, the business of *conformity* had deprived the king of many land-officers, whom their share in the late wars of Europe had made knowing and able.

But, which is worst of all, such are not safe, with their dissent, under their own extraordinary prince. For, though a man were a great honourer of his king,
a lover

a lover of his country, an admirer of the government; in the course of his life, sober, wise, industrious and useful; if a dissenter from the established form of worship, in that condition there is no liberty for his person, nor security to his estate: as useless to the publick, so ruined in himself. For this net catches the *best*; men true to their conscience, and who, indulged, are most like to be so to their prince; whilst the rest are left to *cozen* him by their change; for that is the unhappy end of *forced* conformity in the poor-spirited compliers. And this must always be the consequence of necessitating the prince to put *more* and *other* tests upon his people, than are requisite to secure him of their *loyalty*.

And when we shall be so happy in our measures, as to consider this mischief to the monarchy, it is to be hoped it will be thought expedient to disentangle *property* from *opinion*, and cut the untoward knot some men have tied, that hath so long hampered and galled the prince as well as the people. It will be then, when civil punishments shall no more follow church faults, that the civil tenure will be recovered to the government, and the natures of acts, rewards and punishments, so distinguished, as *loyalty* shall be the safety of *dissent*, and the whole people made *useful* to the government.

It will, perhaps, be objected, 'That Dissenters can hardly be obliged to be true to the crown, and so the crown unsafe in their very services; for they may easily turn the power given them to serve it, *against* it, to greaten themselves.' I am willing to obviate every thing, that may with any pretence be offered against our intreated indulgence. I say, *no*; and appeal to the king himself (against whom the prejudices of our late times ran highest, and who therefore has most reason to resent) if ever he was better loved or served, than by the *old round-beaded seamen*, the earl of Sandwich, Sir William Penn, Sir J. Lawson, Sir G. Afcue, Sir R. Stanier, Sir J. Smith, Sir J. Jordan, Sir J. Harmon, Sir Christopher Minns, captains Sansum, Cuttins, Clark, Robinson, Molton, Wager, Tern,

Tern, Parker, Haward, Hubbard, Fen, Langhorn, Daws, Earl, White; to say nothing of many yet living, of real merit, and many inferior officers expert and brave. And to do our prince justice, he *deserved* it from them, by his humility, plainness, and courage, and the care and affection that he always shewed them.

If any say, 'That most of these men were *conformists*;' I presume to tell them, I know, as well as any man, they served the king never the better for *that*: on the contrary, it was all the strife that some of them had in themselves, in the doing that service, that they must not serve the king *without* it; and if in that they could have been indulged, they had performed it with the greatest alacrity. *Interest will not lie*. Where people find their reckoning, they are sure to be true. For it is want of wit that makes any man false to himself. It was he that knew all mens hearts, that said, "Where the *treasure* is, there will the *heart* be also." Let men be easy, safe, and upon their preferment with the prince, and they will be dutiful, loyal, and most affectionate.

Mankind by nature fears power, and melts at goodness. Pardon my zeal; I would not be thought to plead for Dissenters preferment; it is enough they keep what they have, and may live at their own charges. Only I am for having the *prince* have *Room* for his *choice*, and not be cramped and stinted by *opinion*; but employ those who are best able to serve him: and, I think, out of *six* parties, it is better picking than out of *one*, and therefore the prince's interest is to be head of them all, which a *toleration* effects in a moment, since those *six* (divided interests within *themselves*) having but *one civil head*, become *one intire civil body* to the *prince*. And, I am sure, I have monarchy on my side, if Solomon and his wisdom may stand for it, who tells us, "That the glory of a king is in the multitude of his people."

Nor is this all; for the consequences of such an universal content would be of infinite moment to the security of the monarchy, both at home and abroad.

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At home; for it would *behead* the factions without *blood*, and *banish* the ring-leaders without going *abroad*. When the great bodies of Dissenters see the care of the government for their safety, they have no need of their captains, nor these any ground for their pretences: for as they used the people to value *themselves*, and raise their fortunes with the *prince*, so the people followed their leaders to get that ease they see their heads promised, but *could* not, and the government *can* and does give them.

Multitudes cannot *plot*; they are too many, and have not conduct for it; they move by another spring. *Safety* is the pretence of their *leaders*: if once they see they enjoy it, they have yet wit enough not to hazard it for any body: for the endeavours of busy men are then discernable; but a state of severity gives them a pretence, by which the multitude is easily taken. Men may indiscreetly plot to *get*, what they would never plot to *lose*. So that *ease* is not only *their content*, but the *prince's security*.

This I say, upon a supposition, 'That the Dissenters could *agree* against the government;' which is a begging of the question: for it is improbable, if not impossible, without *conformists*; since, besides the *distance* they are at in their *persuasions* and *affections*, they dare not hope for so good terms from *one another*, as the *government* gives: and that fear, with emulation, would draw them into that duty, that they must all fall into a natural dependance, which I call, holding the prince as the great head of the state.

From *abroad*, we are as safe as from within ourselves: for if leading men at home are thus disappointed of their *interest* in the *people*, foreigners will find here no interpreters of their *dividing language*, nor matter (if they could) to work upon. For the point is gained; the people they would deal in, are at their ease, and cannot be bribed; and those that would cannot deserve it.

It is this that makes princes live independent of their neighbours: and, to be loved at home, is to be feared

feared abroad: one follows necessarily the other. Where princes are driven to seek a foreign assistance, the issue either must be the ruin of the prince, or the absolute subjection of the people; not without the hazard of becoming a province to the power of that neighbour that turns the scale. These consequences have on either hand an ill look, and should rebate extremes.

The greatness of France carries those threats to all her neighbours, that, politically speaking, it is the melancholiest prospect England has had to make since *eighty-eight*: the Spaniard at that time being shorter in all things but his *pride* and *hope*, than the French king is now of the same *universal monarchy*. This greatness, which began with the eleventh Lewis, some will have it, has not been so much advanced by the wisdom of Richlieu, and craft of Mazarine, no, nor the arms of the present monarch, as by the assistance or connivance of England, that has most to lose by him.

O. Cromwell began, and gave him the scale against the Spaniard. The reason of state he went upon, was the ‘Support of usurped dominion:’ and he was not out in it; for the exile of the royal family was a great part of the price of that aid: in which we see how much interest prevails above nature. It was not *royal kindred* could shelter a king against the solicitations of an *usurper*, with the *son* of his *mother’s brother*.

But it will be told us by some people, ‘We have not degenerated, but exactly followed the same steps ever since; which has given such an increase to those beginnings, that the French monarchy is almost above our reach.’ But suppose it were true, what is the cause of it? It has not been old friendship, or nearness of blood, or neighbourhood. Nor could it be from an inclination in our ministers to bring things here to a like issue, as some have suggested; for then we should have clogged his successes, instead of helping them in any kind, lest in so doing we should have put it into his power to hinder our own.

But perhaps our cross accidents of state may sometimes have compelled us into his friendship, and his councils

councils have carefully improved the one, and husbanded the other to great advantages, and that this was more than made for our English interest: and yet it is but too true, that the extreme heats of some men, that most inveighed against it, went too far to strengthen that understanding, by not taking what would have been granted, and creating an interest at home, that might naturally have dissolved that correspondence abroad.

I love not to revive things that are uneasily remembered; but in points most tender to the late king, he thought himself sometimes too closely pressed, and hardly held; and we are all wise enough now to say, a milder conduct has succeeded better: for if reasonable things may be reasonably pressed, and with such private intentions as induce a denial, heats about things doubtful, unwise or unjust, must needs harden and prejudice.

Let us then create an interest for the prince at *home*; and *foreign* friendships (at best uncertain and dangerous) will fall of course: for if it be allowed to *private men*, shall it be forbid to *princes* only, to know and to be true to their own support?

It is no more than what every age makes us to see in all parties of men. The *parliaments* of England, since the *reformation*, giving no quarter to *Roman Catholics*, have forced them to the *crown* for shelter. And to induce the *monarchy* to yield them the protection they have needed, they have, with mighty address and skill, recommended themselves as the great friends of the *prerogative*; and so successfully too, that it were not below the wisdom of that constitution, to reflect what they have lost by that costiveness of theirs to *Catholics*. On the other hand, the *crown* having treated the *Protestant Dissenters* with the severity of the laws that affected them, suffering the sharpest of them to fall upon their persons and estates, they have been driven successively to *parliaments* for succour, whose privileges, with equal skill and zeal, they have abetted: and our late unhappy wars are too plain a proof, how much their
accession

accession gave the scale against the power and courage of both *Conformists* and *Catholicks*, that adhered to the *crown*.

Nor must this contrary adhesion be imputed to love or hatred, but necessary *interest*: refusal in one place, makes way for address in another. If the scene be changed, the parts must follow: for as well before, as after Cromwell's usurpation, the Roman *Catholicks* did not only promise the most ready *obedience* to *that* government, in their printed apologies for liberty of conscience; but actually *treated*, by some of their greatest men, with the *ministers* of those times, for *indulgence*, upon the assurances they offered to give of their *good behaviour* to the government, as then established.

On the other hand, we see the *Presbyterians*, that in Scotland began the war, and in England promoted and upheld it to *forty-seven*, when ready to be supplanted by the *Independents*, wheel to the *King*. In Scotland they *crown* him, and come into England with an army to *restore* him, where their brethren join them; but being defeated, they help, by *private collections*, to support him *abroad*; and after the overthrow of Sir George Booth's attempt, to almost a miracle, *restore* him. And, which is more, a great part of that army too, whose victories came from the ruin of the prince they *restored*.

But to give the last proofs our age has of the power of interest, against the notion opposed by this discourse. First, the *Independents* themselves, held the greatest republicans of all parties, were the most *lavish* and superstitious adorers of monarchy in Oliver Cromwell, because of the regard he had to them; allowing him, and his son after him, to be *custos utriusque tabule*; over all causes, as well ecclesiastical as civil, supreme governor. And next, the *Conformists* in parliament, reputed the most loyal and monarchicall men, did, more than any body, question and oppose the late king's declaration of *indulgence*; even they themselves would not allow so much *pro-*
gative

gative to the crown, but pleaded and opposed his political capacity.

This proves the power of interest, and that *all persuasions* center with it: and when they see the government engaging them with a *fixed liberty of conscience*, they must, for their own sakes, seek the support of it by which it is maintained. This union, directed under the prince's conduct, would awe the greatness of our neighbours, and soon restore Europe to its ancient balance, and that into his hand too: so that he may be the great arbiter of the Christian world. But if the policy of the government places the security of its interest in the *destruction* of the *civil interest* of the *Dissenters*, it is not to be wondered at, if they are less found in the praises of its conduct, than others, to whom they are offered up a sacrifice by it.

I know it will be insinuated, 'That there is danger ' in building upon the union of divers interests;' and this will be aggravated to the prince, by such as would *engross* his bounty, and intercept his grace from a great part of his people. But I will only oppose to that mere suggestion three examples to the contrary, with this challenge, that if after rummaging the records of all time, they find one instance to contradict me, I shall submit the question to their authority.

The first is given by those Christian emperors who admitted all sorts of Dissenters into their armies, courts, and senates. This the ecclesiastical story of those times assures us, and particularly Socrates, Evagrius, and Onuphrius.

The next instance is that of prince William of Orange, who, by a timely indulgence, united the scattered strength of Holland; and, all animated by the clemency, as well as valour of their captain, crowned his attempts with an extraordinary glory; and what makes, continues, great.

The last is given us by Livy, in his account of Hannibal's army; 'That they consisted of divers nations, languages, customs, and religions: that under all their successes of war and peace, for thirteen
' years

‘ years together, they never mutinied against their general, nor fell out among themselves.’ What Livy relates for a wonder, the marquis Virgilio Malvetzy gives the reason of, to wit, their variety and difference, well managed by their general; ‘ For,’ said he, ‘ it was impossible for so many nations, customs, and religions, to combine, especially when the general’s equal hand gave him more reverence with them, than they had of affection for one another. This,’ says he, ‘ some would wholly impute to Hannibal; but however great he was, I attribute it to the variety of people in the army: for,’ adds he, ‘ Rome’s army was ever less given to mutiny, when balanced with auxiliary legions, than when entirely Roman.’ Thus much in his discourse upon Cornelius Tacitus.

And they are neither few, nor of the weakest sort of men, that have thought the concord of discords a firm basis for government to be built upon. The business is to tune them well, and that must be the skill of the musician.

In nature we see all heat consumes, all cold kills: that three degrees of cold to two of heat, allay the heat, but introduces the contrary quality, and overcools by a degree; but two degrees of cold to two of heat, make a poize in elements, and a balance in nature. And in those families where the evenest hand is carried, the work is best done, and the master is most revered.

This brings me to another benefit which accrues to the monarchy by a toleration, and that is a balance at home: for though it be improbable, it may so happen, that either the conforming or non-conforming party may be undutiful; the one is then a balance of the other. This might have prevented much mischief to our second and third Henry, king John, the second Edward, and Richard, and unhappy Henry the Sixth, as it undeniably saved the royal family of France, and secured Holland, and kept it from trucking under the Spanish monarchy. While all hold of

the government, it is that which gives the scale to the most dutiful; but still no farther than to shew its power, and awe the disorderly into obedience; not to destroy the balance, lest it should afterwards want the means of overpoizing faction.

That this is more than fancy, plain it is that the Dissenter must firmly adhere to the government for his being, while the church-man is provided for. The one subsists by its mercy, the other by its bounty. This is tied by plenty, but that by necessity; which being the last of ties, and strongest obligation, the security is greatest from him, that it is fancied most unsafe to tolerate.

But besides this, the tranquillity which it gives at home will both oblige those that are upon the wing for foreign parts, to pitch here again; and, at a time when our neighbouring monarch is wasting his people, excite those sufferers into the king's dominions, whose number will increase that of his subjects, and their labour and consumption, the trade and wealth of his territories.

For what are all conquests, but of people? And if the government may by indulgence add the inhabitants of ten cities to those of its own, it obtains a victory without charge. The ancient persecution of France and the Low Countries has furnished us with an invincible instance; for of those that came hither on that account, we were instructed in most useful manufactures; as, by courses of the like nature, we lost a great part of our woollen trade. And as men, in times of danger, draw in their stock, and either transmit it to other banks, or bury their talent at home for security (that, being out of sight, it may be out of reach too, and either is fatal to a kingdom); so this mildness obtained, setting every man's heart at rest, every man will be at work, and the stock of the kingdom employed; which, like the blood, that hath its due passage, will give life and vigour to every member in the publick body.

And

And here give me leave to mention the experiment made at home by the late king, in his declaration of indulgence. No matter how well or ill built that act of state was, it is no part of the business in hand; but what effect the liberty of it had upon the peace and wealth of the kingdom, may have instruction in it to our present condition. It was evident that all men laboured cheerfully, and traded boldly, when they had the royal word to keep what they got, and the king himself became the universal insurer of Dissenters estates. Whitehall, then, and St. James's, were as much visited and courted by their respective agents, as if they had been of the family: for that which eclipsed the royal goodness, being by his own hand thus removed, his benign influences drew the returns of sweetness and duty from that part of his subjects, that the want of those influences had made barren before. Then it was that we looked like the members of one family, and children of one parent. Nor did we envy our eldest brother, episcopacy, his inheritance, so that we had but a child's portion: for not only discontents vanished, but no matter was left for ill spirits, foreign or domestick, to brood upon, or hatch to mischief. Which was a plain proof, that it is the *union of interests*, and not of *opinions*, that gives peace to kingdoms.

And, with all deference to authority I would speak it, the liberty of the declaration seems to be our English *animum* at last; the sovereign remedy to our English constitution. And to say true, we shifted luck (as they call it) as soon as we had lost it; like those that lose their royal gold, their evil returns. For all Dissenters seemed then united in their affection to the government, and followed their affairs without fear or distraction. Projects, then, were stale and unmerchantable, and nobody cared for them, because nobody wanted any: that gentle opiate, at the prince's hand, laid the most busy and turbulent to sleep: but when the loss of that indulgence made them uncer-

tain, and that uneasy, their persons and estates being again exposed to pay the reckoning of their dissent, no doubt but every party shifted then as they could: most grew selfish, at least jealous, fearing one should make bargains apart, or exclusive of the other. This was the fatal part Dissenters acted to their common ruin: and I take this partiality to have had too great a share in our late animosities; which, by fresh accidents falling in, have swelled to a mighty deluge, such an one as hath overwhelmed our former civil concord and serenity. And pardon me, if I say, I cannot see that those *waters* are like to *assuage*, till this *olive-branch* of indulgence be some way or other restored: the *waves* will still cover our earth, and a spot of ground will hardly be found in this glorious isle, for a great number of useful people to set a quiet foot upon. And, to pursue the allegory, what was the *ark* itself, but the most apt and lively emblem of *toleration*? A kind of natural temple of indulgence. In which we find two of every living creature dwelling together, of both sexes too, that they might propagate; and that as well of the unclean as clean kind: so that the baser and less useful sort were saved; creatures never like to change their nature; and so far from being whipped and punished to the altar, that they were expressly forbid. These were saved, these were fed and restored to their ancient pastures. Shall we be so mannerly as to compliment the Conformists with the stile of clean, and so humble as to take the unclean kind to ourselves, who are the less noble, and more clownish sort of people? I think verily we may do it, if we may but be saved too by the commander of our English ark. And this the peaceable and virtuous Dissenter has the less reason to fear, since sacred text tells us, it was *vice*, and *not opinion*, that brought the deluge upon the rest. And here (to drop our allegory) I must take leave to hope, that though the declaration be gone, if the reason of it remain, I mean the interest of the monarchy, the king and his
great

great council will graciously please to think a toleration no dangerous nor obsolete thing.

But as it has many arguments for it, that are drawn from the advantages that have and would come to the publick by it, so there are divers mischiefs that must unavoidably follow the persecution of Dissenters, that may reasonably dissuade from such severity. For they must either be ruined, fly, or conform; and perhaps the last is not the safest. If they are ruined in their estates, and their persons imprisoned, modestly computing, a fourth of the trade and manufactory of the kingdom sinks; and those that have helped to maintain the poor, must come upon the poor's book for maintenance. This seems to be an impoverishing of the publick. But if, to avoid this, they transport themselves, with their estates, into other governments; nay, though it were to any of the king's plantations, the number were far too great to be spared from home. So much principal stock wanting to turn the yearly traffick, and so many people too, to consume our yearly growth, must issue fatally to the trade one way, and to the lands and rents of the kingdom the other way.

And lastly, If they should resolve neither to suffer or fly, but conform, to prevent both; it is to be inquired, if this cure of church-division be safe to the state; or not rather a raking up coals under ashes, for a future mischief? He whom fear or policy hath made treacherous to his own conscience, ought not to be held true to any thing, but his own safety, and revenge. His conformity gives him the first, and his resentment of the force that compels it, will on no occasion let him want the last. So that conformity cozens nobody but the government: for the state fanatick (which is the *unsafe* thing to the state) being christened by conformity, he is eligible every where, with persons the most devoted to the prince: and all men will hold themselves protected in their votes by it.—A receipt to make faction keep, and preserve disloyalty against all weathers. For whereas the nature

of tests is to *discover*, this is the way to *conceal*, the inclinations of men from the government. *Plain dissent*, is the *prince* with a *candle* in his hand: he sees the where and what of persons and things: he discriminates, and makes that a rule of conduct: but forced *conformity* is the *prince* in the *dark*: it blows out his candle, and leaves him without distinction. Such subjects are like figures in sand; when water is flapt upon them they run together, and are indiscernible: or, *written tradition* made *illegible*, by writing the *oaths* and *canons* upon it: the safest way of blotting out danger.

I know not how to forbear saying, that this *necessary conformity* makes the church dangerous to the state: for even the hypocrisy that follows, makes the church both *conceal* and *protect* the hypocrites; which, together with their liberality to the parson, charity to the poor, and hospitality to their neighbours, recommends them to the first favour they have to bestow. That fort is unsafe, where a party of the garrison consists of disguised enemies; for when they take their turns at the watch, the danger is hardly evitable. It would then certainly be for the safety of the fort, that such friends in *matquerade* were industriously *kept out*, instead of being *whipped in*.

And it was something of this, I remember, that was made an argument for the declaration of indulgence, in the preamble; to wit, 'The greater safety of the government, from *open* and *publick*, than *private*, dissenting meetings of worship;' as indeed the rest bear the same resemblance. For these were the topics, 'Quieting the people: encouraging strangers to come and live among us, and trade by it; and lastly, preventing the danger that might arise to the government by *private* meetings:' of greater reason than from *private men*, not less discontented, but more concealed and secure by the great brake of church conformity. It is this will make a comprehension of the next Dissenters to the church dangerous, though

it were practicable, of which side soever it be. For, in an age, the present form of government shall feel the art and industry of the comprehended. So that a toleration is in reason of state to be preferred. And if the reasons of the declaration were ever good, they are so still; because the emergencies of state, that made them so, remain; and our neighbours are not less powerful to improve them to our detriment.

But it will be now said, 'Though the government should find its account in what has been last alleged, this were the way to overthrow the church, and encourage Dissenters to continue in their errors.' Which is that second main objection I proposed at first to answer in its proper place, and that I think is this:

I humbly say, if it prove the interest of the three considerable church-interests in this kingdom, a relaxation, at least, can hardly fail us. The three church interests are, That of the church of England; that of the Roman Catholick Dissenter; and, that of the Protestant Dissenter. That the church of England ought, in conscience and prudence, to consent to the ease desired.

I pray, first, that it be considered, how great a reflection it will be upon her honour, that from a *persecuted*; she should be accounted a *persecuting church*: ~~an~~ overthrow none of her enemies have been able to give to her many excellent apologies. Nor will it be excused, by her saying, 'She is in the right, which her persecutors were not;' since this is a confidence not wanting in any of them, or her Dissenters: and the truth is, it is but the begging of a question, that will by no means be granted.

No body ought to know more than *churchmen*, that conscience cannot be *forced*: that offerings *against* conscience, are as odious to God, as uneasy to them that

make them: that God loves a *free* sacrifice. That Christ *forbad* fire, though from heaven itself, to punish dissenters; and commanded that the *tares* should grow with the *wheat* till *harvest*. In fine, that we should *love enemies* themselves: and, to exclude worldly strife for religion, that his kingdom is not of *this* world. This was the doctrine of the Blessed Saviour of the world.

Saint Paul pursues the same course: is glad Christ is preached, be it of *envy*: the worst ground for dissent that can be. It was he that asked that hard, but just question, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own Lord he standeth or falleth." He allows the church a warfare; and weapons to perform it; but they are not carnal, but spiritual. Therefore it was so advised, that every man, in matters of religion, should be "*fully persuaded* in his *own* mind;" and if any were short, or mistaken, God would, in his time, inform them better.

He tells us of *Schismatics*, and *Hereticks* too; and their punishment, which is to the point in hand: he directs to a *first* and *second* admonition; and if that prevail not, *reject* them: that is, *refuse* them church fellowship, *disown* their relation, and *deny* them communion. But in all this there is not a word of *finer*, or *imprisonments*: nor is it an excuse to any church, that the *civil magistrate* executes the severity, while *they* are members of *her* communion that *make* or *excuse* the *laws*.

But if the church could gain her point, I mean *conformity*, unless she could gain *consent* too, it were but *constraint* at last: a *rape* upon the mind, which may increase her number, not her devotion. On the contrary, the rest of her sons are in danger by their hypocrisy: the most close, but watchful and revengeful thing in the world. Besides the scandal can hardly be removed: to *overvalue* coin, and rate brass to *silver*, beggars any country; and to own them for *sons* she never *begat*, debases and destroys any church.

It

It were better to indulge *foreign* coin of *intrinsic value*, and let it pass for its *weight*. It is not number, but *quality*; two or three sincere Christians, that *form* an evangelical church: and though the church were *less*, more charity, on the one hand, and piety on the other, with exact church-censure, and less civil coercion, would give her credit with conscience in all sects; without which, their accession itself would be no benefit, but disgrace and hazard, to her constitution.

And to speak prudently in this affair, it is the interest of the church of England not to suffer the extinction of *Dissenters*, that she may have a counter-balance to the *Roman Catholics*; who, though few in number, are great in quality, and greater in their foreign friendships and assistance. On the other hand, it is her interest to indulge the *Roman Catholics*; that, by his accession, she may at all times have the balance in her own hand against the *Protestant Dissenter* leaning to either, as she finds her *doctrine* undermined by the one, or her *discipline* by the other; or, lastly, her *civil interest* endangered from either of them.

And it is certainly the interest of *both those* extremes of dissent, that *she*, rather than either of *them*, should hold the scale. For as the Protestant Dissenter cannot hope for any tenderness, exclusive of Roman Catholics, but almost the *same* reasons may be advanced against *him*; so, on the other hand, it would look imprudent, as well as unjust, in the Roman Catholics, to solicit any indulgence exclusive of Protestant Dissenters. For besides that it keeps up the animosity, which it is their interest to bury, the consequence will be, to take the advantage of time to snatch it from one another; when an united request for liberty, once granted, will oblige both parties, in all times, for example-sake, to have it equally preserved. Thus are all church interests of Conformists and Dissenters rendered consistent and safe in their civil interest one with the other.

But it will last of all, doubtless, be objected,
 ' That though a toleration were ever so desirable in
 ' itself,

‘ itself, and in its consequence beneficial to the publick, yet the government cannot allow it, without ruin to the church of England, which it is obliged to maintain.’

But I think this will not affect the question at all; unless, by maintaining the church of England, it is understood that she should force whole parties to be of her communion, or knock them on the head: let us call to mind, that the religion that is *true*, allows no man to do *wrong*, that *right* may come of it: and that nothing has lessened the credit of any religion more than declining to support itself by its own *charity* and *piety*, and taking sanctuary in the *arms*, rather than the *understandings*, of men. Violences are ill pillars for truth to rest upon. The church of England must be maintained: right; but cannot that be done without the Dissenter be destroyed? In vain then did Christ command Peter to put up his sword, with this rebuke, “ They that take the sword, shall perish with the sword,” if his followers are to draw it again. He makes *killing* for religion, *murder*, and deserving *death*: was *he* then in the *right*, not to call legions to his assistance? And are not his followers of these times in the *wrong*, to seek to uphold their religion by any methods of *force*. The church of England must be maintained; therefore the dissenters, that hold almost the same doctrine, must be ruined. A consequence most unnatural, as it is almost impossible. For besides that the drudgery would unbecome the civil magistrate, who is the image of divine justice and clemency, and that it would fasten the character of a *false* church, upon one that deserves to be esteemed a *true* one; she puts the government upon a task that is hard to be performed. Kings can no more make brick without straw, than slaves: the condition of our affairs is much changed, and the circumstances our government are under differ mightily from those of our ancestors. They had not the same dissents to deal with, nor those dissents the like bodies of people to render them formidable, and their prosecution mischievous.

chievous to the state. Nor did this come of the prince's neglect or indulgence; there are other reasons to be assigned; of which, the opportunities domestick troubles gave to their increase and power, and the severities used to suppress them, may go for none of the least. So that it was as involuntary in the prince, as to the church anxious. And under this necessity to tie the magistrate to old measures, is to be regardless of time, whose *fresh* circumstances give aim to the conduct of wise men in their present actions. Governments, as well as courts, change their fashions: the same clothes will not always serve: and politicks, made obsolete by new accidents, are as unsafe to follow, as antiquated dresses are ridiculous to wear.

Thus *seamen* know, and teach us in their daily practice: they humour the winds; though they will lie as near as they can, and trim their sails by their compass; and by patience under these constrained and uneven courses, they gain their port at last. This justifies the government's change of measures from the change of things; for *res nolunt malè administrari*.

And to be free, it looks more than partial, to elect and reprobate too. That the church of England is preferred, and has the fat of the earth, the authority of the magistrate, and the power of the sword in her sons hands, which comprehend all the honours, places, profits, and powers of the kingdom, must not be repined at: let her have it, and keep it all, and let none dare seek or accept an office that is not of her. But to ruin dissenters to complete her happiness, (pardon the allusion) is Calvinism in the worst sense; for this is that *horrendum decretum* reduced to practice: and to pursue that ill-natured principle, 'Men are *civilly damned* for that they cannot *help*;' since *saith* is not in *man's power*, though it sometimes *exposes* one to it.

It is a severe dilemma, that a man must either renounce *that* of which he makes conscience in the sight of God, or be civilly and ecclesiastically *reprobated*: there was a time, when the church of England herself stood

stood in need of indulgence, and made up a great part of the *non-conformists* of this kingdom; and what she then wanted, she pleaded for, I mean a toleration, and that in a general stile, as divers of the writings of her doctors tell us: of which let it be enough but to mention that excellent discourse of Dr. Taylor, Bishop of Down, intitled, ‘*Liberty of Prophecy.*’

And that which makes severity look the worse in the members of the church of England, is the modesty she professes about the *truth* of the things she believes: for though, perhaps, it were indefensible in any church to *compel* a man to that which she were infallibly assured to be *true*, unless she superseded his ignorance by conviction, rather than authority, it must, doubtless, look rude, to punish men into conformity to that, of the truth of which the church herself pretends *no certainty*.

Not that I would *less* believe a church so cautious, than one more confident; but I know not how to help thinking persecution harsh, when they ruin people for *not* believing that, which they have not in themselves the *power* of believing, and which *she* cannot give them, and of which herself is not *infallibly* assured. The drift of this is *moderation*, which well becomes us poor mortals, that “for every idle word we speak, must give an account at the day of judgment,” if our Saviour’s doctrine have any credit with us.

It would much mitigate the severity, if the dissent were fullen, or in contempt: but if men cannot help or hinder their belief, they are rather unhappy than guilty, and more to be pitied than blamed. However they are of the reasonable stock of the country; and though they were unworthy of *favour*, they may not be unfit to *live*. It is capital, at law, to destroy bastards; and bye-blows are laid to the parish to keep: they must maintain them at last: and shall not these natural sons, at least, be laid at the door of the kingdom? Unhappy fate of Dissenters! to be less heeded, and more destitute than any body. If this should happen to be the effect of their own folly, with submission,

submission, it can never be the consequence of the government's engagements.

Election does not necessarily imply a *reprobation* of the *rest*. If God hath elected *some* to salvation, it will not follow of course that he hath absolutely rejected all the *rest*. For though he was God of the *Jews*, he was God of the *Gentiles* too, and *they* were his people, though the *Jews* were his *peculiar* people. "God respects not *persons*," says St. Peter; the good of all nations are accepted. The difference at last, will not be of *opinion*, but *works*: sheep or goats, all, of all judgments, will be found: and "Come, well done;" or, "Go, ye workers of iniquity," will conclude their eternal state: let us be careful therefore of an *opinion-reprobation* of one another.

We see the God of nature hath taught us softer doctrine in his great book of the world: his *sun shines*, and his *rain falls*, upon *all*. All the productions of nature are by *love*; and shall it be proper to religion *only* to propagate by *force*? The poor *bee* instructs us in humanity; who, to defend her feeble young, refuses no danger. All the seeds and plants that grow for the use of man, are produced by the kind and warm influences of the sun. It is *kindness* that upholds human race. People do not *multiply* in *spite*: and if it be by *gentle* and *friendly* ways, that nature produces and matures the creatures of the world, certainly *religion* should teach us to be *mild* and *bearing*.

"Let your moderation be known to all men," was the saying of a great doctor of the Christian faith; and his reason for that command cogent, "For the Lord is at hand." As if he had said, 'Have a care what you do; be not bitter nor violent; for the judge is at the door: do as you would be done to; lest what you deny to others, God should refuse to you.'

And after all this, shall the church of England be less tender of mens consciences, than our common law is of their lives; which had rather a thousand criminals should escape, than that one innocent should
perish?

perish? Give me leave to say, that there are many innocents (conscience excepted) now exposed; men honest, peaceable and useful; free of ill designs; that pray for Cæsar, and pay their tribute to Cæsar.

If any tell us, 'They have, or may, ill use their toleration;' I say, this must be looked to, and not liberty therefore refused: for the English church cannot so much forget her own maxim to Dissenters, that *Propter abusum non est tollendus usus*. It suffices to our argument it is no *necessary* consequence, and that *fact* and *time* are for us. And if any misuse such freedom, and intitle conscience to misbehaviour, we have other laws enough to catch and punish the offenders, without treating *one* party with the spoils of *six*. And when religion becomes no man's interest, it will hardly ever be any man's hypocrisy. Men will chuse by conscience, which at least preserves integrity, though it were mistaken: and if not in the wrong, truth recompenses inquiry, and light makes amends for dissent.

And since a plain method offers itself, from the circumstances of our case, I take the freedom to present it for the model of the intreated toleration.

Much has been desired, said and pressed, in reference to the late king's being head of a *Protestant* league, which takes in but a part of the Christian world; the Roman and Grecian Christians being excluded. But I most humbly offer, that our wise men would please to think of another title for our king, and that is head of a *Christian* league, and give the experiment here at home in his own dominions.

The Christian religion is admired of all in the *text*, and by all acknowledged in the *Apostle's Creed*. Here every party of Christians meet, and center as in a general. The several species of Christians, that this genus divideth itself into, are those divers persuasions we have within this kingdom; the church of England, Roman-Catholicks, Grecians, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists, Quakers, Socinians: these I call so many orders of Christians, that unite

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in the *text*, and differ only in the *comment*; all owning *one Deity, Saviour, and Judge, good works, rewards and punishments*: which bodies once regulated, and holding of the prince as head of the government, maintaining charity, and pressing piety, will be an honour to Christianity, a strength to the prince, and a benefit to the publick: for in lieu of an unattainable, (at best an unsincere) uniformity, we shall have in civils unity, and amity in faith.

The Jews before, and in the time of Herod, were divided into divers sects. There were Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, and Essenes: they maintained their dissent without ruin to the government; and the magistrates fell under no censure from Christ for that toleration.

The Gentiles, as already has been observed, had their divers orders of philosophers, as disagreeing as ever Christians were, and that without danger to the peace of the state.

The Turks themselves show us, that both other religions, and divers sects of their own, are very tolerable with security to their government.

The Roman church is a considerable instance to our point; for she is made up of divers orders of both sexes, of very differing principles, fomented sometimes to great feuds and controversies; as between Franciscans, Dominicans, Jesuits, and Sorbonists; yet without danger to the political state of the church. On the contrary, she therefore cast herself into that method, that she might safely give vent to opinion and zeal, and suffer both without danger of schism. And these regulars are, by the Pope's grants, privileged with an exemption from episcopal visitation and jurisdiction.

God Almighty inspire the king's heart, and the hearts of his great council, to be the glorious instruments of this blessing to the kingdom.

I shall conclude this persuasive, with the judgment of some pious fathers, and renowned princes.

Quadratus

Quadratus and Aristides wrote two Apologies to Adrian, for the Christian faith, and against the persecution of it.

Justin Martyr, an excellent philosopher and Christian, wrote two learned dissuatives against persecution, which he dedicated (as I take it) to Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

Melito, bishop of Sardis, a good and learned man, wrote a smart defence for the Christian religion and a toleration, dedicated to Verus.

Tertullian, in his most sharp and excellent Apology for the Christians, fastens persecution upon the Gentiles, as an inseparable mark of superstition and error; as he makes the Christian patience a sign of truth. In his discourse to Scapula, he says, 'It is not the property of religion to *persecute* for religion: she should be received for *herself*, not force.'

Hilary, an early and learned father, against Auxentius, saith, 'The Christian church does not *persecute*, but is *persecuted*.'

Atticus, bishop of Constantinople, would by no means have the minister of Nice to respect any opinion or sect whatsoever, in the distribution of the money sent by him for the relief of Christians; and by no means to prejudice those that practise a contrary doctrine and faith to theirs: that he should be sure to relieve those that hunger and thirst, and have not wherewith to help themselves, and make that the rule of his consideration. In short, he made the hereticks to have his wisdom in admiration, in that he would by no means trouble or molest them.

Proclus, another bishop of Constantinople, was of this opinion, 'That it was far easier by fair means to allure unto the church, than by force to compel.' He determined to vex no sect whatever, but restored to the church the renowned virtue of meekness required in Christian ministers.

If we will next hear the historian's own judgment upon the toleration, 'I am of opinion,' says he, 'that he is a persecutor, that in any kind of way molested such

‘ such men as lead a quiet and peaceable life.’ Thus Socrates, in his third book : in his seventh he tells us, ‘ That the bishop of Sinada, indeed, did banish the ‘ Hereticks ; but neither did he this,’ says he, ‘ according to the rule of the Catholick church, which ‘ is not accustomed to *persecute*.’ Lib. 7.

Lactantius tells the angry men of his time thus, ‘ If you will with blood, evil and torments, defend ‘ your worship, it shall not thereby be defended, but ‘ polluted.’

Chrysostom saith expressly, ‘ That it is not the ‘ manner of the children of God, to *persecute* about ‘ their religion, but an evident token of antichrist.’

Thus the fathers and doctors of the first ages. That emperors and princes have thus believed, let us hear some of greatest note, and most pressing to us.

Jerom, a good and learned father, saith, ‘ That ‘ heresy must be cut off with the sword of the spirit.’

Constantius, the father of Constantine the Great, laid this down for a principle, ‘ That those that were ‘ disloyal to God, would never be trusty to their ‘ prince.’ And, which is more, he lived thus, and so died, as his great speech to his great son, on his death-bed, amply evidences.

Constantine the Great, in his speech to the Roman senate, tells them, ‘ There is this difference between ‘ human and divine homage and service, that the one ‘ is *compelled*, and the other ought to be *free*.’

Eusebius Pamphilus, in the life of Constantine, tells us, that in his prayer to God, he said, ‘ Let thy people, I beseech thee, desire and maintain peace, living, free from sedition, to the common good and benefit of all the world ; and those that are led away with error, let them desire to live in peace and tranquillity with the faithful : for friendly humane society and commerce with them, will very much avail to bring them to the right way. Let no man molest another, but let every one follow the persuasion of their own conscience : but let those that have a true opinion concerning God, be persuaded, that

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‘ such as regulate their lives by God’s holy laws, do
 ‘ lead an holy and upright life: but those that will
 ‘ not conform thereunto, may have *liberty* to erect and
 ‘ set up *altars*. But we will *maintain* the *church* and
 ‘ *true religion*, which thou hast committed to our de-
 ‘ fence. Moreover, we desire that they may joyfully
 ‘ receive and welcome this general offer of peace and
 ‘ concord.’

This was the judgment of the most celebrated emperor that ever professed the Christian faith. I have cited other emperors in the body of this discourse; but because the *worst* are to be commended when they do *well*, Valens himself, charmed with the sweetness and strength of the philosopher Themistius, in his elegant oration, grew moderate towards the orthodox, whom a little before he had severely treated: of which these were the heads; ‘ That he persecuted
 ‘ without reason people of good lives: that it was no
 ‘ crime to think or believe otherwise than the prince
 ‘ believed: that he ought not to be troubled at the
 ‘ diversity of opinions: that the *Gentiles* were much
 ‘ more divided in their judgment than the *Christians*:
 ‘ that it sufficeth that every sect aimed at the truth,
 ‘ and lived virtuously.’ We have had modern royal examples too.

Stephen, king of Poland, declared his mind in the point controverted, thus, ‘ I am king of *men*, and not
 ‘ of *conscience*; a commander of *bodies*, and not of
 ‘ *souls*.’

The king of Bohemia was of opinion, ‘ That mens
 ‘ consciences ought in no sort to be violated, urged,
 ‘ or constrained.’

And lastly, let me add (as what is, or should be, of more force) the sense of king James and king Charles the first, men, as of supreme dignity, so famed for their great natural abilities and acquired learning; ‘ It is a sure rule in divinity,’ said king James, ‘ that God never loves to plant his church by
 ‘ violence and bloodshed.’ And in his exposition on the
 the

the twentieth of the Revelations, he saith, ' That per-
' secution is the note of a false church.'

And in the advice of king Charles the first to the
late king, he says, ' Take heed of abetting any fac-
' tions; your partial adhering to any one side, gains
' you not so great advantages in some mens hearts,
' (who are prone to be of their king's religion) as it
' loseth you in others, who think themselves, and their
' profession, first despised, then persecuted by you.'

Again, ' Beware of exasperating any factions, by
' the crossness and asperity of some mens passions,
' humours, or private opinions, employed by you,
' grounded only upon their difference in lesser mat-
' ters, which are but the skirts and suburbs of reli-
' gion; wherein a charitable connivance, and Chris-
' tian toleration, often dissipates their strength, whom
' rougher opposition fortifies, and puts the despised
' and oppressed party into such combinations, as may
' most enable them to get a full revenge on those
' they count their persecutors, who are commonly
' assisted by that vulgar commiseration that attends
' all that are said to suffer under the notion of reli-
' gion.'

' Always keep up *solid piety*, and those *fundamental*
' *truths* which mend both hearts and lives of men,
' with *impartial* favour and justice. Your prerogative
' is best shown and exercised in remitting, rather than
' exacting the rigour of laws; there being nothing
' worse than legal tyranny.'



GOOD ADVICE
TO THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND,
ROMAN CATHOLICK,
AND
PROTESTANT DISSENTER:

IN WHICH

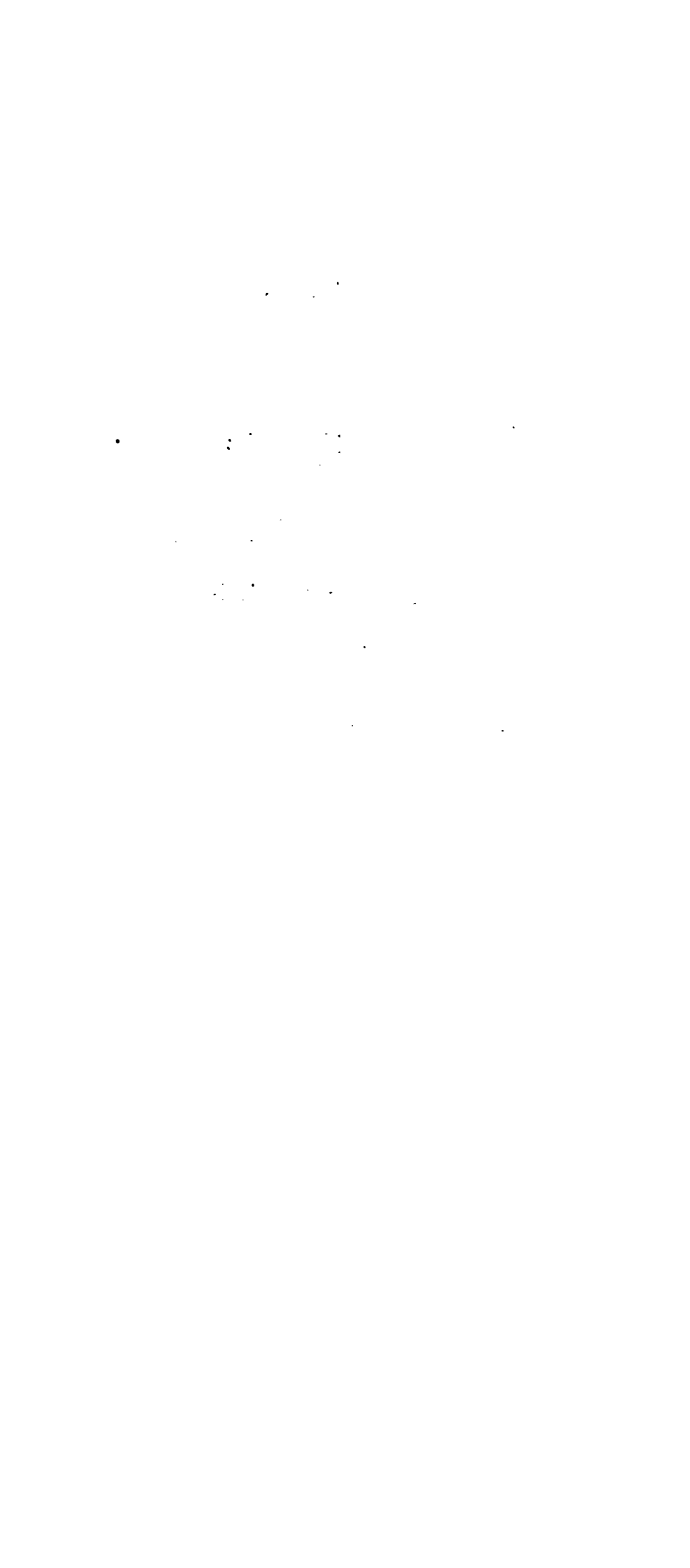
**It is endeavoured to be made appear, that it is
their Duty, Principle, and Interest to abolish the**

PENAL LAWS and TESTS.

Beati Pacifici.

Published in the Year 1687.

A a 3



T O T H E

R E A D E R.

READER,

NO matter who, but what: and yet if thou wouldst know the author, he is an Englishman, and therefore obliged to this country, and the laws that made him free.

That single consideration were enough to command this undertaking; for it is to persuade his countrymen to be deliver'd of the greatest yoke a nation can well suffer under; *penal laws for religion*, I mean.

And now thou hast both the who, and what. If thou art wise and good, thou art above my epithets, and more my flatteries: if not, I am in the right to let them alone. Read, think, and judge. Liberty, English and Christian, is all that is sought in the ensuing discourse. Adieu.

GOOD ADVICE

TO THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND, &c.

PART I.

I Must own it is my aversion at this time, to meddle with publick matters; and yet my duty to the publick will not let me be silent. They that move by principles, must not regard times nor factions, but what is just, and what is honourable; and that no man ought to scruple, nor no time or interest to contest.

The single question I go upon, and which does immediately concern and exercise the minds of the thinking, as well as talking men of this kingdom, is, ‘Whether it be fit to repeal the penal laws and tests in matters of religion, or not?’ I take the affirmative of the question, and humbly submit my reasons to every reasonable conscience. I say reasonable, because that which knows not its own duty, principle and interest, is not so; and that which is not willing to do to others as it would be done by, less deserves to be thought so.

Now there are three sorts of people that will find themselves concerned in this question, the *church of England*, the *Roman Catholick*, and the *Protestant Dissenter*, and these make up the whole body of the kingdom:

dom: if it appear to be their duty, principle and interest, the question is gained, and no-body is left to complain; and if I am mistaken, it is with so great an inclination to serve them all, that their good nature cannot but plead my excuse, especially when they consider I am neither moved by hopes nor fears: private loss or gain being farther from my thought, than I hope they are from a good understanding.

I say, first, then, it is the duty of all of them, because they all profess that religion which makes it their common duty to do it; Christianity I mean: for no Christian ought to deprive any man of his native right, for matters of faith and worship towards God, in the way that he thinks most agreeable to the will of God; because it is necessary to a Christian to believe, 'That faith is the gift of God alone, and that he only is Lord of conscience, and is able truly to enlighten, persuade, and establish it;' and consequently that prejudicing men in their persons or estates, or depriving them of any station in the government, they might otherwise, in their turn, be capable to serve the publick in, is contrary to the *tenderness* and *equity* of that religion; which will yet farther appear, if we consider that '*Christianity is the sole religion of the world that is built on the principles of love; which brought with it the greatest evidences of truth; equally convincing our understandings with its light, and bearing down our senses with its miracles; which silenced the oracles of the Heathens by the Divine power present with it, and vanquished their hearts, that had left nothing else to conquer, leading kings and emperors with their courts and armies in triumph, after the despised cross of him who was the holy and blessed author of it.*'

It was he that laid not his religion in worldly empire, nor used the methods of worldly princes to propagate it; as it came from heaven, so that only should have the honour of protecting and promoting it. His whole business to mankind from first to last, was love. It was first love in his Father to send him

(as

(as Saint John teaches) "God so loved the world, that he sent his Son," &c. It was love in Jesus Christ to come on that errand; that he, 'who thought it no robbery to be equal with God, should take the form of a servant to adopt us children, and make himself of no reputation with the world, that he might make us of reputation with God his Father.'

And he did not only *come* in much love, but *preached* it and pressed it to both friends and foes; "Love one another; love enemies; do good to them that hate you; forgive them that trespass against you; what ye would that other men should do unto you, do that unto them: by these things shall all men know you are my disciples; for I came not to destroy mens lives," no, not for religion itself; "for my kingdom, power, force, weapons, and victory, are not of this world." In all this, *love* prevails: it was his great, his new, his last commandment; of all his disciples, the most pursued by his *beloved* one, that in his bosom had learned his *heart*, as his divine doctrine of love, in his epistles, tells us.

As he lived in love, so he died in love, with us, and for us, and that while we were *rebellious* too; ay, he *prayed* and *died* for them who put him to *death*, "shewing us," says St. Peter, "an example, that we should follow his steps." And what are they? Doubtless the steps of love, the path he trod; "To do good to mankind, enemies as well as friends, that we may be like our heavenly Father, that causes his sun to shine, and his rain to fall upon the just and unjust." This must be the apostle's meaning, for the rest of his passion was inimitable.

Now if this be the doctrine of Christ, the nature of Christianity, the practice of the primitive church, that, like Adam, was created in full strength, beauty, and wisdom, and so an example to succeeding ages of religion, and to which we so often refer as our original; with what pretence to a Christian conscience can any one stickle to keep imprisoning, banishing, impoverishing, hanging, and quartering laws on foot for religion's

religion's sake, but especially against such as are, by creed, professors of Christianity as well as themselves.

I know the case is put hard by those that have the laws on their side; 'We do this to save ourselves;' but an harder case than Christ's can never be put, whose answer in his, ought to resolve theirs fully.

Christ is sent by his Father for the salvation of the world: he introduces and proves his mission by miracles, and the great authority of his word and doctrine: his followers, fully satisfied who he was, whence he came, what he taught, and how eminently confirmed, grew impatient at contradiction; they could not bear the least dissent; for when some of the Samaritans refused to entertain their Lord, because they thought he was going for Jerusalem, (the place of their greatest aversion) these disciples were for having but the word from his mouth, and they would, in imitation of Elijah, have called for fire from heaven to have destroyed them. But he turned and rebuked them, and said, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of, for the Son of man is not come to destroy mens lives, but to save them." This answer is to purpose, and for all times, to be sure Christian ones; and the higher the pretensions of any party are to Christianity, the more inexcusable if they practise the contrary. Would not Christ then hurt them that refused him, and can we hurt our neighbours for not receiving us? He *condemned* that spirit in his disciples, and shall we *uphold* the same spirit, and that by *law* too, which he condemned by his *gospel*? This is killing for God's sake, expressly charged by "Christ with impiety." "They shall think," says he to his disciples, "they do God good service to kill you:" Who should think so? Why the *Christian persecutors*. Is it their property to do so? Yes: What should one think then of those Christians that profess it.

The Jews were grievously punished of God, for that abomination of sacrificing their children to Moloch; but these laws, though they change the object, they

they have not lessened the sin; for they offer up *man, woman, and child*, and though they say, *It is to God*, no matter for that, since it makes their case worse; for it is to imagine that so good, so just, so sensible, so merciful a being, can take pleasure in so much cruelty. ‘ Well, but if we must not knock folks on the head, ‘ what must we do with them?’ Take an answer at the mouth of truth and wisdom: “ Let the tares and wheat “ grow together till the harvest:” What is that? He tells you, “ It is the end of the world:” so that whatever the church of England is, it is certain Christ is for a toleration, and his doctrine is always in fashion: what he *was*, he is, and will be: he went not by reasons of state, or customs of countries; his judgment was better built, who came to *give* law, and not to receive it, and it is a *light* and *rule* to *all* times. “ And “ he that loves father, or mother, or wife, or children, or house, or land, better than HIM,” that is, *his doctrine* (of which this is so great a part) “ is “ not worthy of him;” and I fear no other reason induced the church of England to decline it.

To confirm what has been said, though I design brevity, let me not lose another passage very pregnant to our purpose: when his disciples had accomplished their first mission, at their return they gave him the history of their travels: among the rest, they tell him of one they met with, “ That in his name cast out “ devils;” but because he would not follow with them, they *forbad* him: here is at least a *dissenting* Christian, though a *believer*; yet, it seems, not one of that *closer* congregation: we also see their zeal and sentence. But what says the master, yet alive and with them, the *Infallible Doctor*, in whose mouth was no guile, who had not the spirit by measure, and was the great wisdom of *God* to his people, was he of the same mind, or did he leave them without rule in the point? His answer is this: “ And Jesus said to them, “ *Forbid him not*, for he that is not against us is for “ us.” The prohibition is taken off, and their judgment reversed; and from his, to be sure, there lies no
appeal.

appeal. For though a power of decision were allowed to some one or more on earth, in matters obscure and undetermined, yet in cases already adjudged by the Son of God himself, who had the chair, and could not err, there can be no room for another judge.

Now to apply it, I must first say, I find no such disciples among those that are on the side of keeping up the penal laws; God knows, the disparity is but too unequal. But next, if they were all twelve in Westminster-Abbey, and should be on the side of upholding the penal laws (which is the wrong side they were of before) I should beg their pardon, if I were of their master's mind, and objected his wisdom to their zeal, and his gentle rule to their harsh and narrow judgment. And I beseech the church of England to consider, that no pretence can excuse her dissent, and less her cross practice, to the judgment of her Saviour: 'A judgment that seems given and settled for the conduct of the church on the like occasions, in succeeding times:' and it is pity any worldly thing should have place with her to divert her obedience. Did Christ then come to *save* mens lives, and not to destroy them? And should she (she, I say, that pretends to be a reformed church) uphold those laws that do destroy them? HE, alas! went to another village, instead of burning them, or theirs, for refusing him. And SHE forbids any, that belongs to any other, to lodge in her's, upon pain of losing life or estate: this may make her a *Samaritan* indeed, but not the *good one*, whose example would have taught her, instead of these sharp and ruder remedies, to have poured the oil of peace and gladness into those chops and wounds, that time, and heats on all hands, had made in every religious party of men. Nor does she lose any thing by repealing those laws, but the power of persecuting; and a good church would never have the temptation. Come; somebody must begin to forgive; let her not leave that honour to another, nor draw upon herself the guilt and mischief of refusing it. She pretends to fear the strokes of the
Romanists;

Romanists; but I would fain know of her, if following their example will convert them, or secure her? Does she hope to keep them out by the weapons that have failed in their hands, or can she honourably censure persecution in them, and yet use it herself?

‘But she is extremely scandalized and scared at the ‘severity upon Protestants in France.’ It is certainly very ill; but do not the laws she is so fond of, point at the same work, *conformity*, or *ruin*? And do not we know, that in some places, and upon some parties, her magistrates have plowed as deep furrows, especially within these six and twenty years? Husbands separated from their wives, parents from their children; the widow’s bed and the orphan’s milk made a prize for religion; houses stripped, barns and fields swept clean, prisons crowded, without regard to sex or age, and some of both sorts dungeoned to death, and all for religion. If she says, ‘They were peevish men, bigots, or moved by private interest,’ she still made the laws; and says no more for herself than the French say for their king, which yet she refuses to take for an answer. Perhaps I could parallel some of the severest passages in that kingdom out of the actions of some members of the church of England in *cool blood*, that are even yet for continuing the penal laws upon their plundered neighbours; so that this reflection of hers upon France, is more popular than just from her. But I beseech her to look upon a country four times bigger than France, *Germany* I mean, and she will there see *both* religions practised with great ease and amity; yet of this we must not hear one word: I hope it is not for fear of imitating it. However; it is disingenuous to object the mischiefs of Popery to a general ease, when we see it is the way to prevent them. This is put, in the name of Popery, to keep all to *herself*, as well from Protestant Dissenters, as Roman Catholics. How Christian, how equal, how safe, that narrow method is, becomes her well to consider, and methinks she ought not to be long about it.

I know

I know she flatters herself, and others too believe, she is a *bulwark* against Popery; and with that, without any farther security to other Protestants, wipes her mouth of all old scores, and makes her present court for assistance. But when that word *bulwark* is examined, I fear it appears to mean no more than this, 'That she would keep out Popery for *that* reason, for which she apprehends Popery would turn *her* out,' viz. *Temporal interest*. But may I without offence ask her, when she kept persecution out? Or if she keeps out Popery for any body's sake but her own? Nay, if it be not to hold the power she has in her hands, that she would frighten other parties (now she has done her worst) with what mischief Popery would do them when it has power? But to speak freely, can she be a bulwark in the case, that has been bringing the *worst* part of Popery in, these six and twenty years, if *persecution* be so, as she says it is? This would be called canting to the world in others. But I hear she begins to see her fault, is heartily sorry for it, and promises to do so no more: and why may not Popery be as wise, that has also burnt her fingers with the same work? Their praying for ease by law, looks as if they chose that, rather than power, for security; and if so, why may not the Papists live, as well as she reign? I am none of their advocate, I am no Papist; but I would be just and merciful too. However, I must tell her, that keeping the laws on foot by which she did the mischief, is none of the plainest evidences of her repentance: they that can believe it, have little reason to quarrel at the unaccountableness of transubstantiation. It is unjust in Popery to invade her privileges; and can it be just in her to provoke it by denying a Christian liberty? Or can she expect what she will not give? Or not do as she would be done by, because she fears others will not observe the same rule to her? Is not this "doing evil that good may come of it," and that uncertain too, against an express command, as well as common charity? But to speak freely, whether we regard the circumstances of the king, the religion

ligion of his children, the inequality of the number and strength of those of each of their communions, we must conclude, that the aversion of the church of England to this intreated liberty cannot reasonably be thought to come from the fear she has of the prevalency of Popery, but the loss of that power the law gives her to domineer over all Dissenters. And is not this a rare motive for a Christian church to continue penal laws for religion? If her piety be not able to maintain her upon equal terms, methinks her having so much the whip-hand and start of all others, should satisfy her ambition, and quiet her fears; for it is possible for her to keep the churches, if the laws were abolished; all the difference is, she could not *force*; she might *persuade* and *convince* what she could; and pray, is not that enough for a true church, without gaols, whips, halters, and gibbets? O what corruption is this that has prevailed over men of such pretensions to light and conscience, that they do not, or will not, see nor feel their own principles one remove from *themselves*; but sacrifice the noblest part of the reformation to ambition, and compel men to truckle their tender consciences to the grandeur and dominion of their doctors!

But because the sons of the church of England keep, at this time, such a stir in her favour, and fix her excellency in her opposition to Popery, it is worth while to consider a little farther, if really the most feared and disagreeable part of Popery, in her own opinion, does not belong to her; and if it does, should we not be in a fine condition, to be in love with our fetters, and to court our misery?

That part of Popery which the church of England with most success objects against, is her *violence*. This is that only she can pretend to fear: her *doctrines* she partly professes, or thinks she can easily refute. Nobody counts her doctors *conjurers* for their *transubstantiation*; or dangerous to the *state* for their *beads*, or their *purgatory*: but *forcing* others to their *faith*, or *ruining* them for *refusing* it, is the terrible thing we

are taught by her to apprehend. Now granting this to be the case, in reference to the Roman religion, where it is in the chair, I ask, if the church of England, with her better doctrines, has not been guilty of this impiety; and for that cause more blameable than the church she opposes so much. If we look into her acts of state, we find them many and bitter, against all sorts of Dissenters. There is nigh twenty laws made, and yet in force, to constrain conformity; and they have been executed too, as far and as often as she thought it fit for her interest to let them. Some have been *banged*, many *banished*, more *imprisoned*, and some to death; and abundance *impoverished*; and all this merely for *religion*: though, by a base and barbarous use of words, it has been called treason, sedition, routs, and riots; the worst of aggravations; since they are not contented to make people unhappy for their dissent, but rob them of all they had left, their *innocency*. This has been her state-act, to coin guilt, and make men dangerous, to have her ends upon them. But that way of palliating persecution, by rendering a thing that it is not, and punishing men for crimes they never committed, shews but little conscience in the projectors. The church of England cries out against transubstantiation, because of the invisibility of the change. She does not see Christ there, and therefore he is not there; and yet her sons do the same thing. For though all the tokens of a riot are as invisible in a dissenters meeting, as that in the transubstantiation, yet it *must* be a riot without any more to do: the English of which is, ‘It is a riot to pray to God in the humblest and peaceablest manner in a conventicle.’

I know it is said, ‘The blood shed in the foregoing reign, and the plots of the Papists against queen Elizabeth, drew those laws from the church of England.’ But this was no reason why *she* should do ill because *they* had done so: besides, it may be answered, that that religion having so long intermixed itself with worldly power, it gave way to take the revenges

revenges of it. And certainly the great men of the church of England endeavouring to intercept queen *Mary*, by proclaiming the lady *Jane Gray*, and the apprehension the Papists had of the better title of *Mary*, queen of *Scots*, together with a long possession, were scurvy temptations to kindle ill designs against that extraordinary queen. But though nothing can excuse and less justify those cruel proceedings, yet if there were any reason for the laws, it is plainly removed, for the interests are joined, and have been since king James the first came to the crown. However, it is certain there were laws enough, or they might have had them, to punish all civil enormities, without the necessity of making any against them as Papists. And so the civil government had stood upon its own legs, and vices only against it had been punishable by it. In short, it was the falsest step that was made in all that great queen's reign, and the most dishonourable to the principles of the first reformers; and therefore I know no better reason why it should be continued, than that which made the cardinal, in the history of the council of Trent, oppose the reformation at Rome; 'That though it was true that they
' were in the *wrong*, yet the *admitting* of it approved
' the *judgment* of their enemies, and so good-night to
' *infallibility*.' Let not this be the practice of the church of England, and the rather, because she does not pretend to it: but let her reflect; that she has lost her *king* from her religion, and they that have got him, naturally hope for ease for theirs by him; that it is the end they laboured, and the great use they have for him; and I would fain wonder that she never saw it before; but whether she did or no, why should she begrudge it, at least refuse it now? since it is plain, that there is nothing we esteem dangerous in Popery, that other laws are not sufficient to secure us from: have we not enough of them? Let her think of more, and do the best she can to discover plotters, punish traitors, suppress the seditious, and keep the peace better, than those we have can enable us to do.

But, for God's sake, let us never direct laws against men for the cause of religion, or punish them before they have otherwise done amiss. Let mens works, not their opinions, turn the edge of the magistrate's sword against them; else it is beheading them before they are born.

By the common law of this kingdom there must be some real and proper *overt act*, that proves treason; some *malice*, that proves sedition; and some *violent action*, that proves a rout or riot. If so, to call any sort of *religious orders* the one, or *praying to God* in any way out of *fashion* the other, is preposterous; and punishing people for it, downright *murder*, or *breach of the peace*, according to the true use of words, and the old law of England.

If the church of England fears the growth of Popery, let her be truer to the religion she owns, and betake herself to *faith*, rather than *force*, by a pious, humble, and a good example; to *convince* and *persuade*; which is the highest honour to any church, and the greatest victory over men. I am for a national church, as well as she, so it be by *consent*, and not by *constraint*. But coercive churches have the same *principle*, though not the same *interest*. A church by *law* established, is a *state* church; and that is no argument of verity, unless the state that makes her so be *infallible*; and because that will not be asserted, the other can never oblige the conscience, and consequently the compulsion she uses is unreasonable. This very principle justifies the king of France, and the inquisition. For laws being equally of force in all countries where they are made, it must be as much a fault, in the church of England's judgment, to be a Protestant at *Rome*, or a Calvinist at *Paris*, as to be a Papist at *London*: then where is truth or conscience, but in the *laws of countries!* which renders her an *Hobbist*, notwithstanding her long and loud clamours against the *Leviathan*.

I beg her, for the love of Christ, that she would think of these things, and not esteem me her enemy for performing the part of so good a friend. Plain-dealing

dealing becomes that character; no matter whether the way be agreeable, so it be right: we are all to do our duty, and leave the rest to God: he can best answer for our obedience, that commands it; and our dependance upon his word will be our security in our conduct. What weight is it to a church, that she is the church by *law* established, when no human law can make a *true* church? A true church is of *Christ's* making, and is by *gospel* established. It is a reflection to a church that would be thought true, to stoop to *human laws* for her *establishment*. I have been often scandaled at that expression from the sons of the church of England, especially those of the robe, 'What do *you* talk for? Our religion is by *law established*;' as if that determined the question of its truth against all other persuasions.

The Jews had this to say against our Saviour, "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die." The primitive Christians, and some of our first reformers, *died* as by *law established*, if that would mend the matter: but does that make it lawful to a Christian conscience? We must ever demur to this plea, No greater argument of a church's defection from Christianity than turning persecutor. It is true, the scripture says, "The earth shall help the woman;" but that was to *save herself*, not to *destroy others*: for it is the token that is given by the Holy Ghost of a *false* church; "That none must buy or sell in her dominions, that will not receive her mark in their forehead, or right hand:" that is, 'By going to church against conscience, or bribing lustily to stay at home.'

Things do not change, though men do. Persecution is still the same, let the hand alter ever so often: but the sin may not; for doubtless it is greatest in those that make the highest claim to reformation. For while they plead their *own* light for doing so, they hereby endeavour to *extinguish* another's light that cannot concur. What a man *cannot* do, it is not his fault he *does not* do; nor should he be *compelled* to do

it, and least of all *punished* for *not* doing it. No church can *give* faith, and therefore cannot *force* it: for what is *constrained*, is not *believed*; since faith is, in that sense, *free*, and constraint gives no time to *assent*: I say, what I do not *will*, is not *I*; and what I do not *chuse*, is none of *mine*; and another's faith cannot save *me*, though it should save *him*. So that this method never obtains the end designed, since it *saves* nobody, because it *converts* nobody; it may breed *hypocrisy*, but that is quite another thing than *salvation*.

What, then, is the use of penal laws? Only to shew the sincerity of them that *suffer*, and cruelty of those that *make* and *execute* them. And all time tells us they have ever failed those that have leaned upon them; they have always been losers at last: besides, it is a most unaccountable obstinacy in the church of England to stickle to uphold them: for, after having made it a matter of religion and conscience to address the late king in behalf of *this*, to think he should leave conscience behind him in Flanders, or when they waited on him to the crown, that he should send it thither upon a pilgrimage, is want of wit at best; pardon the censure. Could they conscientiously oppose his *exaltation* for his religion, and now his *religion*, because he will not *leave* it? Or can they reasonably *maintain* those *tests* that excluded him when *duke of York*, while they endured *none* to hinder him from the *crown*? I heartily beg the church of England's excuse, if I say I cannot apprehend her: perhaps the fault is mine; but sure I am she is extremely dark. How could she hope for this king without his conscience? Or conceive that his honour or conscience would let him leave the members of his communion under the lash of so many destroying laws? Would she be so served by a prince of her *own* religion, and she in the like circumstances? She would not, let her talk till doom's-day.

To object the king's promise, when he came to the crown, against the repeal of the penal laws, shews not his insincerity, but her uncharitableness, or that really

really she has a very weak place: for it is plain, the king first declared his *own* religion, and then promised to maintain *her's*; but was that to be *without*, or together *with*, his own? His words shew he intended that his own should *live*, though the other might *reign*. I say again, it is not credible that a prince of any sincerity can refuse a being to his own religion, when he continues another in its well-being. This were to act upon *state*, not *conscience*, and to make more conscience to uphold a religion he *cannot* be of, than of giving ease to one his conscience *obliges* him to be of. I cannot imagine how this thought could enter into any head that had brains, or heart that had honesty. And, to say true, they must be a sort of state-consciences, 'consciences as by law established,' that can follow the law against their convictions.

But this is not all I have to observe from that objection: it implies too evidently, first, that she thinks herself shaken, if the penal laws be repealed; then "by *law* established," she must mean, "established by those *penal laws*." Secondly, That the king having promised to maintain her, as by law established, he ought not to endeavour their *repeal*, by which she is *established*. I confess this is very close arguing; but then she must not take it ill, if all men think her *ill-founded*; for any thing must be so, that is established by *destroying* laws! Laws, that time and practice have declared enemies to *property* and *conscience*. O let her not hold by that charter, nor point thither for her establishment and defence, if she would be thought a Christian church.

"Plutarch had rather one should think there never was such a man in the world, than that Plutarch was an *ill* man." Shall the church of England, that glories in a greater light, be more concerned for her *power* than her *credit*? To *be*, than to be that which she *should* be? I would say, far be it from her, for her own sake; and, which is of much more moment, for the sake of the general cause of religion.

Let us see, therefore, if there be not another way of understanding those words, more decent to the king, and more honourable for her, viz. ‘ That she is in the national chair, has the churches and revenues, and is mother of those that do not adhere to any *separate* communion; and that the king has promised to maintain her in this post, from the invasions of any other persuasion that would wrest these privileges out of her hand:’ this he promised formerly; this he has very particularly repeated in his gracious declaration: but to ruin men that would not conform, while himself was so great a dissenter, and came such, to her knowledge, to the crown, can be no part of his promises, in the opinion of common sense and charity. Is there no difference to be observed, between not turning her out, and destroying all others not of her communion? He will not turn her out; there is his promise: and he has not done it; there is his performance: nor will he do it, I am confident, if she pleases. But there is no manner of necessity from this engagement, that all parties else are to be confounded. Though, if it were so, it is ill divinity to press such promises upon a prince’s conscience, that cannot be performed with a good one by any body.

Let us remember how often she has upbraided her dissenters with this, “ Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s,” whilst they have returned upon her the other half of the text, “ and render unto God the things that are God’s.” It happens now that God and Cæsar are both of a mind, which perhaps does not always fall out, at least about the point in hand. Will she dissent from both now? Her case, believe me, will be doubtful then. I beg her to be considerate. It is the greatest time of trial she has met with since she was a church. To acquit herself like a member of Christ’s universal one, let her keep nothing that voids her pretensions. The Babylonish garment will undo her. Practices inconsistent with her reformation will ruin her. The martyrs blood won the day,

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day, and her severity has almost lost it. They suffered by law, she makes laws for suffering. Is this an imitation of their practice, to uphold the weapons of their destruction? I must tell her, it is being a martyr for persecution, and not by it: another path than that the holy ancients, and our humble ancestors trod, and which will lead her to be deserted and contemned of every body that counts it safer to follow the blessed rule and practice of Christ and his inspired messengers, than her narrow and worldly policies. But that which heightens the reproach, is the offer of the Romanists themselves to make a perpetual civil peace with her, and that she refuses. Would the martyrs have done this? surely no. Let her remember the first argument honest old Fox advances against that church, is the church of England's present darling, viz. Penal laws for religion; as she may see at the beginning of his first volume: doubtless he was much in the right, which makes her extremely in the wrong. "Nothing," says the prophet, "must harm in God's holy mountain," and that is the church, says Fox, and therefore he says, Christ's church never persecutes. Leave then God with his own work, and Christ with his own kingdom. As it is not of the world, let not the world touch it; no, not to uphold it, though they that bear it should trip by the way. Remember Uzzah, he would needs support the ark when the oxen *bumbled*; but was struck dead for his pains. The presumption is more than parallel. Christ promised to be "present with his church to the end of the world." He bids them "fear not," and told them, that "sufficient was the day for the evil thereof." How? with penal laws? no such matter; but his divine presence. Therefore it was, he called not for legions to fight for him, because his work needed it not. They that want them have another sort of work to do: and it is too plain, that empire, and not religion, has been too much the business. But, O let it not be so any more! to be a *true* church is better than to be a *national* one; especially as so upheld. Prefs virtue,
punish

punish vice, dispense with opinion; persuade, but do not impose. Are there tares in opinion? let them alone; you heard "they are to grow with the wheat "until harvest," that is, the end of the world." Should they not be plucked up before? No; and it is *angels* work at last too. Christ, that knew all men, saw no hand on earth fit for that business. Let us not then usurp their office. Beside, we are "to love "enemies;" this is the great law of our religion; by what law then are we to *persecute* them? And if not enemies, not friends and neighbours certainly.

The apostle rejoiced "that Christ was preached out "of envy." If so, I am sure we ought not to envy Christians the enjoyment of the liberty of their consciences. Christianity should be propagated by the spirit of Christianity, and not by violence or persecution, for that is the spirit of antichristianity. Nor, for fear of it, should we, of Christians, become antichristians. Where is faith in God? Where is trust in Providence? Let us do our duty, and leave the rest with him; and not "do evil that good may come of it;" for that shews a distrust in God, and a confidence in our own inventions for security. No reason of state can excuse our disobedience to his rule; and we desert the principles of our heavenly Master when we decline it. The question is about conscience; about this we can none of us be too tender, nor exemplary. It is in right doing that Christians can hope for success; and for true victory only through faith and patience. But if to avoid what we fear, we contradict our principles, we may justly apprehend that God will desert us in an unlawful way of maintaining them. Perhaps this may be God's time of trying all parties, what he will do; whether we will rely upon him, or our own feeble provisions; whether we will allow what we ourselves, in our turn, have all of us desired; if not, may we not expect to suffer the thing we would inflict? For our penal laws cannot secure us from the turns of Providence, and less support us under them. Let us consider the true ground of the difficulty that

is made, if it be not partial and light in God's scale; for to that trial all things must come, and his judgment is inevitable as well as infallible. Besides, if we have not tried all other methods, we are inexcusable in being so tenacious for this. I do therefore, in all humility, beseech all sorts of professors of Christianity in these kingdoms, to abstract themselves from those jealousies which worldly motives are apt to kindle in their minds, and with an even and undisturbed soul pursue their Christian duty in this great conjuncture; considering, "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," and that, for all our watchmen, it is "God alone (at last) that keeps the city." Not that I would decline a fitting, but an unchristian provision: for though the foundation were never so true, yet if our superstructure be *hay* and *straw*, (our own narrow devices) the fire will consume it, and our labour will be worse than in vain. Let us not therefore *sow* what we would *not reap*, because we *must reap* what we *sow*: and remember who told us, "what we measure to others shall be measured to us again." Let us, therefore, do unto all parties of men, as we would be done unto by them in their turn of power; lest our fear of their undutifulness should tempt us out of our duty, and so draw upon ourselves the mischiefs we are afraid of. Sacred writ is full of this, in the doctrine of both testaments; and, as we profess to believe it, we are inexcusable if we do not practise it. Let the spirit then of Christian religion prevail: let our policies give way to our duty, and our fears will be overcome of our hopes, which will not make us ashamed at the last and great judgment; where, O God! let us all appear with comfort.

I could yet enlarge upon this subject; for nothing can be more fruitful. I could say, that a church that denies *infallibility*, cannot *force*, because she cannot be *certain*; and so penal laws (though it were possible that they could be lawful in others) in her, would be unjust: that scripture leaves men to *conviction* and *persuasion*; that the true church-weapons are *light* and *grace*;

grace; and her punishments, *censure* and *excommunication*: that gaols and gibbets are inadequate methods for conversion, and that they never succeeded: that this forbids all farther light to come into the world, and so limits the Holy One, which in scripture is made a great sin. And, lastly, That such insnare their own posterity that may be of another mind, and forfeit by it the estates they have so carefully transmitted to them.

Thus far against imposition. And against compliance, I could say, that it is to betray God's sovereignty over conscience; to defy men; gratify presumption; soil and extinguish truth in the mind; obey blindfold; make over the soul without security; turn hypocrite, and abundance more; each of which heads might well merit an whole chapter. But this having been well and seasonably considered elsewhere, I shall now proceed to the second part of this discourse, in which I will be as brief, and yet as full, as I can.

P A R T II.

That it is the principle of men of note of all parties.

BUT what need is there of this, may some say, when all parties profess to be of the same judgment, 'That conscience ought not to be forced, nor religion imposed upon men at their civil peril?' I own they are all of that mind, at one time or other; and therefore, that I may purge myself of any animosity to the doctrine of the church of England, I will ingenuously confess the severe conduct I have argued against is not to be imputed to her principles; but then her evil will be the greater, that in fact has so notoriously contradicted them. I know some of her defenders will hardly allow that too; though the more candid give us their silence or confession: for they tell us, 'It is not the church that has done it;' which, unless they mean, the laws were not made at church, must needs be false, since those that made and executed them

them were of her own communion, and are that great body of members that constitute her a church; but, by her shifting them off, it is but reasonable to conclude that she tacitly condemns what she publickly disowns. One would think, then, it should not be so hard to persuade her to quit them, in the way she made them, or to enjoin her sons to do it, if that language be too harsh for her. This she must hear of some way; and I pray God she may endeavour to do her duty in it. She is not alone; for every party in power has too evidently lapsed into this evil; though, under the prevalency and persecution of another interest, they have ever writ against club-law for religion. And to the end that I may do the reformation right, and the principles of the church of England justice, I must say, that hardly one person of any note died in the time of queen Mary, that did not pass sentence upon persecution as antichristian, particularly Latimer, Philpot, Bradford, Rogers, very eminent reformers. The apologies that were written in those times, are of the same strain, as may be seen in Jewel, Haddon, Reynolds, &c. and the Papists were with reason thought much in the wrong by these primitive Protestants, for the persecution that they raised against them, for matters of pure religion. But what need we go so far back? Is it not recent in memory, that bishop Usher was employed to O. Cromwell, by some of the clergy of the church of England, for liberty of conscience? Dr. Parr, in the life of Dr. Usher, primate of Armagh, fol. 75, has that passage thus:

‘ Cromwell forbidding the clergy, under great penalties, to teach schools, or to perform any part of their ministerial function; some of the most considerable episcopal clergy in and about London, desired my lord Primate that he would use his interest with Cromwell, (since they heard he pretended a great respect for him) that as he granted liberty of conscience to almost all sorts of religions, so the episcopal divines might have the same freedom of serving God in their private congregations (since they were

not

‘ not permitted the publick churches) according to
 ‘ the liturgy of the church of England; and that nei-
 ‘ ther the ministers, nor those that frequented that ser-
 ‘ vice, might be any more hindered, or disturbed by
 ‘ his soldiers: so according to their desire, he went and
 ‘ used his utmost endeavours with Cromwell, for the
 ‘ taking off this restraint, which was at last promised
 ‘ (though with some difficulty) and that they should
 ‘ not be molested, provided they meddled not with any
 ‘ matters relating to his government.’

Certainly those gentlemen were of my mind. And to give Dr. Hammond his due, who I understand was one of them, he left it to the witnesses of his end, as his dying counsel to the church of England, ‘ That
 ‘ they displaced no man out of the university, or pre-
 ‘ sent church; but that by love, and an holy life, they
 ‘ should prevail upon those in possession to come into
 ‘ their church.’ But this looked so little like the po-
 licy and ambition of the living, that they resolved it should be buried with him. This I had from an eminent hand in Oxford, a year or two after his death. An older man out-lived him, and one of the most learned and pious of that communion, bishop Sanderson I mean: they were the two great men of their sort that were of the party. Let us see what this reverend man says to our point:

‘ The word of God doth expressly forbid us to sub-
 ‘ ject our consciences to the judgment of any other,
 ‘ or to usurp a dominion over the consciences of any
 ‘ one.’ *Several cases of conscience discussed in ten lectures in the Divinity School at Oxford, 3 lect. 30 sect. page 103. printed 1660.*

‘ He is not worthy to be Christ’s disciple, who is
 ‘ not the disciple of Christ *alone*. The simplicity and
 ‘ sincerity of the Christian faith hath suffered a great
 ‘ prejudice since we have been divided into parties;
 ‘ neither is there any hope that religion should be re-
 ‘ stored to her former original and purity, until the
 ‘ wounds that were made wider by our daily quarrels
 ‘ and dissensions, being anointed with the *oil of brother-*

‘ by love, as with a balsam, shall begin to close again,
 ‘ and to grow entire into the same unity of faith and
 ‘ charity.’ *Ibid.* Sect. 29.

‘ The obligation of conscience doth not signify any
 ‘ compulsion; for, to speak properly, the conscience
 ‘ can no more be compelled than the free-will.’ *Ibid.*
 4 lect. Sect 5. Pag. 109.

‘ The express commandment of God doth oblige
 ‘ the conscience properly by itself, and by its own
 ‘ force; and this obligation is absolute, because it
 ‘ doth directly and always oblige, and because it obli-
 ‘ geth all persons, and the obligation of it is never to
 ‘ be cancelled. None but *God alone* hath power to
 ‘ impose a law upon the conscience of any man, to
 ‘ which it ought to be subjected, as obliging by it-
 ‘ self.—This conclusion is proved by the words of the
 ‘ apostle, “ There is but one law-giver, who can both
 ‘ save and destroy.” In which words two arguments
 ‘ do offer themselves to our observation: in the first
 ‘ place, they assert there is but one legislator; not one
 ‘ picked out amongst many; not one above many; but
 ‘ one *exclusively*, that is to say, *one*, and *but one only*.
 ‘ The apostle otherwise had made use of a very inef-
 ‘ fectual argument to prove what he had propounded;
 ‘ for he rebuketh those who unadvisedly did pass their
 ‘ judgment either on the persons, or the deeds of
 ‘ other men, as the invaders of their rights. “ Who
 ‘ art thou,” saith he, “ who dost judge another?”
 ‘ As if he should have said, Dost thou know thyself,
 ‘ what thou art, and what thou dost? It doth not be-
 ‘ long to thee to thrust thy saucy sickle into the harvest
 ‘ of another man, much less boldly to fling thyself
 ‘ into the throne of Almighty God. If already thou
 ‘ art ignorant of it, then know, that it belongeth to
 ‘ *him alone* to judge of the consciences of men, to
 ‘ whom alone it doth belong to impose *laws* upon the
 ‘ consciences of men, which none can do but God
 ‘ alone.’ *Ibid.* pag. 111, 112, 113.

‘ The condition and natural estate of the conscience
 ‘ itself is so plac’d, as it were in the middle *betwixt*
 ‘ God

‘ God and the will of man, as that which is usually
 ‘ and truly spoken of kings and emperors, may as
 ‘ truly be verified of the conscience of every man,
 ‘ *Solo Deo minores esse, nec aliquem in terris superiorem ag-*
 ‘ *noscere*; “ They are less than God only, and on earth
 ‘ do acknowledge no superior.” That speech of the
 ‘ emperor Maximilian the first is very memorable,
 ‘ *Conscientiis dominari velle, est arcem cæli invadere*;
 ‘ “ To exercise a domination over consciences, is to in-
 ‘ vade the tower of heaven.” He is a plunderer of
 ‘ the glory of God, and a nefarious invader of the
 ‘ power that is due unto him, whosoever he is that
 ‘ shall claim a right to the consciences of men, or
 ‘ practise an usurpation over them.’ *Ibid.* Sect 11.
 pag. 115.

And yet this is the sad consequence of imposing re-
 ligion upon conscience, and punishing non-confor-
 mity with worldly penalties.

Let us now hear what the late bishop of Down says,
 in his *Lib. of Prophecy*, to our point, ‘ I am very much
 ‘ displeas’d that so many opinions and new doctrines
 ‘ are commenc’d amongst us; but more troubled,
 ‘ that every man that hath an opinion thinks his own
 ‘ and other mens salvation is concern’d in its main-
 ‘ tenance; but most of all, that men should be per-
 ‘ secuted and afflicted for disagreeing in such opinions,
 ‘ which they cannot with sufficient grounds obtrude
 ‘ upon others necessarily, because they cannot pro-
 ‘ pound them infallibly, and because they have no
 ‘ warrant from scripture so to do; for if I shall tie
 ‘ other men to believe my opinion, because I think I
 ‘ have a place of scripture which seems to warrant
 ‘ it to my understanding; why may he not serve up
 ‘ another dish to me in the same dress, and exact the
 ‘ same task of me to believe the contradictory?’ *Li-*
 ‘ *berty of Prophecy*, epist. dedicat. pag. 8, 9.

‘ The experience which Christendom hath had in
 ‘ this last age, is argument enough, that toleration of
 ‘ differing opinions is so far from disturbing the pub-
 ‘ lick peace, or destroying the interest of princes and
 common-

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• commonwealths, that it does advantage to the pub-
• lick, it secures peace, because there is not so much
• as the pretence of religion left to such persons to
• contend for, it being already indulged to them.’

Ibid. pag. 21.

• It is a proverbial saying, *Quod nimia familiaritas*
• *servorum est conspiratio adversus dominum*; and they
• who for their security run into grots and cellars and
• retirements, think that they being upon the defen-
• sive, those princes and those laws that drive them to
• it are their enemies; and therefore they cannot be
• secure, unless the power of the one, and the obli-
• gation of the other, be lessened and rescinded; and
• then the being restrained, and made miserable, en-
• dears the discontented persons mutually, and makes
• more hearty and dangerous confederations.’ *Ibid.*

pag. 23.

• No man speaks more unreasonably, than he that
• denies to men the *use* of their *reason* in choice of
• their *religion*. *Ibid.* pag. 169.

• No Christian is to be put to *death*, *dismembered*, or
• otherwise directly *persecuted*, for his *opinion*, which
• does not teach impiety or blasphemy.’ *Ibid.* pag.
190.

• There is a popular pity that follows all persons in
• misery; and that compassion breeds likeness of af-
• fections, and that very often produces likeness of
• persuasion; and so much the rather, because there
• arises a jealousy and pregnant suspicion that they,
• who persecute an opinion, are destitute of sufficient
• arguments to confute it, and that the hangman is
• the best disputant.’ *Ibid.* pag. 197, 198.

• If a man cannot change his opinion when he lists,
• nor ever does, heartily or resolutely, but when he
• cannot do otherwise, then to use force, may make
• him an hypocrite, but never to be a right believer;
• and so, instead of erecting a trophy to God and
• true religion, we build a monument for the devil.’

Ibid. pag. 200.

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‘ The trick of giving persons differing in opinion over to the secular power, at the best is no better than hypocrisy, removing envy from themselves, and laying it upon others; a refusing to do that in external act, which they do in counsel and approbation.’ *Ibid.* pag. 209.

Thus far bishop Taylor, one of the most learned men of the church of England in his time.

Let me add another bishop, held learned by all, and in great reputation with the men of his communion; and, among them, the lords spiritual and temporal in parliament assembled, who have sufficiently declared against this persecuting spirit of religion, by their full approbation returned to the bishop of St. Asaph, preached before them November the 5th, 1680, and their desire that he would print and publish that sermon. The bishop says, that ‘ They who are most given to hate and to destroy others, especially those others who differ from them in religion, they are not the church of God, or at least they are so far corrupted in that particular.’ Pag. 8.

Again he says, ‘ That, of societies of men, Christians, of all others, are most averse from ways of violence and blood; especially from using any such ways upon the account of religion: and among Christian churches, where they differ among themselves, if either of them use those ways upon the account of religion, they give a strong presumption against themselves that they are not truly Christians.’ *Ibid.* pag. 9.

‘ There is reason for this, because we know that Christ gave love for the character by which his disciples were to be known. *John* xiii. 35. “ By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love to one another.” And lest men should unchristen others first, that they may hate them, and destroy them afterwards, Christ enlarged his precept of love, and extended it even to enemies,

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‘mies, and not only to ours, but to the enemies of our religion.’ *Matt. v. 43, 44. Ibid. pag. 9.*

‘As our holy religion excels all others in this admirable temper, so by this we may usually judge who they are that excel among Christian churches, when there happens any difference between them, whether touching the faith, or the terms of communion. They that were the more fierce, they generally had the worst cause.’ *Ibid. pag. 12, 13.*

‘The council of Nice suppressed the Arians by no other force, but putting Arians out of their bishopricks; they could not think hereticks fit to be trusted with cure of souls: but otherwise, as to *temporal things*, I do not find that they inflicted any kind of punishments; but when the Arians came to have the *power* in their hands, when theirs was come to be the *imperial religion*, then depriving was nothing, banishment was the least that they inflicted.’ *Ibid. pag. 14.*

‘Neither our religion, nor our church, is of a *persecuting* spirit. I know not how it may be in particular persons; but I say again, it is not in the *genius* of our church: she hath no doctrine that teacheth persecution.’ *Ibid. pag. 20.*

‘I would have no man punished for his religion, no not them that destroy men for religion.’ *Ibid. pag. 37.*

Dr. Stillingfleet comes short of none of them on this subject. ‘Our Saviour,’ says he, ‘never *pressed* followers, as men do *soldiers*, but said, “If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross (not his sword) and follow me.” His was *ἡμῶν καὶ φιλήθροπος νομοθεσία* his very commands shewed his meekness; his laws were sweet and gentle laws, not like *Draco’s*, that were writ in blood, unless it were his *own*, that gave them. His design was to ease men of their former burdens, and not lay on more; the

• *Irenicum*, a weapon-salve for the church’s wounds, by E. Stillingfleet, rector of Sutton, in Bedfordshire, in preface to the reader.

' duties he required were no other but such as were
 ' necessary, and withal very just and reasonable. He
 ' that came to take away the unsupportable yoke of
 ' Jewish ceremonies, certainly did never intend to
 ' gall the necks of his disciples with another instead
 ' of it. And it would be strange the church should
 ' require more than Christ himself did; and make
 ' other conditions of her communion, than our Sa-
 ' viour did of discipleship. What possible reason can
 ' be assigned or given why such things should not
 ' be sufficient for communion with a church, which
 ' are sufficient for eternal salvation? And certainly
 ' those things are sufficient for that, which are laid
 ' down as necessary duties of Christianity by our Lord
 ' and Saviour in his word. What ground can there
 ' be why Christians should not stand upon the same
 ' terms now, which they did in the time of Christ and
 ' his apostles? Was not religion sufficiently guarded
 ' and fenced in them? Was there ever more true and
 ' cordial reverence in the worship of God? What
 ' charter hath Christ given the church to bind men up
 ' to more than *himself* hath done? or to exclude those
 ' from her society, who may be admitted into hea-
 ' ven? Will Christ ever thank men at the great day
 ' for keeping such out from communion with his
 ' church, when he will vouchsafe not only crowns of
 ' glory to them, but it may be *aureole* too, if there
 ' be any such things there? The grand commission
 ' the apostles were sent out with, was only to *teach*
 ' what Christ had *commanded* them. Not the least
 ' intimation of any power given them to impose or
 ' require any thing beyond what himself had spoken
 ' to them, or they were directed to by the immediate
 ' guidance of the spirit of God.

' Without all controversy, the main inlet of all the
 ' distractions, confusions and divisions of the Christian
 ' world, hath been by adding other conditions of
 ' church communion than Christ hath done.

' There is nothing the primitive church deserves
 ' greater imitation by us in, than in that admirable
 ' temper,

‘ temper, moderation and condescension which was used in it towards all the members of it.

‘ This admirable temper in the primitive church might be largely cleared, from that liberty they allowed freely to Dissenters from them in matters of practice and opinion; as might be cleared from Cyprian, Austin, Jerome, and others.—Leaving the men to be won by observing the true decency and order of churches, whereby those who act upon a true principle of Christian ingenuity may be sooner drawn to a compliance in all lawful things, than by force and rigorous impositions, which make men suspect the weight of the thing itself, when such force is used to make it enter.’ *In the preface.*

The same is in effect declared by the house of commons, when they returned their thanks to Dr. Tillotson, dean of Canterbury, for his sermon preached before them, November the 5th, 1678, desiring him to print that sermon, where he says, upon our Saviour’s words, “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of,” ye own yourselves to be my disciples, but do you consider what spirit now acts and governs you? Not that, surely, which my doctrine designs to mould and fashion you into, which is not a furious and persecuting and destructive spirit, but mild and gentle, and saving; tender of the lives and interests of men, even of those who are our greatest enemies.” Pag. 6, 7.

No difference of religion, no pretence of zeal for God and Christ, can warrant and justify this passionate and fierce, this vindictive and exterminating spirit.” *Ibid.* pag. 7.

He (*i. e.* Christ) came to introduce a religion, which consults not only the eternal salvation of mens souls, but their temporal peace and security, their comfort and happiness in this world.’ *Ibid.* pag. 8.

‘ It seemed good to the author of this institution, to compel no man to it by temporal punishment.’ *Ibid.* pag. 13.

‘ To separate goodness and mercy from God, compassion and charity from religion, is to make the two best things in the world, God and religion, good for nothing.’ *Ibid.* pag. 9.

‘ True Christianity is not only the best, but the best-natured, institution in the world; and so far as any church is departed from good-nature, and become cruel and barbarous, so far it is degenerated from Christianity.’ *Ibid.* pag. 30.

Thus far Dr. Tillotson, who, to be sure, deserves not to be thought the least eminent in the present church of England. Let us hear what Dr. Burnet says to it:

‘ Men are not masters of their own persuasions, and cannot change their thoughts as they please: he that believes any thing concerning religion, cannot turn as the *prince* commands him, or accommodate himself to the *law*, or his present *interests*, unless he arrive at that pitch of Atheism, as to look on religion only as a matter of policy, and an engine for civil government.’ *Dr. Burnet’s history of the rights of princes, &c.* in his *preface*, pag. 49.

It is to this doctor’s pains, she owes the very *history of her reformation*; and as by it he has perpetuated his name with her’s, certainly he must have credit with her, or she can deserve none with any body else; for no man could well go farther to oblige her.

Let me here bring in a lay-member of the church of England, Sir Robert Pointz, in his *Vindication of Monarchy*, who yields us an excellent testimony to the matter in hand: ‘ The sword availeth little with the souls of men, unless to *destroy* them together with their bodies, and to make men desperate, or dissemblers in religion, and, when they find opportunity, to fall into rebellion, as there are many examples.’ Pag. 27.

‘ In the ancient times of Christianity, such means were not used as might make hereticks and schismatics more obstinate than docible, through the preposterous proceedings of the magistrates and ministers

‘ ministers of justice, in the execution of penal laws, used rather as snares for gaining of money, and pecuniary mulcts imposed, rather as prices set upon offences, than as punishments for the reformation of manners.’ *Ibid.* pag. 28.

‘ The ancient Christians were forbidden by the imperial law, as also by the laws of other Christian nations, under a great penalty, *to meddle with the goods of Jews, or Pagans, living peaceably.*’ *Ibid.* pag. 29.

‘ For the goods of the *Jews*, although enemies to the Christian religion, cannot, for the cause of religion, come by *escheat* unto *Christian princes*, under whom they live.’ *Ibid.* pag. 29.

‘ It is truly said, that *peace*, a messenger whereof an *angel* hath been chosen to be, is scarce established by the *sword*; and the *gospel*, the *blessed peace*, cannot be published by the sound of *cannon*; neither the *sacred word* be conveyed unto us by the impious hands of *soldiers*; neither *tranquillity* be brought to the persons and consciences of men, by that which bringeth *rain* unto *nations.*’ *Ibid.* pag. 70.

He has said much in a little; the talent and honour of men truly great. I give this still to the church of England’s principles, which yet makes it harder for her to justify her practice in her use of power. But let us hear a king speak, and one the church of England is bound to hear by many obligations:

King Charles the first, out of his tender and princely sense of the sad and bleeding condition of the kingdom, and his unwearied desires to apply such remedies, as, by the blessing of Almighty God, might settle it in peace, by the advice of his lords and commons of parliament, assembled at Oxford, propounded and desired, ‘ That all the members of both houses might securely meet in a full and free convention of parliament, there to treat, consult, and agree upon such things, as may conduce to the maintenance and defence of the reformed Protestant religion, with due consideration to all just and reasonable ease to tender consciences.’ The king’s message of a treaty, March

3, 1643, from Oxford, superscribed to the lords and commons of parliament assembled at Westminster.

In the king's twentieth message for peace, January 29, 1645, he has these words, 'That by the liberty offered in his message of the 15th present, for the ease of their consciences who will not communicate in the service already established by act of parliament in this kingdom, he intends that all other Protestants, behaving themselves peaceable in and towards the civil government, shall have the free exercise of their religion, according to their own way.'

In the thirty-third message for peace, November 14, 1647, there are these words, 'His majesty considering the great present distempers concerning church-discipline, and that the Presbyterian government is now in practice, his Majesty, to eschew confusion as much as may be, and for the satisfaction of his two houses, is content that the said government be legally permitted to stand in the same condition it now is, for three years; provided, that his majesty, and those of his judgment (or any other who cannot in conscience submit thereunto) be not obliged to comply with the Presbyterian government, but have free practice of their own profession, without receiving any prejudice thereby.' From the Isle of Wight.

In his declaration to all his people, January 18, 1645, from Carisbrook castle, after the votes of no address, he says, 'I have sacrificed to my two houses of parliament, for the peace of the kingdom, all but, what is much more dear to me than my life, my conscience and my honour.'

In his letter to the lords, gentlemen, and committee of the Scotch parliament, together with the officers of the army, July 3, 1648, from Carisbrook castle.—'As the best foundation of loyalty is Christianity, so true Christianity is perfect loyalty.'

ΕΙΚΩΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΗ. Ch. 6. Upon his majesty's retirement from Westminster.—'Sure it ceases to be counsel, when not *reason* is used, as to men, to *persuade*, but *force* and *terror*, as to beasts, to drive and compel men

' to

‘ to whatever tumultuary patrons shall project. He deserves to be a *slave*, without pity or redemption, that is content to have his *rational sovereignty* of his *soul*, and liberty of his will and words, so captivated.’—
 Again, *ibid.* ‘ Sure that man cannot be blameable to God or man, who seriously endeavours to see the *best reason* of things, and faithfully follows what he takes for *reason*; the uprightness of his *intentions* will excuse the possible failing of his *understanding*.—
 Again, *ibid.* ‘ I know no resolutions more worthy a Christian king, than to prefer his conscience before his kingdoms.’

Chap. 12. Upon the rebellion and troubles in Ireland.—‘ Some kind of zeal counts all merciful *moderation* lukewarmness, and had rather be *cruel*, than accounted *cold*, and is not seldom more greedy to kill the bear for his skin, than for any harm he hath done.’—*Ibid.*
 ‘ O! my God! thou seest how much cruelty among Christians is acted, under the colour of religion; as if we could not be Christians, unless we crucify one another.’

Chap. 13. Upon the calling the Scots, and their coming.—‘ Sure, in matters of religion, those truths gain most on mens judgments and consciences, which are least urged with secular violence; which weakens truth with prejudices, and is unreasonable to be used, till such means of rational conviction have been applied, as, leaving no excuse for ignorance, condemns mens obstinacy to deserved penalties.—Violent motions are neither manly, christian, nor loyal.—The proper engine of faction is force; the arbitrator of beasts, not of reasonable men, much less of humble Christians and loyal subjects, in matters of religion.’

Chap. 14. Upon the covenant.—‘ Religion requires charity and candour to others of different opinions.—Nothing violent and injurious can be religious.’

Chap. 15. Upon the many jealousies raised, and scandals cast upon the king, to stir up the people against him.—‘ In point of true conscientious tenderness (attended with humility and meekness, not with
 ‘ proud

' proud or arrogant activity, which seeks to hatch every
 ' egg of indifferent opinion to faction or schism) I
 ' oft declared how little I desire my laws and scepter
 ' should intrench over God's sovereignty, who is the
 ' only King of mens consciences.'

Chap. 27. To the prince of Wales.—' Take heed of
 ' abetting any factions; your partial adhering to any
 ' one side, gains you not so great advantages in some
 ' mens hearts, (who are prone to be of their king's re-
 ' ligion) as it loseth you in others, who think them-
 ' selves, and their profession, first despised, then perfe-
 ' cuted by you.—My counsel and charge to you is,
 ' That you seriously consider the former real or objected
 ' miscarriages, which might occasion my troubles, that
 ' you may avoid them.—A charitable connivance, and
 ' Christian toleration, often dissipates their strength,
 ' whom rougher opposition fortifies.—Always keep
 ' up sound piety, and those fundamental truths (which
 ' mend both hearts and lives of men) with impartial
 ' favour and justice.—Your prerogative is best shewed
 ' and exercised in remitting, rather than exacting the
 ' rigour of the law, there being nothing worse than
 ' legal tyranny.'

And as this was the sense and judgment of a king,
 that time and the greatest troubles had informed with a
 superior judgment, (and which, to be sure, highly
 justifies the measures that are now taken) so Dr. Hudson,
 his *plain-dealing* chaplain, must not be forgotten by us
 on this occasion, who took the freedom to tell his royal
 master, ' That he looked upon the calamities he
 ' laboured under, to be the hand of God upon him,
 ' for not having given God his due over conscience.'

One can easily imagine this to be reformation
 language; and then it is not hard to think how low
 that church must be fallen, that from so free and ex-
 cellent a principle, is come to make, execute, and up-
 hold, penal laws for religion, against her conscientious
 neighbours: but it is to be hoped, that, like Nebuchad-
 nezzar's image, whose feet were a mixture of *iron* and
clay, and therefore could not stand for ever, persecution
 will

will not be able to mix so with the seed of men, but that humanity will overcome it, and mankind one day be delivered from that iron, hard, and fierce nature.

I have done with my church of England's evidences against persecution: and for the judgment of all sorts of Dissenters in that point, let their practice have been what it will, nothing is clearer, than that they disallow of persecution, of which their daily addresses of thanks to the KING, for his general ease, by his excellent declaration, are an undoubted proof.

Thus, then, we see it is evident, that it is not only the duty of all parties, as they would be thought Christians, to repeal penal laws for religion, but, upon a fair enquiry, we see it is the avowed principle of every party, at one time or other, that conscience ought not to be compelled, nor religion imposed upon worldly penalties. And so I come to the third and last part of this discourse.

P A R T III.

It is the interest of all parties, and especially the church of England.

AS I take all men to be unwillingly separated from their interests, and consequently ought only to be sought and discoursed in them, so it must be granted me on all hands, That interests change as well as times; and it is the wisdom of a man to observe the courses, and humour the motions, of his interest, as the best way to preserve it. And lest any ill-natured, or mistaken person, should call it temporizing, I make this early provision; 'That I mean, no immoral, or corrupt compliance:' a temporizing deservedly base with men of virtue, and which in all times, my practice, as well as judgment, hath shewn the last aversion to. For upon the principle I now go, and which I lay down, as common and granted in reason and fact, with all parties concerned in this discourse, That man does

not

not change, that *morally* follows his interest under all its revolutions; because to be true to his interest, is his first civil principle. I premise this, to introduce what I have to offer with respect to the interests to be now treated upon.

And first, I say, 'I take it to be the interest of the church of England to *abolish* the penal laws, because it never was her interest to make them.' My reasons for that opinion are these; First, They have been an argument to invalidate the sufferings of the reformers, because if it be unlawful to disobey government about matters of religion, they were in the wrong. And if they say, 'O but they were in error that punished their non-conformity.' I answer, How can she prove that she is infallibly in the right? And if this cannot be done, she compels to an uncertainty upon the same terms. Secondly, She has overthrown the principles upon which she separated from Rome: for if it be unlawful to plead scripture and conscience, to vindicate dissent from her communion, it was unlawful for her, upon the same plea, to dissent from the church of Rome; unless she will say again, 'That she was in the right, but the other in the wrong;' and she knows this is no answer, but a begging of the question; for they that separate from *her*, think themselves as serious, devout, and as much in the right as *she* could do. If then conscience and scripture, interpreted with the best light she had, were the ground of her reformation, she must allow the liberty she takes, or she eats her words, and subverts her foundation; than which nothing can be more destructive to the interest of any being, civil or ecclesiastical. Thirdly, The penal laws have been the great make-bate in the kingdom from the beginning: for if I should grant that she had been once truly the church of England, I mean consisting of *all the people* of England, (which she was not, for there were divers parties dissenting from the first of her establishment) yet since it afterwards appeared she was but one party, though the biggest, she ought not to have made her power more national than her faith, nor her faith so

by the force of temporal authority. It is true, she got the magistrate on her side, but she engaged him too far: for she knew, Christ did not leave Cæsar executor to his last will and testament; and that *that* should be the reason why *she* did so, was none of the best ornaments to her reformation. That she was but a party, though the biggest, by the advantages that temporal power brought her, I shall easily prove; but I will introduce it with a short account of our state-reformation here in England.

Henry the eighth was a kind of hermaphrodite in religion, or, in the language of the times, a *trimmer*; being a medley of *Papist* and *Protestant*, and that part he acted to the life, or to the death rather; sacrificing on the same day men of both religions, because one was not *Protestant enough*, and the other not *Papist enough* for him. In this time were some *Anabaptists*; for the distinction of *church of England*, and *Calvinist*, was not then known.

Edward the sixth succeeded; a prince that promised virtues, that might more than balance the excesses of his father; and yet, by archbishop Cranmer, was compelled to sign a warrant to burn poor *Joan of Kent*, a famous woman, but counted an *enthusiast*: but to prove what I said of him, it was not without frequent denials and tears, and the bishop's taking upon him to answer for it at God's judgment; of which I hope his soul was discharged, though his body, by the same law, suffered the same punishment in the succeeding reign. Thus even the *Protestants* began with *blood* for meer religion, and taught the *Romanists*, in succeeding times, how to deal with them.

At this time the controversy grew warm between the *church of England* and the *Calvinists*, that were the abler preachers, and the better livers: the bishops being mostly men of state, and some of them looking rather backward than forward; witness the difficulty the king had to get Hooper consecrated bishop, without conformity to the reserved ceremonies.

Queen

ob *Queen Mary* came in, and ended the quarrel at the stake. Now Ridley and Hooper *holys* and are the dearest brethren, and best friends in the world. Hooper keeps his ground, and Ridley *hooper* with his ceremonies to the other's farther reformation. But this light and union flowed from their persecution; for those abroad at Franckfort, and other places, were not upon so good terms: their feuds grew so great, that the one refused communion with the other; many endeavours were used to quench the fire, but they were ineffectual; at best it lay under the ashes of their affection for another time; for no sooner was *Queen Elizabeth* upon her throne, than they returned, and their difference with them. They managed it civilly for a while; but ambition in some, and covetousness in others on the one hand, and discretion giving way to resentment on the other, they first ply the queen and her ministers, and when that ended in favour of the *men of ceremony*, the others arraigned them before the first reformers abroad, at Geneva, Basil, Zurich, &c. The leading prelates by their letters, as Dr. Burnet lately tells us, in his printed relation of his travels, clear themselves to those first doctors of any such imputation, and lay all upon the queen, who, for reasons of state, would not be brought to so inceremonious a way of worship, as that of the *Calvinists*.

At this time there were Papists, Protestants, Evangelists, Præcisians, Ubiquitists, Familists, or Enthusiasts, and Anabaptists in England; when, the very first year of her reign, "A law for uniformity in worship and discipline," was enacted, and more followed of the severest nature, and sometimes executed. Thus, then, we see that there never was such thing as a church of England since the days of Popery, that is, a church, or communion, containing all the people of the kingdom, and so cannot be said to be so much as a twin of the reformation: nevertheless, she got the blessing of the civil magistrate; she made him great, to be great by him: if she might be the church, she should

should be the *head*. Much good may the bargain do her. Now is the time for her to stand to her principle. I never knew any body exceed their bounds, that were not met with at last. If we could escape men, God we cannot; his providence will overtake us, and find us out.

By all this then it appearing, that the *church* of *England* was not the *nation*, the case is plain, 'That the penal laws were a make-bate,' for they sacrificed every sort of people whose consciences differed from the church of England; which first put the *Romanists* upon flattering prerogative, and courting its shelter from the wrath of those laws. The address could not be unpleasant to princes; and we see it was not; for *King James*, that came in with invectives against *Popery*, entering the lists with the learned of that church, and charging her with all the marks the *revelation* gives to that of antichrist, grew at last so tame and easy towards the *Romanists*, that our own story tells us of the fears of the increase of *Popery* in the latter parliament of his reign.

In *King Charles* the first's time, nobody can doubt of the complaint, because that was in great measure the drift of every parliament, and at last one reason of the war. On the other hand, the *severity* of the *bishops* against men of their own principles, and, in the main, of their own communion, either because they were more zealous in preaching, more followed of the people, or could not wear some odd garment, and less lead the dance on a *Lord's day* at a maypole, (the relick of *Flora*, the *Roman strumpet*) or perhaps for rubbing upon the ambition, covetousness, and laziness of the dignified, and ignorance and looseness of the ordinary clergy of the church, (of which I could produce five hundred gross instances) I say these things bred bad blood, and, in part, gave beginning to those animosities, that at last broke forth, with some other pretences, into all those national troubles that agitated this poor kingdom for ten years together, in which the church of England became the
greatest

greatest loser, her clergy turned out, her nobility and gentry sequestered, decimated, imprisoned, &c. And whatever she is pleased to think, nothing is truer, than that her *penal laws*, and conduct in the *Star-chamber*, and *Highb commission court*, in matters of *religion*, was her overthrow.

It is as evident, the same humour, since the restoration of the late king, has had almost the same effect. For nothing was grown so little and contemptible, as the church of England in this kingdom, which she now intitles herself *The church of*: witness the elections of the last three parliaments before this. I know it may be said, *The persons chosen were church-goers*; I confess it, for the law would have them so. But nobody was more averse to the politicks of the clergy; insomuch that the parson and the parish almost every-where divided upon the question of their election. In truth, it has been the *favour and countenance of the crown*, and not her intrinsic interest or value, that has kept her up to this day; else her penal laws, the bulwark of the church of England, by the same figure that she is one against Popery, had sunk her long since.

I hope I may, by this time, conclude, without offence, that the penal laws have been a make-bate in the great family of the kingdom, setting the father against his children, and brethren against brethren; not only giving the empire to one, but endeavouring to extinguish the rest, and that for this the church of England has once paid a severe reckoning. I apply it thus: is it not her interest to be careful she does it not a second time? she has a fair opportunity to prevent it, and keep herself where she is; that is, *The publick religion of the country, with the real maintenance of it*; which is a plain preference to all the rest.

Violence and tyranny are no *natural* consequences of Popery; for then they would follow every-where, and in all places and times alike. But we see in twenty governments in Germany, there is none for religion,

religion, nor was for an age in France: and in Poland, the Popish Cantons of Switzerland, Venice, Lucca, Colonia, &c. where that religion is dominant, the people enjoy their ancient and civil rights, a little more steadily than they have of late times done in some Protestant countries nearer home, almost ever since the reformation. Is this against *Protestancy*? No; but very much against *Protestants*. For had they been true to their principles, we had been upon better terms. So that the *reformation* was not the fault, but not *keeping to it* better than some have done: for whereas they were *Papists* that both obtained the *great charter*, and *charter of forests*, and, in the successive reigns of the kings of their religion, industriously laboured the confirmation of them, as the great text of their *liberties* and *properties*, by above thirty other laws; we find almost an equal number to destroy them, and but *one* made in their favour, since the reformation, and that shrewdly against the will of the *big church-men* too; I mean, *the petition of right*, in the third year of Charles the first. In short, they desire a legal security with us, and we are afraid of it, lest it should insecure us; when nothing can do it so certainly as their insecurity; for *safety* makes no man *desperate*. And he that seeks ease by law, therefore does it, because he would not attempt it by force. Are we afraid of their power, and yet provoke it? If this jealousy and aversion prevail, it may drive her to a bargain with the kingdom for such general redemption of property, as may dissolve our great corporation of conscience, and then she will think, that half a loaf had been better than no bread; and that it had been more adviseable to have parted with penal laws, that only served to dress her in satire, than have lost *all* for keeping *them*; especially when it was but parting with spurs, claws and bills, that made her look more like a *vulture* than a *dove*, and a *lion*, than a *lamb*.

But I proceed to my next reason, why it is her interest to repeal those penal laws, (though a greater

cannot be advanced to men than (self-preservation) and that is, 'That she else breaks with a king heartily
 ' inclined to preserve her by any way that is not perle-
 ' cuting, and whose interest she once pursued at all ad-
 ' ventures, when more than she sees was suggested to
 ' her by the men of the interest she opposed, in fa-
 ' vour of his claim.' What then has befallen her,
 that she changes the course she took with such re-
 lutions of perseverance? For bringing him to the
 crown with this *religion*, could not be more her duty
 to his title, or her interest to support her own, than it
 is still to be fair with him. If she owed the one to
 him, and to Christianity, she is not less indebted to
 herself the other. Does he seek to impose his own re-
 ligion upon her? By no means. There is no body
 would abhor the attempt, or, at all adventures, con-
 demn it, more than myself. What then is the mat-
 ter? Why, he desires *ease* for his *religion*: she does
 not think fit to consider him in this, (no, not the
 king she brought with *this* objection to the crown).
 Certainly she is much in the wrong, and shows herself
 an ill courtier, (though it was become her calling)
 first, to give him roast-meat, then beat him with the
 spit. Is not this to quit those high principles of loy-
 alty and Christianity she valued herself once upon,
 and, what she can, provoke the mischiefs she fears?
 Certainly this is dividing in judgment from him,
 that she has acknowledged to be her ecclesiastical
 head.

My fifth reason is, That as the making and execut-
 ing the penal laws for religion affects all the several
 parties of Protestant Dissenters as well as the Papists
 (the judges in Vaughan's time, and he at the head
 of them, giving it as their opinion, they were equally
 exposed to those laws) and that they are thereby na-
 turally driven into an interest with them; so it is at
 this time greatly the prudence of the church of Eng-
 land to repeal them; for by so doing she divides that
interest that self-preservation allows all men to pursue,
 that

that are united by danger: and since she is assured the Papists shall not have the less ease in this king's time, than if the laws were repealed, and that her fears are not of the succeeding reigns, how is their repeal a greater insecurity, especially when by that she draws into her interest all the Protestant Dissenters, that are abundantly more considerable than the Papists, and that are as unwilling that Popery should be *national* as herself. For if this be not granted, see what reputation follows the church of England. She tells the king she does not desire his friends should be persecuted; yet the forbearance must not be by *declaration*, to save the government, nor by *law*, to save her; and without one of these warrants, every civil magistrate and officer in England is perjured, that suffers them in that *liberty against law*. How can she be sincerely willing that should be done, that she is not willing should be done *legally*?

But, sixthly, The church of England does not know but they, or some other party, may at one time or other prevail. It seems to me her interest to set a good example, and so to bespeak easy terms for herself. I know of none intended, and believe no body but herself can place her so low; yet if it were her unhappiness, I think to have civil property secured out of the question of religion, and constraint upon conscience prevented by a glorious *magna charta* for the *liberty* of it, were not a thing of ill consequence to her interest. Let us but consider what other princes did for their own religion, within the last seven reigns, when they came to the crown, and we cannot think so soft and equal a thing as an *impartial liberty of conscience*, after all that has been said of a *Popish successor*, an ordinary character of a prince, or a mean assurance to us: this ought not slip her reflection. Besides, there is some care due to posterity: though the present members of her communion may escape the temptation, their children may not: they may *change* the religion of their education, and conscientiously chuse

some *other* communion. Would they submit the fortunes they leave them to the rape of hungry courtiers, bigots and indigent informers, or have their posterity impoverished, banished, or executed, for sober and religious *dissent*? God knows into whose hands these laws at last may fall, what mischief they may do, and to whom. Believe me, a king of the humour of sir J. K. of the *west*, or sir W. A. of *Reading*, or sir R. B. or sir S. S. of *London*, would, with such vouchers, quickly make a *Golgotha* of the *kingdom*. If she thinks herself considerable in number or estate, she will have the more to lose. Let her not therefore establish that in the prejudice of others, that may in the hands of others turn to her prejudice.

Lastly, I would not have her miss the advantage that is designed her by those that perhaps she thinks worst of. I dare say nobody would willingly see the *Presbyterian* in her *chair*; and yet that may happen to be the consequence of her tenaciousness in a little time. For if the aversion her sons promote by wholesale against *Popery* should prevail, the remains of it in herself are not like to escape that reformation. I mean, her *episcopal government*, and the *ceremonies* of her worship, for which she has vexed the most conscientious people of this kingdom above an age past. And the *Presbyterian* being a rich, industrious, and numerous party, as well among the nobility and gentry, as trading and country people, I cannot see but the next motion, naturally speaking, is like to tend that way; for other parties, however well esteemed, may seem too great a step of reformation at once; and methinks she has tasted enough of that regiment, to be once wise, and keep the balance in her own hands. And certain it is, that nothing will so effectually do this, as the intreated liberty of conscience; for then there will be four parties of *Dissenters*, besides herself, to balance against any designs that may warp or bias things to their advancement. And that which ought to induce the church of England not a little to hasten

hasten as well as do the thing, is this; she is now a sort of national church by *power*, she will then be the publick church by concurrence of *all* parties. Instead of enemies to invade or undermine her, they that should do it are made the friends of her safety, by the happiness they enjoy through her complacency: and if any should be so unnatural or ungrateful to her, the interest of the rest will oblige them to be her spies and security against the ambition of any such party. I do heartily pray to God that he would enlighten the eyes of her leaders, and give them good hearts too, that *faction* may not prevail against *charity*, in the name of *religion*: and, above all, that she would not be proud of her numbers, or stand off upon that reflection; for that alone will quickly lessen them, in a nation loving freedom as much as this we live in: and what appears in the town, is an ill glass to take a prospect of the country by: there are parishes that have fifteen thousand souls in them, and if *two* come to church, it is a matter of brag; though half the rest be sown among the several dissenting congregations of their judgment. I would not have her mistaken; though Popery be an unpopular thing, it is as certain she, of a long time, has not been popular, and on that principle never can be: and if she should plow with that heifer now, and gain a little by the aversion to Popery; when it is discerned that Popery does return to the civil interest of the kingdom; they will quickly be friends. For besides that we are the easiest and best-natured people in the world to be appeased, there are those charms in liberty and property to *English* nature, that no endeavours can resist or disappoint. And can we reasonably think the Romanists will be wanting in that, when they see it is their own (and perhaps their only) interest to do so? These are the arguments which, I confess, have prevailed with me to importune the church of England to yield to the 'Repeal of all the penal statutes,' and I should be glad to see them either well refuted, or submitted to.

on shall now address myself to those of the Roman
 church, and hope to make it appear it is their inter-
 est to sit down thankfully with the liberty of consci-
 ence herein desired, and that a *toleration*, and *no more*,
 is that which all Romanists ought to be satisfied with.
 My reasons are these: first, the *opposition* that *Popery*
 every-where finds: for in nothing is the kingdom so
 much of a mind as in this *aversion*: it is no news, and
 so may be the better said and taken. I say then, this
unity, this *universality*, and this *visibility*, against *Popery*,
 make the attempt for *more* than liberty of conscience
 too great and dangerous. I believe there may be
 some poor silly bigots that hope bigger, and talk far-
 ther; but who can help that? There are weak people
 of all sides, and they will be making a pudder: but
 what is the language of their true interest, the in-
 fallible guide of the wiser men? *Safety*, *certainty*,
 and that in succeeding reigns, to *choose* and *direct*
 their steps must be modest, for they are watched and
 numbered. And though their prudence should sub-
 stitute their zeal, both must yield to necessity, whe-
 ther they like it or no. What they convert upon the
 square, (*persuasion*, I mean) is their own, and much
 good may it do them. But the fear is not of this
 and for compelling the aversé genius of the kingdom,
 they have not the means, whatever they would do if
 they had them: which is my second reason. I say
 they have not the power, and that is what we appre-
 hend most. There are three things that prove this
 in my opinion. First, their want of *hands*; next,
 want of *time*; and lastly, their intestine *divisions*, which,
 whatever we think, is not inconsiderable. They are
 few, we must all agree, to the kingdom, upon the
 best computation that could be made: out of *eight*
millions of *people*, they are not *thirty thousand*, and those
 but thinly sown up and down the nation; by which it
 appears that the disproportion of the *natural strength*
 is not less than *two hundred and seventy* persons to *one*.
 So that *Popery* in *England* is like a *spirit* without a
 body,

body, or, a *general* without an *army*. It can hurt no more, than *bullets* without *powder*, or a *sword*, and no *hand* to use it: I dare say, there is not of that communion, enough at once, to make all the coal-fires in *London*; and yet we are apprehensive they are able to consume the whole *kingdom*. I am still more afraid of *her fears* than of *them*; for though they seem high, she thinks their religion in no reign has appeared much lower.

O, but they have the king of their side, and he has the executive power in his hands! True, and this I call the *artificial strength* of the kingdom. But, I say, first we have his word to bind him. And though some may think our kings cannot be tied by their people, certainly they may be tied by *themselves*. What if I do not look upon the act of both *houses* to oblige the king, his own *confession* must; and that may be given in an *act* of *state*. I take the king to be as well obliged in *honour* and *conscience* to what he promises his people in another method, as if it had been by his *royal assent* in *parliament*; for an honest man's word is good every-where; and why a king's should not, I cannot tell. It is true, the place differs; and the voice comes with greater solemnity; but why it should with greater truth, I know not. And if the church of England will but be advised to give him the opportunity of keeping his repeated word with her, and not deprive herself of that advantage by jealousies and distances that make her suspected, and may force him into another conduct, I cannot help believing that the king will to a tittle let her feel the assurance and benefit of his promises.

But next, we have his *age* for our security; which is the second proof, of the second reason, why the Papists should look no farther than a toleration. This is the want of *time* I mentioned. They have but *one life in the lease*, and it is out of their power to *renew*; and this life has lived fast too, and is got within seven of threescore; a greater age than most of his ances-

tors ever attained. 'Well, but he has an army, and many officers, of his own religion.' And if it be so, What can it do? It may suppress an *insurrection*; but upon the attempts we foolishly fear, they were hardly a breakfast to the quarters they live in. For if they were together, all the confines or remote parts of the nation would rise like grass upon them; and if dispersed, to be sure they have not strength for such an attempt.

'But if they are not sufficient, there is a potent prince not far off can help the design, who is not angry with Protestantism at home only.' Suppose this, is there not as potent *naval powers* to assist the constitution of the kingdom from such invasions? Yes, and *land ones too*. And as the Protestant governments have more ships than the other, so an equal *land force*, when by such attempts to make *Popery* universal, they are awakened to the use of them: but certainly we must be very silly to think the king should suffer so great a shock to his own interest, as admitting an army of foreigners to enter his kingdom on any pretence, must necessarily occasion. These bull-beggars, and raw-heads and bloody-bones, are the malice of some, and the weakness of others. But time, that informs children, will tell the world the meaning of the fright.

The third proof of my second reason, is, 'The intestine division among themselves.' That division weakens a *great* body, and renders a small one *harmless*, all will agree. Now, that there is such a thing as *division* among them, is town-talk. The *seculars* and *regulars* have ever been two *interests* all the *Roman church* over; and they are not only so here, but the *regulars* differ among themselves. There is not a coffee-house in town that does not freely tell us that the *Jesuits* and *Benedictines* are at variance, that Count *Da*, the Pope's nuncio, and bishop *Lyborn*, dissent mightily from the *politicks* of the first; nay, the other day the story was, that they had prevailed *entirely* over them. The
lords

lords and gentlemen of her communion have as warmly contested about the *lengths* they ought to go; *moderation* seems to be the conclusion. Together they are little, and can do little; and, divided, they are contemptible, instead of terrible.

Lastly, The Roman church ought to be discreet, and think of nothing farther than the intreated general case, because it would be an extreme that must beget another in the succeeding reign. For as I can never think her so weak as well as base, that after all her arguments for the *jus divinum* of succession, she should, in the face of the world, attempt to violate it in the wrong of one of another *persuasion*; (for that were an eternal loss of her with mankind); so, if she does not, and yet is extravagant, she only rises higher to fall lower than all others in another reign. This were provoking their own ruin. And, to say true, either way would, as the second letter has it, “Discredit her for ever, and make true prophets of those they had taken such pains to prove false witnesses.” And supposing her to reckon upon the just succession, nothing can recommend her, or continue her happiness, in a reign of another judgment, but this “Liberty equally maintained,” that other persuasions, more numerous, for that reason, as well as for their own sakes, are obliged to insure her. Here the foundation is broad and strong, and what is built upon it has the looks of long life. The indenture will at least be *quinque-partite*, and parties are not so mortal as men. And as this joins, so it preserves interest intire, which amounts to a ‘religious amity and a civil unity,’ at the worst.

Upon the whole matter, I advise the members of the Roman communion in this kingdom, to be moderate; it is their duty, and it belongs to all men to see it and feel it from them, and it behoves them mightily they should; for the first part of this discourse belongs to their hopes, as well as to the church of England’s fears, viz. *the duty and spirit of Christianity*. Next, let them

them do good offices between the king and his excellent children; for as that will be well taken by so affectionate a father, so it gives the lie to their enemies suggestions, and recommends them to the grace and favour of the successors. And having said this, I have said all that belongs to them in particular. There is left only my address to the Protestant Dissenters, and a general conclusion, to finish this discourse.

Your case, that are called Protestant Dissenters, differs mightily from that of the church of England, and Rome. For the first hath the laws for her, the last the prince. Those laws are against you, and she is not willing they should be repealed: the prince offers to be kind to you, if you please: your interest, in this conjuncture, is the question. I think none ought to be made, that it is the liberty of conscience desired, because you have much more need of it, having neither laws nor prince of your side, nor a successor of any of your persuasions. The fears of Popery I know reach you; but it is to be remembered also, that if the laws are not repealed, there wants no new ones to destroy you, of the Papists making; so that every fear you are taught to have of their repeal, is against yourselves. Suppose your apprehensions well grounded, you can but be destroyed: which is most comfortable for you to suffer, by law, or without it? The church of England, by her penal laws, and the doctrine of headship, has armed that religion (as it falls out) to destroy you. Nay, has made it a duty in the king to do it, from which (he says) nothing but an act of parliament can absolve him, and that she is not willing to allow. And is it not as reasonable that you should seek their repeal; that if you suffer from the Papists, it may be without human law, as well as against Christ's law, as for the church of England to keep them in force; because if she suffers, it shall be against the laws made to uphold her? For not repealing them, brings you an inevitable mischief, and her, at most, but an uncertain safety; though it is certain, she at the same time will

will sacrifice you to it. And yet if I were in her case, it would please me better to remove laws that might reproach me; and stop my mouth when turned against me; and be content, that if I suffer for my religion, it is against the law of God, Christianity, and the fundamentals of the old and true civil government of my country, before such laws helped to spoil it. In short, you must either go to *church*, or *meet*, or *let fall* your worshipping of God in the way you believe. If the first, you are hypocrites, and give away the cause, and reproach your dead brethren's sincerity, and gratify the old accusation of schism, ambition, &c. and finally lose the hope and reward of all your sufferings. If the second, viz. that you *meet against law*, you run into the mouth of the government, whose teeth are to meet in you, and destroy you; *as by law established*. If the last, you deny your faith, overthrow your own arguments, fall away from the apostolical doctrine of *assembling together*, and so must fall into the hands of God; and under the troubles of your own consciences and woundings of his spirit; of which it is said, "who can bear them." So that nothing is plainer than that Protestant Dissenters are not obliged to govern themselves after such church of England measures, supposing her fears and jealousies better bottomed than they are: for they are neither in this king's time in the same condition, with her; if the penal laws remain in force, nor like to be so; if she can help it, in the next reign, if they are not repealed in this; so that they are to be certainly persecuted now; in hopes of an uncertain liberty then: Uncertain both whether it will be in her power, and whether she will do it if it be. The language of fear and assurance is two things; affliction promises what prosperity rarely performs. Of this the promises made to induce the late king's restoration, and the cancelling of the former declaration, and what followeth upon both, are a plain truth. And though the last Westminister parliament inclined to it; nobody so

much

much opposed it as the clergy, and the most zealous sons of that church: and if they could or would not then see it to be reasonable, I cannot see why one should trust to people so selfish and short-sighted. But if she will stoop to all those dissenting interests that are Protestant, it must either be by a comprehension, and then she must part with her bishops, her common-prayer, her ceremonies, and this itself is but Presbyterian; (and she must go lower yet, if she will comprehend the rest) or, if not, she must *persecute*, or give this liberty of conscience at last; which, that she will ever yield to uncompelled, and at a time too when there is none to do it, while she refuses it under her present pressing circumstances, I confess I cannot apprehend. But there is yet one argument that can never fail to oblige your compliance with the general case intreated, viz. 'That the penal laws are against our great law of property, and so void in themselves.' This has been the language of every apology; and that which, to say true, is not to be answered: how then can you decline to help their repeal, that in conscience, reason and law, you think void in their own nature?

Lastly, There is nothing that can put you in a condition to help yourselves, or the church of England, against the domination of Popery, but that which she weakly thinks the way to hurt you both, viz. 'The repeal of the penal laws.' For, as you are, you are tied hand and foot; you are not your own men; you can neither serve her nor yourselves; you are fast in the stocks of her laws, and the course she would have you take, is to turn martyrs under them to support them: if you like the bargain, you are the best-natured people in the world, and something more. And since *begging* is in fashion, I should desire no other boon; for upon so plain a loss of your wits, your estates will of course fall a stray to the government, so that without the help of a penal law, you make an admirable prize.

I have

I have no mind to end so pleasantly with you; I have a sincere and Christian regard to you and yours. Be not cozened, nor captious, at this juncture. I know some of you are told, 'If you lose this liberty, you introduce *idolatry*, and for conscience sake you cannot do it.' But that is a pure mistake, and improved, I fear, by those that know it so, which makes us the worse; for it is not introducing idolatry, (taking for granted that Popery is so) but saving the people from being *destroyed* that profess that religion. If Christ and his apostles had taken this course with the world, they must have *killed* them, instead of *converting* them. It is your mistake, to think the *Jewish rigorous constitution* is adequate to the *Christian dispensation*; by no means: that one conceit of Judaizing Christianity in our politicks, has filled the world with misery, of which this poor kingdom has had its share. Idolaters are to be *enlightened* and *persuaded*, as St. Paul did the Athenians and Romans, and not *knocked on the head*, which mends nobody. And to say a Christian *magistrate* is to do that, that a *Christian* cannot do, is ridiculous; unless, like the bishop of Munster, who goes like a *bishop* one part of the day, and a *soldier* the other, he is to be a Christian in the *morning*, and a magistrate in the *afternoon*. Besides, it is one thing to enact a religion national, and compel obedience to it, (which would make this case abominable indeed) and another thing to take off Christian penalties for the sake of such mistakes; since that is to give them power to hurt others, and this only to save you from being hurt for mere *religion*.

To conclude my address to you: of all people; it would look the most disingenuous in you, and give you an air the least sensible, charitable and Christian, not to endeavour such an ease, that have so much wanted it, and so often and so earnestly pressed it, even to clamour. But that you should do it for their sakes who have used you so, and that the instruments of their cruelty, the *penal laws*, should from a com-
mon

mon grievance become a darling to any among you, will be such a reproach to your understandings and consciences, that no time or argument can wipe off, and which I beseech God and you to prevent.

THE CONCLUSION.

I shall conclude with one argument, that equally concerns you all, and that is this; you claim the character of *Englishmen*. Now to be an *Englishman*, in the sense of the government, is to be a *freeman*, whether lord or commoner, to hold his liberty and possessions by laws of *his own consenting unto*, and not to forfeit them upon facts made faults, by humour, faction, or partial interest prevailing in the governing part against the constitution of the kingdom; but for faults only, that are such in the nature of civil government; to wit, ‘breaches of those laws that are made by the whole, in pursuance of common right, for the good of the whole.’

This regard must at no time be neglected, or violated towards any one interest; for the moment we concede to such a breach upon our general liberty, be it from an aversion we carry to the principles of those we expose, or some little sinister and temporary benefit of our own, we sacrifice ourselves in the prejudices we draw upon others, or suffer them to fall under; for our interest in this respect is common. If then, as Englishmen, we are as mutually interested in the inviolable conservation of each other’s civil rights, as men embarked in the same vessel are to save the ship they are in for their own sakes, we ought to watch, serve and secure the interest of one another, because it is our own to do so; and not by any means endure that to be done to please some narrow regard of any one party, which may be drawn in example at some other turn of power to our own utter ruin.

Had

Had this honest, just, wise and English consideration prevailed with our ancestors of all opinions from the days of Richard the second, there had been less blood, imprisonment, plunder, and beggary for the government of this kingdom to answer for. Shall I speak within our own knowledge, and that without offence? There have been ruined, since the late king's restoration, above *fifteen thousand families*, and more than *five thousand persons* dead under bonds for matters of meer conscience to God: but who hath laid it to heart? It is high time now we should, especially when our king, with so much grace and goodness, leads us the way.

I beseech you all, if you have any reverence towards God, and value for the excellent constitution of this kingdom, any tenderness for your posterity, any love for yourselves, you would embrace this happy conjuncture, and pursue a common expedient; that since we cannot agree to meet in one *profession of religion*, we may entirely do it in this *common civil interest* where we are all equally engaged; and therefore we ought for our own sakes to seek one another's security, that if we cannot be the better, we may not be the worse for our persuasions, in things that bear no relation to them, and in which it is impossible we should suffer, and the government escape, that is so much concerned in the civil support and prosperity of every party and person that belongs to it.

Let us not therefore uphold penal laws against any of our religious persuasions, nor make tests out of each other's faiths, to exclude one another our civil rights; for by the same reason that *denying transubstantiation* is made one to exclude a *Papist*, to *own it*, may be made one to exclude a church of England man, a Presbyterian, and Independent, a Quaker, and Anabaptist: for the question is not who is in the right in opinion, but whether he is not in practice in the wrong, that for such an opinion deprives his neighbour

bour of his common right? Now it is certain there is not one of any party, that would willingly have a test made out of his belief, to abridge him of his native privilege; and therefore neither the opinion of *transubstantiation* in the Papists, *episcopacy* in the church of England-man, *free-will* in the Arminian, *predestination* in the Presbyterian, *particular churches* in the Independent, *dipping of adult people* in the Anabaptists, nor *not swearing* in the Quaker, ought to be made a test of, to deprive him of the comforts of his life, or render him incapable of the service of his country, to which by a natural obligation he is indebted, and from which, no opinion can discharge him; and for that reason much less should any other party think it fit, or in their power to exclude him.

And indeed it were ridiculous to talk of giving liberty of conscience (which yet few have now the forehead to oppose) and at the same time imagine those tests that do exclude men that service and reward, ought to be continued: for though it does not immediately concern me, being neither officer nor Papist, yet the consequence is general, and every party, even the church of England, will find herself concerned upon reflection; for she cannot assure herself it may not come to be her turn.

But is it not an odd thing, that by leaving them on foot, every body shall have liberty of conscience but the *government*? For while a man is out of office, he is test-free; but the hour he is chosen to any station, be it in the legislation or administration, he must *wiredraw* his conscience to hold it, or be excluded with the brand of dissent: and can this be equal or wise? Is this the way to employ men for the good of the publick, where 'opinion prevails above virtue, and abilities are 'submitted to the humour of a party?' Surely none can think this a cure for division, or that animosities are like to be prevented by the only ways in the world that beget and heighten them.

Nor

It is it possible that the ease that should be wanted can continue long, when the party in whose favour they are not repealed, may thereby be enabled to turn the point of the sword again upon themselves.

I know Holland is given in objection to this extent of freedom, where only *one persuasion* has the government, though the rest their liberty: but they do not consider, first, how much more Holland is under the power of necessity than we are. Next, that our constitutions differ greatly. For the first, it is plain, in the little compass they live in; the uncertainty and precariousness of the means of their subsistence: that as they are in more danger of growing, so nearer ruin by any commotion in the state, than other countries are. *Trading* is their support; *this* keeps them busy, *that* makes them rich; and wealth naturally gives them caution of the disorders that may spoil them of it. This makes the governing party wary how they use their power, and the other interests tender how they resist it; and upon it, they have reason to fear a publick dissolution; since Holland has not a natural and domestic fund to rely upon, or return to, from such accidental disorders.

The next consideration is as clear and constant; our constitutions differ mightily: for though they have the name of a republick, yet in their essence, in order to the legislature, they are much less free than we are: and since the freeholders of all the parties in England may *elect*, which in Holland they can no more do than they can be chosen, there is good reason why all may be electible to serve their king and country here, that in Holland cannot be chosen or serve. And if our power to *abuse* be larger than theirs in Holland, we are certainly then a *freer* people, and so ought not to be confined, as they are, about what person is that must be chosen: methinks it bears no

proportion, and therefore the instance and objection are improper to our purpose.

But it is said by some, 'That there cannot be two predominant religions; and if the church of England be not that, *Popery*, by the king's favour, is like to be so.' It is certain that two predominant religions would be two uppermost at once, which is nonsense every-where: but as I cannot see what need there is for the church of England to lose her churches or revenues; so while she has them, believe me, she is predominant in the thing of the world that lies nearest her guides. But if I were to speak my inclination, I cannot apprehend the necessity of any *predominant* religion, understanding the word with *penal laws* in the tail of it: the mischief of it, in a country of so many powerful interests as this, I can easily understand, having had the opportunity of seeing and feeling it too: and because nothing can keep up the ball of vengeance like such a *predominant* religion, and that penal laws and tests are the means of the domination, I, for that reason, think them fit to be repealed, and let *English* mankind say, *Amen*.

I do not love quibbling; but it is true, to a lamentation, that there is little of the *power* of religion seen where there is such a *predominant* one, unless among those it domineers over.

I conclude, they that are so predominant, and they that seek to be so (be they who they will) move by the same spirit and principle; and however differing their pretensions and ends may be, the odds are very little to me, by which it is I must certainly be oppressed.

Dare we then do (for once) as we would be done by, and show the world, we are not religious without *justice*, nor Christians without *charity*; that *false self* shall not govern us against *true self*; nor opportunity make us thieves to our neighbours, for God's sake? The end of testing and persecuting under-

der every revolution of government! if this we can find in our hearts to do, and yet as men, and as Christians, as Englishmen, we do but do our duty, let the penal laws and tests be repealed: and in order to it, let us now take those measures of men and things, that may give our wishes and endeavours the best success for the publick good, that our posterity may have more reason to bless our memories for their freedom and security, than for their nature and inheritance.

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J U S T M E A S U R E S,
I N A N
E P I S T L E o f P E A C E a n d L O V E,
T O

Such Professors of TRUTH as are under
any Dissatisfaction about the present
ORDER practised in the Church of
CHRIST.

Published in the Year 1692.

F R I E N D S,

I Have, with a deep sense and sorrow, often beheld the distance and dissatisfaction you are under in reference to your ancient and faithful brethren, and that fellowship, which, I am sure, was once very dear and valuable with you, and I would have the charity to hope, is what many of you desire still: and for your sakes that would not willingly think amiss, nor differ, nor divide from those that otherwise you have an esteem for and are in judgment one with, as to the worship and doctrines of truth, I desire to open my mind, both with tenderness and plainness; and if what I say has the voice and matter of peace and love in it, and may be helpful to you, in closing with your brethren again, I shall greatly rejoice:

in which, know this, I seek you not in the words of man's wisdom, nor to raise controversy, nor for victory, nor any by-ends, but for the sake of that precious fellowship and seamless garment, in which the truth clothed us all in the beginning, and with which it will clothe and comfort all its faithful servants and true friends to the end.

First, I shall begin with the difference, and what you have, both in conference and writing, alleged for the ground of your dissatisfaction and dissent: next, I shall consider the nature and merit of it; and last of all, give my sense upon the whole matter, in order to a better understanding for the future.

That there is a difference, is but too plain; for it has in some parts proceeded to a separation, as well to places of worship, as in matters of discipline. The ground of this dissatisfaction, upon which so great a distance has been raised, you say is, 'Requiring your compliance with some practices relating to discipline, particularly *womens* meetings about marriages, before they are admitted to be solemnized among us; some of you thinking, that there is 'No service for *womens* meetings at all;' others, 'No service in their being *distinct* from mens meetings,' at least; 'No necessity for either, and therefore no necessary compliance to be required and insisted upon, but every one left to their liberty in Christ, lest imposition and formality should prevail among us, as they have done in other religious societies,' In this, I think, I have truly and fairly stated the case on your part, and given your objection to our practice, and the reason why you dissent from it.

Now, friends, I shall consider the nature and merit of this dissatisfaction and dissent, wherein I beseech your attention, patience, and candour, and I hope you will find, that we are clear of the imposition and formality you object or fear.

In the first place, I do not find that you have any just cause to fear, in general, an infringement on your *christian* liberty; since it has been, and is, most sincerely

cerely declared by the brethren chiefly concerned in the good order and service of the church, that they have no thought or design of imposing any thing upon the *consciences* of friends; or, that friends ought to have now, any more than at the beginning, any *other* reason or measure of compliance or conformity in matters relating to God, than the *conviction of the light and spirit of Christ in every conscience*. But there is this distinction to be considered well of, that the matters in difference are not such as require such an exercise and conviction of conscience as is pleaded, because they relate not to *faith* or *worship*. Did they require *faith*, or did they appertain to *worship*, as if you were obliged to worship God only in such a *place, time, gesture, raiment, with such words and forms of speech, &c.* (which has been the case of the Dissenters from the national church) your objection and plea were good: but this about which your dissatisfaction arises, is purely discipline in *government*, and not in *worship*; formality in *order*, and not in *religion*: it is about methods of regulating ourselves, as to the civil or outward part of the church, as we are a society; how we may avoid disorder, and preserve the credit of our society from censure and scandal.

For instance, ‘To keep the necessitous; as poor, aged, sick, and orphans: to reconcile differences: to take care of births, marriages, and burials: in fine, to prevent, rebuke, and restore disorderly walkers.’ To all which, I conceive, there is no need of an *act* of *faith*, or other *exercise* of *conscience*, than as the apostle exhorts, “To be ready to every good word and work:” I mean, here is nothing required to be *believed* as an *article* of *faith*; here is no *novelty* or *formality* in *worship* introduced, or any thing proposed as an end or service for our mens and womens meetings, that can reasonably admit of the raising of such a scruple of conscience; since the things proposed are duties, that all civil societies, as well as church-fellowships, agree in, as requisite to the support of the *reputation* of fellowships and societies.

Now this being the great and true end, use and service of our mens and womens meetings, and that it is the *end* that always denotes and constitutes the nature of the *means*, it cannot justly be thought to be of the nature of *imposition* and *formality*, as the words are commonly taken in an ill sense, to expect the compliance of members of a society to such methods of order as the elders thereof have exhorted to, and the generality of the people have embraced, and which the most considerable part of those that dissent, declare they dissent from, rather for fear of suffering an infringement of their *Christian liberty*, than any dislike to the practice itself; I say, this cannot be called, or accounted, such an imposition upon conscience, because they are expedients of *order*, and methods of rule about things universally *agreed upon*: the *thing* will not bear the word: for instance; because I may say it is against my conscience to confess such an article or doctrine of *faith*, or to worship God after such a prescribed *form*, that therefore it would sound reasonable for me to say, 'It is against my conscience to submit to the counsel of the church for ending of *differences*; and it is against my conscience, after having once told the brethren I intend to marry such a woman, to come again a fortnight, or a month after, to ask if they have informed themselves of mine and the woman's clearness, both towards parents and other persons, before we solemnize it?' Surely this would look, to reasonable people, an *over-tender*, or an *over-righteous*, or rather, indeed, an *over-free* and *large* conscience, that would scruple at twice or thrice publishing the banns, to prevent undutifulness to parents, and injury to pre-engagements, when those we profess to exceed, require in their communion that it be thrice done. In like manner it would look very strange in me, to call a church-care of circumspect walking up to the religious principles of the society that I have voluntarily embraced, 'An *imposing*, or *over-driving* me.'

But

But you object, ‘Why must we go before *women*?’ and, ‘Why *women apart* from men?’ This still, friends, can be no imposition, as is before expressed, because it is no matter of *faith*, nor practice of *worship*, but a referring still to our *external order of life*: and we say, ‘Women as well as men,’ because they are concerned, for they are part of the church of Christ; and the common banns that are published in churches (so called) or markets, exclude not *women* to make their exception any more than *men*. ‘But why *women apart*?’ say you. We think for a very good reason; the church increaseth, which increases the business of the church; and women, whose bashfulness will not permit them to say or do much as to church-affairs before the men, when by themselves may exercise their gifts of wisdom and understanding, in a discreet care for their own sex, at least; which makes up not the least part of the business of the church; and this while the men are upon *their* proper business also. So that as *men* and *women* make up the *church*, *men* and *women* make up the *business* of the church; and therefore it is very reasonable they should be *helpers together*, in doing the church’s business. This way women are made useful and serviceable in and to the church, as were the “holy women of old,” that were so much commended by the apostle, for deaconesses indeed. And, as I said before, their businesses being hereby distinct, *two* businesses are doing at one and the same *time*, and consequently, there must needs be a greater dispatch; which in country places, and winter seasons, where friends come ten or fifteen miles to meetings, must needs be very convenient and comfortable. I may add, that there are divers things that seem peculiar to *women*, that were not fit for *men*, and in which men did, and would, find themselves often at a loss; which renders their distinct meetings farther convenient.

These are the reasons and motives to the present practice of the church of Christ, without infringing Christian liberty, by *compelling* conscience to any mat-

ter of *faith* and *practice*, relating to women; we meaning, by our whole order and government, no other thing than a careful eye and check upon *practice*; an expediency against *irregularity* in *conversation*, whether towards them that are without, or those that are within the same communion, to which the strong will submit for the sake of the weak.

My own sense upon this whole matter is, ' That a
 ' misapprehending the intention of the brethren, and
 ' an undistinguishing zeal against impositions on the
 ' one hand; and a fear, on the other side, that those
 ' who so mistook and misrendered the design of the
 ' brethren, were either high-minded and unruly, or
 ' prone to undue liberty, or that they, not being the
 ' first promoters of this discipline in government,
 ' detracted from them that were, and so would lessen
 ' the credit and authority of their endeavours, with
 ' such as were peculiar favourers; and that, in fine,
 ' their dissent tended to the breach of brotherly love
 ' and unity in the church; I say my sense is, that this
 ' on each side, with the heats that followed, perhaps
 ' much worse than the thing itself, gave life to the
 ' division, that those that fear the Lord have truly
 ' mourned for.' And since I have hinted the heats
 that may have attended the management of this difference, be not offended that I say, the difference, through those heats, is now more in *spirit* than *fact*, in *mind* than *matter*: it is come in fact to this, ' Whether the care of *conversation* should belong to *women*
 ' as well as *men*, especially relating to their *own* *sex*,
 ' the women being so great a part of the church?' And over this, I think, you are got for the most part. 2. ' Whether the women may meet *separately*
 ' from the men?' And for answer to this, be pleased to take notice of your own unavoidable concessions: you allow meetings of care in general, and do not deny *women* absolutely their share among the *men*, and that *particular* members must be accountable to the *society* they are of, in point of conversation, according to the rules embraced by the said society. I say,
 you

you own the *end*, you allow the *means*, you refer the *choice* of your means to the *society*; and *you*, as well as *we*, expect a compliance with those rules. Then the question is, 'Whether, in fact, *womens* meetings be ' a part of that discipline the church admits of?' And it is evident, that the church of God does, generally speaking, receive and practise it, with satisfaction and advantage. I would therefore beseech you, friends, to ponder in your minds, upon what a narrow point your distance stands, and that the main and tender point is allowed you, viz. ' *Conscience* is *free*, and ' unconcerned in the question;' and the visible ground of distance being so small, weigh with yourselves, by what has been, what may be, the consequence of this lamentable breach.

I am as much for *liberty* as any man; I ever was so, and hope I ever shall be for it; but we must refer it to a proper object, or we shall abuse what we do so much prize, and pervert one of the greatest privileges we can pretend to. I do not mean, by the liberty that we are to resign to the benefit of *society*, that which is *private* or *personal*: no, this does not enter into private or personal liberty, concerning which, the apostles taught us to bear, and not offend one another; as about meats and drinks; I may add clothes, houses, trades, &c. so as there be no excess, (for that is every-where wrong): these things regard not *society*, but a man's self, and his *private* liberty alone. What is it to the *society*, what or when I *eat*, what sort of *clothing* I wear, or *house* I live in, or *trade* I will be of, so as excess or uncomeliness be avoided? This is still in my own power, and many like things, hard to be numbered, about which *society* is not in the least concerned, nor in which any member of it is interrupted, or called in question. In the next place, we do also all agree, that faith must not be *forced*, nor worship *constrained*, for that grates upon *conscience*, which God only can effectually enlighten or rightly persuade. But that bears not upon our question, as I said before; for the compliance desired in it, is about *order*, not
faith;

faith; and that not about *worship*, but *conversation*; in which if you submit your liberty, it is for the good of *society*, and you have the returns of it in the benefit and comfort thereof. Do you serve, or take care of others, that before were *free* of that engagement? Others also were tied by the same rules, to serve and be concerned for *you*, that formally owed you *no* obligation: and if *you* are under the notice and reproof of others, as to your personal conduct, they are equally under *yours* upon occasion; so that you *lose* nothing but what you *get*, nor *give* nothing but what you *receive* again; and to a *right* spirit and a *good* mind, this mutual service will appear reasonable, christian, and requisite. And as in no age, the resister and gainsayers of *care* and *order*, in any of the Lord's eminent servants, have passed without the mark of God's rebuke; so those that have contested and opposed the wisdom of God in his faithful servants, have ever failed of their purpose, and been finally manifested to have been led by a wrong spirit. And as observable it is, that those by whom the Lord has eminently appeared, and who were the first instruments of his several dispensations to the sons of men, have always exercised that authority among the people they have gathered, and have been constantly preserved from falling away, though some or other have risen against them with that clamour, as if they had set up themselves, and were gone from what they taught or were, and took too much upon them. But what have they all come to? **Read and judge.**

Nor was it ever heard of, in the dealings of God with the sons of men, that he varied, or changed his dispensations in the life-time of the instruments of any of them, as some have been ready to imagine; nor yet in that age in which he has brought them forth: which engages me to beseech you, in the bowels of the love of CHRIST, our only root of life and light, and love and peace, "that you be like-minded with your friends and brethren," and see that the life and the fellowship of the truth be preserved

served in the enjoyment and practice of fellowship; which will be, if the love of God, which first made us love one another, be kept in; for that is a sovereign antidote against all the poison of discontent, evil jealousy, and the divisions that are wont to follow. And instead of reproaching our elders and brethren, whom God has honoured, and whom we have honoured, and could have laid down our lives for, and who know nothing by themselves, but that they are as true to the Lord, and in as good a condition in the truth as ever they were, and have done, and intended in what they have done, as much the benefit of the Lord's people; I say, instead of reproaching them with usurping authority, and taking too much upon them, let us consider, that those whom we have received with so much reverent love, and as worthy of double honour in the greater things, are not unworthy to be heard and followed by us in lesser matters: let us regard and value their care, and love them for it. So true is that saying among men, 'That is well *spoken* which is well *taken*,' that the bent and purpose of a man's spirit, is that which gives the just reason of acceptance or rejection.

You have, dear friends, judged too much after an *outward* appearance; and, you may see, not *truly* there neither. Open, therefore, your hearts, your souls and spirits, and taste, with the divine sense of the tender and meek truth, the *aim* and *end* of brethren: herein be a little more truly free and universal in your minds, and you will perceive this care has a large and long prospect for good. The due exercise of your spiritual senses will answer all your objections, and satisfy every upright soul among you: but if you look out, mistake liberty, mistake imposition, mistake formality, mistake the nature and end of things, and the intention of your ancient friends and brethren in them, you will judge carnally, and be ready to think, as if *outward* rule and lordliness were aimed at, and a departing from the truth; even whilst our care, in the sight of the Lord, is for the honour of it, in refer-
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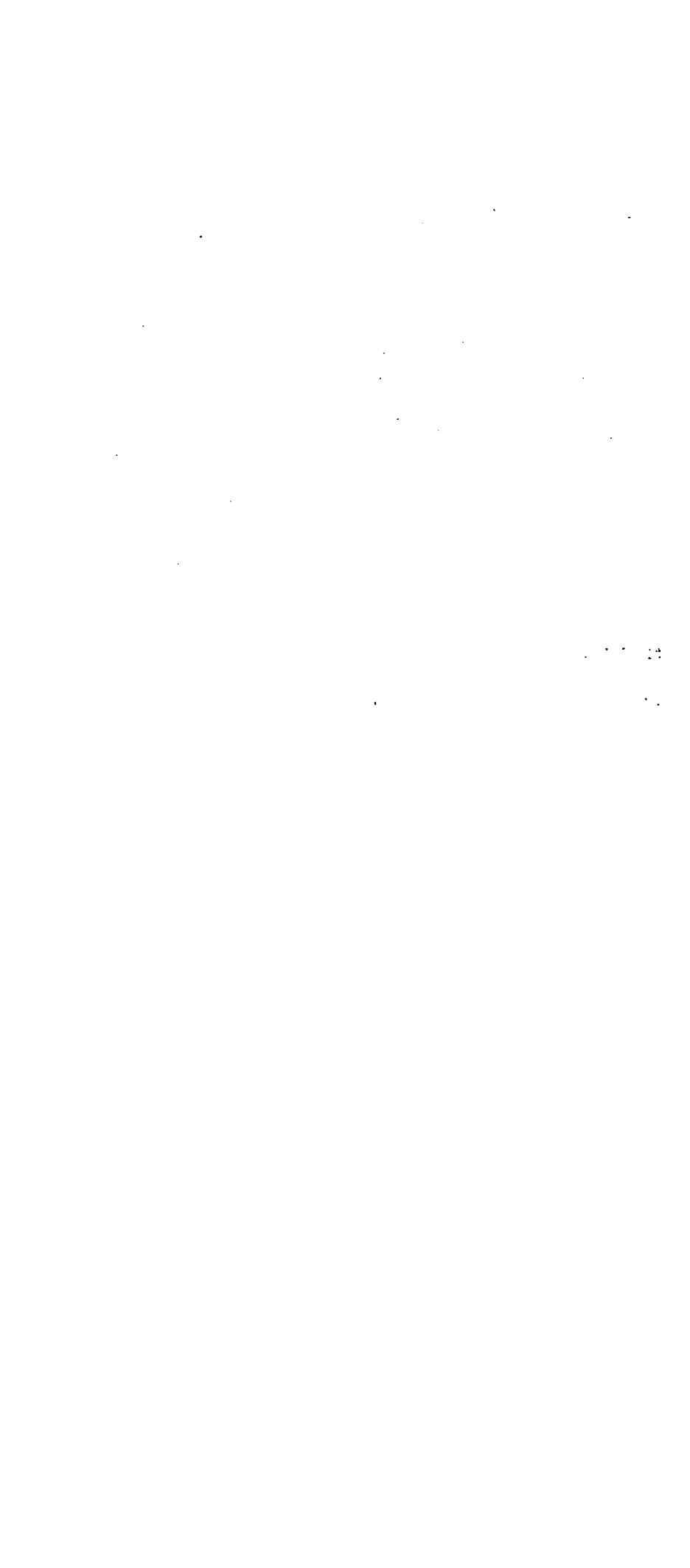
ence to the *young*, the *weak*, and such as may be *careless*, and ready to *fall asleep*; for such some yet are, and such are yet like to be; and for *their* sakes, a *discipline*, as to *conversation*, must be; as well as that there are natural infirmities, as *sickness*, *age*, &c. that unavoidably call for it: nor did, or can ever, any community subsist without it; and the heats, prejudice, and rents, that have arisen about the *how* or *manner* of it, shew the opposition not to be right, nor of a good tendency; the end of that order, in the minds and hands of those from whom we joyfully received the testimony of the truth, being the glory of God, and good of his people, as a *primitive Christian* society.

To conclude: as this is not a plea for *imposition*, nor *forms of worship*, but *forms of discipline*, as to the government and behaviour of ourselves in our converse, both with those that are without, and those that are within; and that there is no visible communion, or society, in this world of bodies, but what is subject to them, and must in some sort subsist by them; I beseech you, that we, as becomes a reasonable and modest people, and as dear children, may be of
 “one heart, and one mind, and walk together as
 “those that have been partakers of one life, and that
 “have drunk into one spirit;” for, “it is a comely
 “thing to see brethren walk together in love.”

O friends, let us labour against secret animosities, watchings for evil, detraction, the sin that flung the angels out of their heavenly station: let us see to our own spirits, how they are, if *meek*, *lowly*, *humble*, *tender*, by which the true and preserving judgment is only known and felt; or, if not *high*, *fierce*, *hard*, and *prejudiced*; for a man may come to lose a good frame of spirit upon very trifles. It is not always what the *matter* is the dispute arises upon, but *how far* the thing is *espoused*, and what place a man suffers it to have in his mind: if jealousy, reputation, revenge, or contradiction, prevail, division must follow: some are apt to resent things too soon, and carry it too far, even to obstinacy, through the workings of the evil
 one

one in a mystery; so that though the pretence of the quarrel may be some fact or other, yet *that* has the least share oftentimes in the difference, it being inflamed and increased by the mysterious workings of the spirit of strife and variance in the mind, according to an old saying, "The greatest feuds oftentimes arise from the slightest causes." Let me beseech and prevail with you to read and weigh the bent and force of the apostle's spirit in Rom. xii. also xiv. 19. and xv. 4, 5, 6. and especially xvi. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. verses. Likewise 1 Cor. xiv. 32, 33. weighty places indeed. 2 Cor. xiii. Ephes. iv. 1, 2, 3, 4. Phil. iii. 16, 17, 18. Chap. iv. 8, 9. Col. iii. 12, 14, 15, 16. 1 Thes. v. 12, 13, 14. 2 Thes. iii. 4, 5, 6. He often commands order and obedience to the apostolick tradition in this epistle, Tit. i. 15. chap. ii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Heb. xiii. 1. And, 1 Pet. iv. 8. All which exhort to "peace, brotherly-kindness, to be of one mind, to study one thing." O follow the things that make for *peace*, and do not contend, dispute, and strive one with another. A blessed doctrine, and it has a blessed reward. The Lord God Almighty dispose your minds, my friends, to a tender returning state; and frighten not yourselves with designs (of the brethren) that have no being, but in *jealousy* and *misperception*: I beseech you, in the Lord, lay down every mark or ensign of *difference* or *separation*, and behold our arms as open as ever to receive you, and let *your* heart be as *our* heart, and then *our* meetings *your* meetings: let the fear and awe of the Lord, the becoming love of his precious truth, which is "Christ in us, the hope of our glory," who gave himself for us, to redeem us from the enmity, death, and curse, which disobedience had laid us under, melt and cement us as one lump; flesh of flesh, and bone of bone; so shall our joy exceed our sorrow, and tears be wiped from our eyes on this occasion; and God, our exceeding great and glorious rewarder, be our crown, portion, and diadem for ever. Yours,

In and for the truth,
WILLIAM PENN.
THE



T H E
NEW ATHENIANS
N O
NOBLE BEREANS:

Being Answers to several

ATHENIAN MERCURIES,

IN BEHALF OF THE

PEOPLE called QUAKERS.

Published in the Year 1692.

P A R T I.

In Answer to the Athenian Mercury of the 7th Instant.

IAM heartily sorry to see men, professing so much ingenuity, fall so much below their pretensions. Your design, at first, carried the face of instruction, and gave us hopes of a general improvement of useful learning; and for that reason your papers were as welcome to us as any other people; especially those that referred to natural philosophy, mathematicks, and history; insomuch, that some of us collected them as they came out, and others bought them as they were

completed into volumes; being much concerned if at any time trivial or light questions were considered, as an unworthy diversion from the end by you in the beginning proposed. But you have not only been led, upon such occasions, to exceed too often the bounds of modesty, but you have taken occasion also to violate those of Christianity, in falling upon people's opinions in religion, instead of giving your own impartially; and upon their persons likewise, and at last, the society itself; as if your business were to expose them, instead of informing them, and to increase animosities, rather than to take up their time with more peaceable and profitable subjects. What if you were led to speak of any principle held by the people called Quakers? Could not that have been done as indifferent persons, which you, by your very design, would bespeak yourselves to all persuasions, and not as party-disputants and angry antagonists? Might not the intention of the people have passed for good and sincere, though any part of their doctrine had, in your opinion, been unsound; but you must use hard words and names for both things and persons? A sober and unconcerned answer, upon any question that might be sent you relating to their belief, would have taken better with every body that deserved your pains, and have brought us sooner to reflect upon our mistakes, if such they were: but, in earnest, it looks as if you were almost aground, and wanted matter, that so specious a design as this first shewed itself, should dwindle away into froward controversy and personal invectives about religion; or that you are not sufficient for your work, that can so easily be moved out of your province.

I beseech you leave this preposterous digression, and pursue your own business with more care and exactness; and, before you go, suffer yourselves first to be a little better informed of what you have so irregularly and undeservedly censured.

You take occasion at these words, ' Truth is always persecuted,' to say, ' That will indifferently serve
' Turk,

‘ Turk, Jew, Heathen, or Heretick, as well as the
 ‘ Quakers.’ This is harsh and unchristian. Are none
 worse than we? And we as great Hereticks as any?
 You judge before you convict us: it is too gross par-
 tiality, and false in every degree. But whatever the
 persecuted be, the persecutor, to be sure, is always
 in the wrong; which is your case against the Quakers:
 but you recriminate, and will prove us persecutors.
 That were to the purpose indeed. Let us hear it.
 ‘ You excommunicate such as will not be subject to
 ‘ your injunctions:’ and good reason too, if they are
 injunctions of civil order. He that joins himself to
 any society, is obliged to the rules of that society;
 and every society has, and must have, that power up-
 on the members that constitute it, or confusion fol-
 lows, and the society dissolves. For instance, injunc-
 tions about ‘ civil controversies, care of poor orphans,
 ‘ due and orderly proceedings relating to marriages,’
 &c. are to be complied with, without the reproach of
 persecution: and yet farther too; look upon what
 principles of communion any person enters into any
 society, if he leave them, or any of them, it is no
 persecution to disown him in that thing wherein he
 alters, so that it touches not person or estate; for that
 is persecution in a proper sense; which is not our case.
 But we ‘ imprison such as disturb our meetings.’ How
 this will be proved is hard to tell; and yet if it be
 persecution, it will light hardest elsewhere, even upon
 those, perhaps, that you account us Hereticks for se-
 parating from. But, thanks be to God, we can and
 do deny the charge. ‘ See,’ say you, ‘ Francis Bugg’s
 ‘ One blow more:’ but if this be *Athenian*, it is not
Berean, to condemn an whole people upon another
 man’s authority, that you are not assured was well
 grounded. Besides, it is a book we have answered;
 which you take no notice of; and that is unfair, if
 you knew of it; and if you did not, you ought to
 have asked, before you had espoused another man’s
 allegations. This is not answerable to that candor you
 profess; and we must tell you, that Francis Bugg is

an *apostate Quaker*, an angry, unreasonable and clamorous man; often and again detected, and proved inconsistent with himself; and you will find, in the issue, of no reputation to your charge against us. But did you ever read our *orders of discipline*, or have you been ever eye or ear-witnesses of our *injunctions upon conscience*? If you have, you should have mentioned them, and shewn us our fault; but your evidence here, is what a discontented man says, who speaks *ex parte*, and is judge in his own cause, against a body of people he was once among, and zealous for; who, upon a private controversy, because he had not his own will, took pet at those that could not be brought to humour him; and from thence ran out from the very profession of a Quaker; which shews the foundation wrong, that quits a principle, for being displeas'd in a man or men. What will become of society, if such humours are uncontrollable, or they must give the rule or law to the whole?

Your next proof of our being persecutors, is from a passage of Geo. Fox, and Geo. Roff, in their letters to O. Cromwell, by which we perceive your new acquaintance, and with what tools you work; which we are sorry for, both for your sakes and theirs. But those passages are plainly wrested by you; for they advise O. Cromwell to go on in the work he was call'd to; and what was that, pray? Is there one word of *imposing* religion upon the people of those countries, or forcing them to abjure or renounce their own? No, not a tittle of it. Where then is the persecution? But inasmuch as they were countries that did persecute, by which means the truth of God had not a free entrance or passage, but inquisitions in Popish, and consistories in Protestant governments, suppress'd all that conformed not to their respective establishments; therefore he should have made it his business to open the way for a true liberty of conscience, that truth might not suffer under violence, nor persecution for conscience sake oppress its professors. This is the upshot of those passages, their very scope and tendency,

ency, as will appear to any impartial reader, that will please to weigh them with what goes before and follows. But if you call this persecution, to be sure it must be so to fight for religion: and if it was unlawful for O. Cromwell to fight for liberty of conscience, who was of a fighting principle, what think you of punishing people because of their conscience, that would not fight with you? You are very tender of a sudden, if it may but brush at us; while you do not consider the blow you give yourselves and your own friends, that have but too signally appeared in that spirit and practice. The Lord inform, and forgive them.

You justify calling us ‘silly enthusiasts,’ for believing ‘it is not lawful to swear;’ and say, ‘you are of the same mind, because we, without reason, by the dictates of our own fancy, which we call God’s spirit, oppose the saints practice of old; of which it was prophesied it should be used under the gospel, was so by the apostles and primitive Christians, nay, by God himself; therefore the Quakers are silly enthusiasts.’ Thus you.

Now we think this will not prove us *enthusiasts*, nor *silly*; for we argue from a text, and not our own dreams and fancies. Had we only pretended the authority of a private revelation for this assertion, and that not true, then it had been *enthusiasm*, and we *enthusiasts*, in the worst sense: it is *silly indeed*, to call an opinion grounded upon an express text of scripture, either *enthusiasm* or *silly*, when there is not a plainer text for one God, than this of our Saviour’s against swearing, Matt. v. 34. “Swear not at all.” But if we had overstrained it, where is the silliness of it? Is it *enthusiasm*, or *silly*, to shut out all *vain* swearing, by shutting out *all* swearing? The advantage of that exceeds the disadvantage of lying in evidence, when that lying is made as punishable as forswearing. What silliness or *enthusiasm* is in this, pray you? Scotland and Holland think no such thing, that have indulged that tenderness.

And if the text be but seriously considered, the inference we make is beyond exception.

First, The tendency of that sermon upon the mount, is to shew, that the righteousness of the gospel excels that of the law; as in the case of adultery, divorce, revenge, &c. But the law forbade *false* and *vain* swearing; therefore this must refer to that which was ~~not~~ forbidden under the law. This is acknowledged by many learned men, and in particular one of our own nation, bishop Sanderson, in his "Latin lectures, of the obligation of an oath:" but we, for another reason, that shall anon be mentioned, think he yet narrows the extent of that evangelical precept, for he refers to *vows* only, and not swearing in any case; but we, to *swearing at all*. And our reasons are, first, If it had been *vows* only, there had been no need of substituting any way of speaking in the room of it. And, secondly, If the text cannot therefore refer to *vows* in particular, *swearing at all* must be intended; or nothing is forbidden, that was not forbidden under the law. Thirdly, Christ's prohibiting swearing, and substituting something in the room of it, and that something purely referring to the way and manner of Christians declaring the truth, it is, to us, evident, that he comprehended all cases wherein the truth of a thing is in doubt, and consequently the end of swearing: so, says Christ, "Let your ὁ ἄληθῆς, your speech, or your word, be yea, yea; or nay, nay." It is rendered *communication* in our translations, that it might refer only to common discourse, that word being sometimes so understood; and yet communication comprehends all acts of justice, as well as other parts of life: for if it comprehends discourse in dealing, it also comprehends the evidence of that dealing, and the laws of just dealing; and consequently the word *communication* cannot lessen the real force of our sense of the text; but the words of the text do plainly express a *degree*, if not a *form*, of declaring truth, be it *yea* or *nay*. And since truth-speaking takes in and relates to controversies among men, as well as other parts

parts of human converse, this text is a *measure* of truth-speaking on all these occasions also. Fourthly, now how far Christian men may go in declaring the truth, or where they are to be bounded, the text is plain, viz. a *double*, but *bare*, averment, or denial: "Let your word or speech be *yea, yea; nay, nay*: that is, 'Let your answers, whenever you are asked the truth of a matter, go no farther than a *simple affirmation*, or *negation*, which you may double, if you please.' Fifthly, The reason Christ gives for bounding his followers within *yea, yea, and nay, nay*, excludes all oaths, *yea*, all that is *more* than *yea, yea, and nay, nay*; to wit, that "they come of *evil*," because they proceed from distrust, infidelity and impatience: a simple assertion declares truth; more, is a *straining* of the mind, and but to stoop to unreasonable incredulity, which hath an evil rise. Now what is *more* than *yea, yea*; and *nay, nay*; Why *imprecations* are more, an outward *sign* denoting an oath is more than *yea, yea, and nay, nay*; and consequently cometh of *evil*, because below a Christian's truth and sincerity to gratify. Sixthly; and truly the text is so far from excluding judicial cases, that it serves chiefly to relate to evidence upon differences. 1. Because it is in the room of the swearing the law allowed, which was *true* swearing: and, 2. Because of *doubling* the assertion *yea, yea*; for a *single* *yea* is enough for a Christian in ordinary cases. Well, but you oppose to this, the prophecy, Isaiah, xix. vers. 18. to which, if you please, we will add two more, chap. xlv. 23. and Jer. iv. 2. and make your best of them: for besides that it begs the question, that the prophet treated of gospel-times, and not of some happy time before the period of *their* dispensation, God might speak to them in the language of *their* time to be interpreted in a more *spiritual* sense; and this the place quoted by you shows: for, vers. 21. mention is made of *oblation* and *sacrifice*, that shall be offered in that day, which, in a *Jewish* sense, is not true of gospel-times; but in a gospel-sense, to wit, *prayers and praises*, with *heart* and *voice*, is true. So

it is in the case of swearing, they shall *swear* in that day, as they *sacrifice* in that day; that is, 'a Christian's *oath* shall be his *solemn word*; and the difference is not greater between them, than between the sacrifices and oblations of *beasts* and *birds* under the law, and the spiritual sacrifices and oblations of the *hearts*, *wills* and *affections* of people under the gospel: and thus, you see, that prophecy stands you in little stead.

But you object the practice of the apostle, Rom. i. 9. "God is my witness." 2 Cor. xi. 31. "God knoweth I lie not." Gal. i. 20. "Before God I lie not." And you add, 'If these are not formal oaths, you would fain know what are?' In which, if you will not be offended, we will say, as well as think, you have not been ingenuous to be so hard upon us, before you had first stated and agreed with us what an oath is; for if that be disputable, (as it may be for what you have done to settle it) you argue at random. Premises must ever be agreed by disputants, or nothing can follow clearly and satisfactorily. We may say the same thing you say, without allowing it the same force and extent; nay swear, perhaps, in *your* opinion, though not in our own; the same words being an oath, and not an oath, as they may be used and applied in different manners. For if you should think *that* an oath, which we think *none*, and you argue for swearing by proofs, which for that reason are none to us; how do you prove swearing *lawful*, or convince us that not swearing *at all* is silly and enthusiastical, when you have not yet adjusted *what is* swearing *at all*? This had been well worth your *Mercury*, for it had been informing, and shown good reading.

But you put it off thus, after citing the apostle's words, "God is my witness," &c. 'If these are not formal oaths, we would fain know what are.' In which you shift your post, and turn querists, instead of answering questions.

But having such supposed able men to deal with, we are not willing to put it off so; and therefore return

turn it upon you; to state what an oath *is*, which you so zealously recommend; denying, on our part, any of those texts to *be* an oath; as did Basil the Great, upon Psalm xv. And Gregory Nazianzen, in his ‘Dialogue against Swearing:’ and bishop Sanderfon, in his ‘Defence of Joseph, in his Oxford Lectures;’ which will much better defend the apostle from your imputation.

For what you say of Tertullian, you wrong him extremely, and your reader also, by not telling him where to find it: for in his Apology, chap. xxxii. whence, we suppose, your objection is taken, he does equivocally and improperly own swearing, ‘That they *swore*, though not by the genius of Cæsar, yet, for the health and safety of Cæsar, just as they did *sacrifice*.’ *Hoc saluum esse volumus, & pro magno id juramento habemus.* ‘Our wishing well to Cæsar, we have, or account, *for* an oath, or *instead* of an oath. And, as the Pythagoreans say, ‘There is in all reasonable creatures an oath or tie, viz. A mind not to transgress the law of God:’ and, as Clemens Alexandrinus speaks, ‘That a *good* man swears by his *deeds*.’ So Tertullian urged upon them, ‘That the Christians sacrificed for the health of Cæsar as well as they; but it was in the Christian way, by *pure prayers*.’ So that *as* he was for *sacrifice*, he was for *swearing*. Thus to Scapula. C. 1, 2.

And in his book of Idolatry, chap. xi. ‘I speak not of *perjury*,’ says he, ‘because it is not lawful to *swear*.’ And, chap. xxxi. ‘He that signs a bill of security, containing an oath, is guilty of swearing, and transgresses Christ’s command, who hath commanded *not* to swear.’ And speaking of the temptations Christians were exposed to, if they should launch into the traffick of the world, he adds, ‘Not to speak of forswearing, seeing it is not lawful so much as to *swear*.’

We are the longer upon this, because he is one of your authorities. Your other is Athanasius, ‘That he purged himself by an oath, pleading the apostle’s example.’

‘example.’ Which, by the way, looks like an excuse for doing it, and as if in other cases he did not allow it. But pray take the pains to read his annotations upon Christ’s passion, and you will find, first, that he denies *all* swearing; and upon our grounds. ‘The evangelical sentence,’ says he, of the Lord, is, ‘Let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay.’ This far we, who are in Christ, may confirm our words with asseverations, ‘but come no nearer to an oath.’

To this he himself objects the common opinion, ‘That God swore; He answers it, ‘That God did *not*, properly and formally, *swear*, nor could *not*; for the nature of an oath is to swear by that which is *greater* and *better* than *one’s self*, Heb. vi. 16. ‘But, if any thing,’ says he, ‘this must be said, his *word* is an oath to man for verity, because of his *faithfulness* and *truth*.’ And he will not have the *apostle* to have *sworn*, nor the most celebrated fathers of and before his time. So that we return it upon you, that if at any time they used those expressions of the apostle, it was in church matters, and because they did not think it an oath. And if you will please to turn to Justin Martyr’s Second Apology, pag. 63, you will find he is of the same mind; ‘We should *speak*, but not *swear*, the truth;’ and vouches Christ’s authority, Matt. v. for it. Clemens Alexandrinus, lib. 7. and Tertullian’s contemporary, Cyprian, Hilarry, Greg. Nyssen, Cæsarius, Epiphanius, Ambrose, and Chrysostom above all the rest, stiled the golden Doctor or Father, out of whose discourse, upon this subject, we observe these five things:

1. ‘That oaths are not lawful under the gospel.’
2. ‘The reason of it, that their evangelical verity is the Christian, and a better, security.’
3. ‘That the rise of an oath is infidelity and distrust, which are from evil, and that is below a Christian state; for he that dare not swear, which once was permitted, dare not lie, which never was permitted; and therefore his yea is yea, and his nay, nay.
4. ‘That

4. ' That swearing was a condescension to a weak and low state of the world, to divert people from swearing by false gods, which was the evil custom of those times; as if God should say, " I will suffer you to swear, if you will swear by *me*, that am the true God, and not by their false gods:" And that from hence came his command to swear by *him*, not for the sake of *swearing*, but to avoid *idolatry*.

5. ' That this principle is the only means of rooting all evil swearing out of the world.' Take the cure for this most pernicious and epidemical distemper, in the words of Basil the Great.

' The remedy consisteth in a twofold admonition: first, not to swear *at all*: secondly, to suppress the *form* of oaths.' I will close with what the institutions say, that go under the name of Clemens Romanus. ' Our Master hath commanded that we should not swear, no, not by the true God; but that our *word* should be more credible than an *oath*.' This Clemens was very ancient, you know, since the apostle Paul mentions him, and that to him some of the ancients ascribe the epistle to the Hebrews.

We hope, after you have considered the authorities that support this doctrine, you will be so charitable at least to allow that we are neither *filly*, nor *enthusiasts*, for asserting it. This comprehending your answers and exceptions to the queries upon this subject (for against a command so plainly proved, they must fall of course) we are under no obligation to consider them; and yet they shall not pass our notice, though it were but to let you see how little they deserve it.

The first query is, ' If Christ's coming did not supersede oaths, since it was to end sin, the occasion of oaths?' The second, ' If man, improving the means given him to answer that end, may not obtain it?' I put them together, because you give the same answer to both, which is negative; and for the same reason, viz. ' Because Christ did not come to end sin:' and your reason for that is, ' That if Christ

‘ Christ intended to have ended sin by his coming, it had been ended, which is not so, and therefore it was not the end of his coming.’ This opposes as plain a text as is in the bible, 1 John iii. 5, 6. “ And ye know he was manifest to take away our sins. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not; whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.” The angel thus declared the end of his coming, Mat. i. 21. Christ commands perfection, ch. v. 48. “ Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” The heavenly leaven was given to leaven the *whole* lump, chap. xiii. 33. The apostle desired, “ That the Christians of his time might be sanctified *throughout* in body, soul and spirit;” which leaves out no part of man, nor no part of any part un sanctified, 1 Thes. v. 23. and exhorteth them to “ press forward to the mark,” which was a *perfect* man, even “ to the measure of the fulness of Christ.” Phil. iii. 14, 15. Eph. iv. 13. In which passages the end of Christ’s coming, and the work and blessing of the gospel, was to end *sin*, both as to the guilt and nature of it; and to sanctify and regenerate the soul. Read Phil. i. 10. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Tit. iii. 5. Heb. ii. 11.

2. Your reason is both weak and dangerous: for if all comes to pass that Christ intends, then he intended not the conversion of Jerusalem, notwithstanding he lamented it so, because it came not to pass. Again, If Christ intended to take away the guilt and power of sin, it should accordingly be taken away: but in whole nations of believers, how very few can say it, or can you say it of? Nor know you but that there are some that walk “ *blamelessly*” now, as well as then. Your ignorance is no argument to the contrary: a principle may be true, for all mens practices; and God’s end for good to man, though man may frustrate it to himself.

3. The scriptures you urge are against you, Jam. iii. 2. Here we will join issue with you, this chapter being a strong proof of our point; yea, this very verse: for it supposes a *perfect* man, which you deny; and

and by the similes of a *bridle* and an *helm*, it shews how a man can come to be so. But, say you, in the name of the apostle, "In many things we offend all:" yet consider, pray, that the apostle included himself no more there, than verse 9, where speaking of the tongue, he also saith, "therewith bleſs we God, and "therewith curſe we men." You cannot therefore think, I hope, that the apostle was a *curſer*; but it was a way of ſpeaking to fetch in the guilty, and the better to reach them, by *perſonating* them, or involving *himſelf* among them.

Hear again the ſame apoſtle, in this very chapter, verſ. 11, 12. "Doth a fountain ſend forth at the ſame place ſweet water and bitter? Can the fig-tree, my brethren, bear olives?" 'Yes,' ſay the *Athenians*; 'No,' ſay the *Quakers*. Pray who keeps cloſeſt to the text? Hear him farther, verſ. 17. and chap. i. 27. he tells you the nature and end of their religion. In few words, *humanity* and *purity*, *bowels* and *holineſs*; they are the pure religion and undefiled in God's ſight, in his account; not *creeds*, but *practice*; not *profeſſion*, though of true words, but *experience* and *good living*. And, without offence, had you been of this religion, you would have been leſs exceptious at us and ours. Your next ſcripture is as unhappily choſen as the former, 1 John i. 8. "If we ſay we have no ſin, we deceive ourſelves, and the truth is not in us." Now if you pleaſe but to read the verſe foregoing and following, perhaps you will ſee it is not to your purpoſe.

"If we walk in the light as (God) is in the light, we have fellowſhip one with another, and the blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all ſin." Now follows your text, "If we ſay we have no ſin," (that is, no ſin to be *cleaſed from*, no need of Chriſt to *take away* our ſins) "we deceive ourſelves, and the truth is not in us." Obſerve now what follows, we deſire you; "If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs;" which comprehends both
the

the *guilt* and *nature* of sin. And that we have not misinterpreted your text, the next and last verse proves our sense genuine; "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us:" That is, 'If we say we have not sinned, and so have no need of a propitiation for sins past, or to be cleansed from the sin that is present, we make God a liar, that says we are sinners, and therefore sent us his Son to redeem us from sin.' But now we will suppose your answers good to the two queries; pray what does that lessen the validity of not swearing *at all*? Though men are not in all things perfect, may they not tell truth, and be believed, without the force and strain of an oath? Must all men be liars that are not sinless? Look about you, Athenians: if this be not the case, "Swear not at all," is both good doctrine and practicable, for all that you have said to the contrary.

Your answer to the third query, 'If there be a plainer precept than this of swear 'not at all,' is a jest at us, but it turns in earnest upon yourselves. 'Show us,' say you, 'a more positive command than that, "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that has none;"—which if we followed in winter time,' you say, 'we should look worse than we do.' But we tell you it is to be followed, both winter and summer, by all that will follow Christ; and however ill they look for it here to scoffers, Christ will look very well upon them for it another day. But you think you pinch us, by urging the text upon us literally; which, alas! is your mistake: for so that we do not *swear*, we answer that precept, though by other words than *yea* and *ay*; and if we give of our abundance to them that *want*, we answer this, though not exactly in a literal sense: and now, you see, your jest upon the looks of the Quakers, makes *you* look no better than you should do. And thus much for your first paper; what remains being but heads insisted upon in your following Mercuries, where I shall find

find them, and in my next consider them particularly as they lie.

PART II.

In answer to the Athenian Mercury of the 11th of the fourth month called June.

YOU were certainly very much in haste, when you poured out such a mouthful of charges upon a poor people, that one half of them, made good, must needs lay them as low as you wish: but they that count so quick, usually reckon without their host, and must count again; as indeed you do; for, in an after Mercury, you retract some of your charges; which shews, by the way, you went without book in making them. To spare you, and save paper, we will not repeat them here together, but as we answer them; for they are both foul and fully given.

Your first charge is, 'We speak contemptibly of the bible;' but we hope not. Your assumption has four parts of proof. 1. 'We own it not,' you say, 'as an adequate rule of faith and manners.' For this you cite R. B's Apology, page 25, & 43. And *what* you cite is true; but you cite not *all*, and so leave what you cite more open to exception, which is by no means fair. Love but truth and ingenuity more than you love your own credit, or slight ours, and we shall not doubt the issue, even in your own thoughts. R. B. tells you wherein the scripture is not a rule in *all* cases and circumstances, viz. 'It was not Paul's to go to *Jerusalem*, to be shut up there, rather than to go back to preach to the churches in *Greece*: nor the rule of Paul's *call*, nor of any minister of Christ to the *ministry*; nor with reference to their going to *this* or *that* nation to preach the gospel, rather than any *others*.' It is not a rule to *prophecy*, as to *when* or *what*, at one time or place, more than another; for though it says, 1 Cor. xiv. "That all may pro-
" *phesy*

“ phesy one after another, as it is revealed to them,” which authorizes the practice; yet it is not the rule of those motions of the spirit; neither to the party moved to speak, nor to those that hear to judge aright: for no scripture can tell me if I am moved by the spirit of God, or my own spirit, or a *transformed* spirit; nor can those that hear, judge of it, but by the spirit of truth. So that though the *scripture* be a rule of words, it is the *spirit only* that is a rule to mens spirits concerning the rise of true prophecy in any. Again; by what chapter or verse can you tell you are believers? For though there are divers can tell *what* a believer is, yet how do you know that *you* are such? By what rule do you *apply* scripture; nay, by what rule do you *believe* scripture? For the scripture cannot be the rule of your belief of *itself*: and therefore it is, that R. B. in our name, says, ‘ They are not the
‘ principal ground of all truth and knowledge, nor
‘ yet the primary adequate rule of faith and manners:
‘ but,’ says he, ‘ being a faithful testimony of the first
‘ foundation, they may be well esteemed a secondary
‘ rule, and subordinate to the spirit, from whence they
‘ have their excellency and certainty,’ p. 38. And can you call this contemning of the scriptures, without speaking contemptibly of the holy spirit that gave them forth? He argues thus: ‘ If the spirit only give
‘ the knowledge of God, and by the spirit we be to
‘ be led into all truth; then the spirit, and not the
‘ scripture, is the foundation of all truth, and the
‘ primary rule: but the first is true; therefore also
‘ the last. Again, That which is not the rule of
‘ faith to believe the scriptures, is not the primary
‘ adequate rule of faith and manners: but the scrip-
‘ ture is not, nor cannot be, that rule; therefore;’
&c. p. 38. 41, 42. You shew yourselves too *mercenary*, and ride post over our arguments, leaving them and the matter behind you. The scripture you oppose to all this, 1 Tim. iii. 17. and which is all you answer, (and enough too, were it but to your purpose) proves oniy, ‘ That all scripture by inspira-
‘ tion

'tion from God is profitable;' but it does not say, it is sufficient of itself for the accomplishing of the man of God to every good work: so is preaching, praying, and meditating profitable; but it does not say, that it is the *fountain* of all true knowledge, and the *only rule* of Christians, or a rule in *all particular cases* that may occur to men: and it is plain the apostle referred to the care of a pastor, and to all particular occasions. Less does he say, that the *Spirit* is not the rule of Christians; and if it be a *rule* at all, it cannot be a *subordinate* one to the scriptures that came from it: no doubt but they are profitable, very profitable; and blessed be God for them; but must we condemn them, unless we *prefer* them to the *spirit of God*? The great and most excellent rule of Christians, John xiv. 26. "The comforter shall teach you all things." Ch. xvi. 13. "The spirit of truth will guide you into all truth." The apostle commended the church to the "Word of God's grace," which is inward, Acts xx. 32. See 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10, 11, 12. which place attributes all divine knowledge to the Spirit of God, its searchings and revelations. Again, Tit. ii. 11, 12. & 1 John ii. 20, 21. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. It abideth in you; and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth and is no lie; and even as he hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." We will close with the words of Christ, whom all are to hear and prefer, John v. 37, 40. "Search the scriptures (or, ye search the scriptures) for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me. And (for all that) ye will not come unto me, that ye may have life."

A most severe rebuke to the better Jews of his time; and as great a one to the Christians of that stamp now. They valued the scriptures, but undervalued the Messiah when he came, whom, from scripture, they looked for: what blindness was theirs, that knew him not by so many marks as they gave of him, but turned the scripture against him, that testified

of him? This is the case of our opposers with us at this day: they oppose the scriptures to Christ the Word, that shines in the heart, and will not come to him, the quickening spirit, in themselves, that they might have life; but think, by them, to have eternal life, and they are they that testify of him. "Know ye not your ownelves," says the apostle, "how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be repro-bates?" 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

This is the doctrine that is our *crime*, our *enthusiasm*, our *error*; and we are *seducers*, *deceivers*, and what not, for asserting, recommending and pressing it. But if this be to be *vile*, we are like to be *more vile*; for we must bear witness to that which the scripture testifies of, viz. *the spirit*, and prefer it before the scripture, when the scripture does so to *itself*. No man's *letter* is **HIMSELF**, nor so noble as himself. The scripture is as the letter or epistle of the Holy Ghost to men; but for that reason it is *not* the Holy Ghost, nor to be *instead of* the Holy Ghost to us; nor, to be sure, to be *preferred before* the Holy Ghost. We bless God for the scriptures; we read them with comfort and advantage; and they are profitable to the perfecting of the man of God, through the assistance of the spirit: the scriptures *declare* the things of God; but cannot *work* them in the man; the spirit only can do that; for which cause we honour, exalt and prefer the spirit, as that which *fulfils* the scripture, and invite all to receive it, that it may make people spiritual; for, "to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Wherefore, as often as any of our expressions are construed to lessen the holy scriptures, we ask it as a piece of justice from all our readers, to take this caution with them, we speak comparatively, not with *our* books, or with *men*, but with *Christ*, his *light* and *spirit*, from whence the scriptures came. And in this sense it is that R. B. and others, on the like occasion, express themselves, when supposed to abate of the common opinion of the scriptures. For as face answers face in a glass, so we say, and know, the spirit and scripture answer each other. And therefore the comfortable
evidence

evidence of a Christian man, is the 'Testimony of the spirit of God *within* him, and the scriptures of truth *without* him.' Let it not then be any more a fault in us to direct people to the spirit of God, by which only they can come to the possession of the good things the scriptures speak of; for though they exhort, rebuke, instruct, &c. yet without that great agent, the *spirit*, influencing and enabling the creature, he shall never experience the truth of the scriptures to himself in the most relative and excellent parts of them.

2. The second part of your assumption is, 'That we deny the scriptures to be necessary;' for which you cite S. Fisher, *Rust.* p. 112. and R. B. *Ap.* p. 68. It looks gross, as you lay it down; but pray take it all together: they cannot be *absolutely* necessary to salvation, where God has not made it necessary that they should *be at all*; for then that would be necessary which is not; and people for ever miserable, for want of that which is not their fault that they have not. Again; it is allowed among Protestants, that where the scriptures or sacraments are withheld from people, (as under confinement, or providentially in infidel countries) there an upright desire or intention answers and supplies that want; then they are not absolutely necessary: so every-where, by consequence, where they cannot be had, they cannot be absolutely necessary to salvation. This is not to render the scriptures useless or needless, or to raise an indifference to them where they are enjoyed; by no means; they are a great blessing, and, as such, to be highly prized; and no man, that has any fear of God, or the least taste of his goodness, but must be of that mind; but to vindicate God's mercy and goodness from leaving so great a part of the world without the means of salvation, as they must be that want the scriptures, if they are absolutely necessary to salvation. To end this head, consider, 1st, How long the world was without them. 2dly, How few and particular the first books were: and, at last, in how narrow a compass all the Old Testament writings lay, compared with

with the whole world. And, lastly, show many churches were gathered by the apostles before the New Testament scripture was all in being; which is so much more beneficial, proper and advantageous to Christians, both as to faith and worship, than that of the Old Testament: and yet without that, for several years, in which time, doubtless, many first assemblies they lacked no rule: they had that which was sufficient, viz. the *grace of God*, which taught them and led them in the way to blessedness.

Your third proof, 'Is our equalling *apocrypha* with 'scripture,' and quote S. F. *Rus.* p. 77. But if we do not equal scripture with apocrypha, it does not follow we slight the scripture, to have more of it than it allow that title to: did *we* make the scripture *apocryphal*, you had hit the mark, in *your* sense thereof.

However, first, your communion frequently use it to confirm their doctrine, both in pulpit and in writing; and particularly the present archbishop, in his late sermon before the queen, upon *Psal.* lxxiii. 23. and that with a more than common emphasis. And if it were spurious, and a *by-blow*, as you are pleased to call us in respect of religion, why should so many eminent poets of your own choose to vouch the truth of religion from those books, rather than *Plato*, *Philo*, &c?

3. Remember, if you please, that they were first left out by the council of Laodicea, which was three hundred sixty-four years after Christ; and received again by the council of Carthage, anno 399; which, at the best, is but an indifferent foundation for your exception. Also pray take along with you, the complaints of *Jerom* and *Epiphanius*, among others, of the *partialities* that had been, even by the *orthodox*, committed upon the New Testament, under pretence of the ill use some hereticks (real or supposed) made, or might make, of them. *Jer. ad Luc. Epist.* 28. *Epip. in Anc.* 7. 2.

4. Your fourth part of the assumption to prove your charge, is, 'That we equal our own writings unto the 'scripture,

scripture, and that it is the ready way to make it
 both blasphemy and nonsense: and from thence you
 are pleased to call us *God's ape*. Waving all your re-
 flections, that edify very little, and cannot honour
 you, pray observe your proofs. *G. Fox, Mystery*, pag.
 12. and *Francis Howgil, Anti. Volunt.* defeated, with-
 out a page, affirm the "Necessity of an infallible spirit
 for gospel ministers." O friends! Whither would
 you drive things? What, make that *beresy*, which is
 the root of all true religion, as well as true ministry?
 Can a fallible spirit bring people into the truth, or turn
 them to God? Is not the spirit of God an infallible
 spirit? And are not the children of God led by it?
Rom. viii. 14. And we are not ashamed to say,
 'That by that holy spirit, we are often constrained to
 exhort, rebuke, and instruct, as it giveth utterance;
 and that God has owned our labours with a comfort-
 able harvest, blessed be his name!' but for equalling
 our writings with scripture, we have no such expres-
 sions or thoughts: it is a word of your own, and a
 conceit and inference of our old adversaries. There
 are degrees, as well as diversity, of manifestations and
 operations, but the same Lord, and the same spirit:
 yet, if it will satisfy you, we have ever preferred the
 Bible to all books and writings of saints and good
 men. You have other proofs, you say, that *G. Roff*
 writ to *Oliver Cromwell* "Thus saith the Lord."
 And that branded blasphemer *Nayler* (whom we,
 you say, to this day imitate, defend and admire) says,
 in his *Love to the Lost*, "The word of the Lord to
 his beloved city;" 'though the holy scripture must
 not have that honour.' Now, know ye, if ye please,
 that we own the stile, and bless God his word is a-
 mong us, and when it lays a necessity upon us, we
 can say in truth, *The word of the Lord*: and it is, or
 ought to be, well known to this nation, that we have
 spoken it in truth; it having been fulfilled more than
 once upon those to whom we have been sent with it.
 And it is a blindness, and a thick apostasy, that has
 overtaken such as count it monstrous to have a vision,

or to know the word of the Lord in gospel-days; the days of light and life, the dispensation of spirit and power; and of the word of the Lord; according to that notable passage, Isa. ix. 21. "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my spirit that is upon thee (speaking of Christ) and my words which I have put into thy mouth; shall not depart out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever," Also that of Joel ii. 28. "In the latter days I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh;" without respect to nation, age or sex. But you are very disingenuous to thrust into your citation of J. Nayler's words, by parenthesis, whom you say we imitate, defend and admire; thereby suggesting, that we defend him in blasphemy; which is more than you can prove by any warrantable authority: however, hereby you justify that piece of cruelty, done in that unhappy age, and usurped power (as you suggest) which many eminent and sober people were grieved at: this is abusive, and out of all bounds of equal dealing, and we wish you may repent of it: for we are so far from imitating, defending, and admiring him in that respect, wherein he gave occasion of offence and stumbling, that we did not only at that time disown his proceedings, but he very solemnly condemned them himself, which was printed to the world; and he lived an humble, contrite, and exemplary life, and died, we believe, in peace.

'That we read our own epistles in our meetings, and not the scriptures.' is not from disrespect to the scripture, but because of a particular occasion, and a word of exhortation thereby communicated. If it were customary to read our friends writings, as the scriptures are in the publick places of worship, and yet we did not read the scriptures, we should deserve your reproof; but that is not the case, far be it from us.

The last part of your assumption, by which you would prove us to condemn the scripture, is, 'Our using,

joining, with the Papists, detracting expressions, as a
 'dead letter, a nose of wax, a Lesbian rule;' and for
 this you quote S. F. pag. 48. It is low with you,
 that you have no more evidence. But now be inge-
 nous; can you think we call the *scriptures* so, or that
 we say men *make* them so, or *use* them so? Lay your
 hands upon your hearts, and think again. Is there
 any thing more proverbial, than to say, 'That men
 make a nose of wax of the scriptures?' But herein to
 join us with the Papists, still is more uncandid; for
 the very place you cite makes an exception to the
 Papist's practice, who use such speeches *tauntingly*,
 that is, in slight, in contempt of the scripture. But
 S. F. doth it not in any such sense; why then should
 you make him do it tauntingly, and with *Papists*,
 when he so particularly provides against them both?
 You would make ill jury-men with such latitudes.
 The scripture, *of itself*, is a dead letter, for *all* letters
 are so *in themselves*; and you grant as much in speak-
 ing of the *word of God*: but if they are made *alive* to
 any soul, by the application of God's holy and quick-
 ening spirit, they become *living* to that soul, as much
 as if the holy penman had spoke them in his ear: and
 indeed *no* words are living to any man, whether writ-
 ten or spoken, but as they are made so by the *spirit*,
 in the *heart* of such a man. But Gregory Nazianzen,
 whom we suppose you reverence, speaking of the
 Bible, said, 'Is religion placed in a *leaf*? Fearest
 'thou (*paper*, or) *parchment* more than *God*?' This had
 been heinous in *us*, and yet it is true. A *Lesbian rule*
 he stiled it, *ad hominem*. The truth they declare is
 stable and certain; but men twist, shift, and wring
 them, and so they become like the *Lesbian rule*, that
 served all turns; and for that reason he urged, 'That
 'men should come to the spirit of God, to receive
 'the mind of the spirit in the matter therein doubted
 'or controverted.'

Your second charge is, 'That the Quakers will by
 'no means allow the scripture to be the word of
 'God.' If you had said, in *no sense* too, you would

have gone too fast, and yet your intention for your words looks that way. Let us not dissent, pray you, more than needs must, to support the credit of your charge. You confess 'Christ is called the Word of God, but so is the *scripture*.' And we say, *Christ is*, but so is *not* the *scripture*: you produce *Jer. xlii. 4, 10, 12.* We say, at that rate, there are an *hundred words of God*, because it was the *stile* the prophets used for every *message*. But you go, I confess, a great way to help out the matter, when you allow, 'That it is ridiculous to say the very *letters* are the word of God, but the *sense* and divine *truths* therein contained, and conveyed to us by the co-operation of God's spirit:' for in *that* sense, every passage thereof, given forth by divine inspiration, is the will, mind, command, and, if you please, *so* far the *word* of the Lord; and so we do not, as you say, contradict ourselves in using the same phrase to our own writings. But, nevertheless, primarily and excellently, we attribute that *stile* to "*Christ, the word, that was with God, and was God, and made all things:*" and we do not see but you yield it to us.

For your third charge, 'Of turning the sacred truths of scripture into jejune allegories,' since you refer your proof to another place, we also do our answer.

Your fourth charge is, 'That we speak not very honourably of our Saviour.' But how does that appear? Do we say he is *no* Saviour, or that he is a *deficient* Saviour, and leaves men as bad as he finds them? As too many shew that call him so; and, which is worse, plead to be so as long as they live, because, say they, 'He did not come to take away the nature of sin,' which must be left for their probation, and to shew forth God's mercy to forgive; as if sin were serviceable? We have not thus dishonoured him, I hope. How is it, pray you, that we dishonour him? Why, first, you say, 'We make him a monster:' that is bad indeed, or you are very irreverent, as well as unjust, in your expression. 'Robert Barclay, pag. 306.'

you

you tell us; *he says*; he has two bodies.' Suppose so; *one* you grant: the *other* R. B. calls *Vehiculum Dei*. Not two bodies of the Virgin *Mary*: how is it a monster then? You are more *mercurial*, than exact. But pray consider, (and better late than never): did not all the fathers *feed* of Christ, as well as *drink* of him, do you think? Read 1 Cor. iii. 4. "They did eat
 " the same spiritual meat, and did all *drink* the same
 " spiritual drink: (for they drank of that spiritual
 " rock that followed them, and that was Christ.)"
 Now the word *body* is figuratively used, as it imports a *substance*; that is, *the food of the saints*, their *spiritual nourishment* and *subsistence*. You should be more deliberate, and not so wild and adventurous in your censures. Your reason is, 'That we say Christ is actually
 ' present in every one of our own bodies; which,' you say, 'Is a greater degradation to him, than lying in
 ' a manger.' But still we see you do not read the bible, or remember what you read. Peruse 2 Cor. xiii. 5. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the
 " faith; prove your ownelves: know ye not your
 " ownelves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except
 " ye be reprobates:" so that what you make a dishonour to Christ, the apostle makes an evidence of being in the faith. But this is not the only point in which you two differ. Yet know, that 'Christ being in
 ' our body,' is none of *our* phrase; and shews, as in other charges (and which you ingenuously own in your *third Mercury*) that you imperfectly know our principles, though you boldly censure them. But were it so, yet the apostle had defended the expression, who, speaking of the divine manifestation of Christ, and God *in* Christ, in the creature, saith, "And this
 " treasure have we in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us," 2 Cor. iv. 6, 7. To this add that of Christ's prayer, John xvii. 23. "I in them, and they in *me*;" and it is to be hoped you will think a *man* a little better than a *manger*; and yet it is no degrading of Christ,

to say, 'He is where he says he is, and where it is antisciptural to say, 'He is not.'

Your last reason for our dishonouring our Saviour, is out denying him to be *distinct* from the Father. But suppose this were true; why do you strain so hard to depress us? Pray what were the dishonour of it? It slight, on our parts, not look so coherent; but to make the Son the Father, is dishonouring the Father, rather than the Son. You had better not be meddling, and let this work alone; it is not your talent, and ill becomes you. Howbeit, know, if you please, we do think the Son *distinct* from the Father; for *fatherhood* and *sonship* are certainly not the same. And the very place you cite of R. B. p. 87, 88, you produced to prove your first reason, tells you enough of that.

Now for the citations out of E. Burrough's *Trumpet*, pag. 17. and J. Parnel's *Shield*, pag. 30. they mean no more than this, 'That we should not satisfy ourselves only with what *Christ did*, and the *saints enjoyed*, so long ago, but that we should *know* and *feel* him, by his light and spirit, *nearer* to us, that we might evidence his work in our hearts, and be partakers of the experiences of those blessed saints in light:' and not that we denied, or slighted, that blessed manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh. This we have said again and again upon occasion. Isaac Pennington's words, *Quest.* pag. 33. are defended by express scripture. See Heb. x. 5, 7. "A *body* hast thou prepared me. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." The body was not *he*, but *his*; and if Christ *dwells* in his people, as many scriptures express, the *body* cannot be Christ, in a *strict* sense, because it cannot *dwell* in them. And therefore the absurdity that is flung at us, in reference to our use of that expression, returns upon them that have so gross a conception of *Christ*, and his *dwelling* in his people. You would have us confound *God* and his *saints*, from a passage, in G. F's *mystery*. 'He is received, that saith, Christ is distinct from his saints.'

The

The page is not quoted, but we know the place: we suppose it is a *mis-printing* gives you that apprehension; *distinct* for *divided*; they are *distinct*, but not *divided*. And this is that which was intended. You are too ready to catch; and mistake also, when you oppose G. F. jun. to R. B. one calling *the light*, God, the other, *the spiritual BODY* of Christ. For, 'He who is the *light*, is *God*; and the *light* is the *appearance and manifestation of God*.'

You take it ill, that we should allow the "*Light within* to be *Christ*; and not the *man that died at Jerusalem*, to be *God* or *Christ*, in a *proper sense*;" they are your own words. Indeed, you are very unguarded in your expressions. "Nor," say you, "so much as *Christ* in a *proper sense*." We do not understand you. Would you have any thing *die* but the *body*? You deny the *soul's sleeping*, and falsely make it a principle of *ours*, with the addition of a *Socinian dream*. If not, then ye say, '*Christ died*,' as we say, since that was the *body* of Christ that died. *You dream of our idolizing one another from this principle of Christ being in men*. But take it from *us*, (as you ought in justice) *what we believe*, and not from *enemies*, that seek advantages, and screw, wring, and pervert our words; that we *abhor* such practices. But you have three evidences, which, as you think, cannot fail you.

1. 'That many of us worshipped *Naylor*. *Just as much* as we worship *Francis Bugg*, or *you*. But this we know, that your *many*, were a *few*, and yet *too many*, *giddy men and women*; and that their *actions* were *denied* by us, and by *themselves* at last.

Your second proof, as you pretend, is J. Coal's words, in a letter to G. F. And your last proof, which doubtless you think your best, is a passage in a letter of J. Audland's to G. Fox.

But, first, Where these letters *are*, you do not tell us, nor give us any sufficient authority for them, nor for the truth of your *copies*; which, upon so high a charge, should, in common justice, have been done.

2. Besides,

2. Besides, they are given us in *fractiōns*, and *Œ's*, as appears by your breaks; and that is also unfair. For might not they write to G. F. and yet fall to *pray* and *praise* God occasionally also? A thing frequent in religious correspondencies.

3. But if it were a fault, must it include an *whole people*? Was it writ *to* them, or printed *by* them? Be just!

4. Is it their *practice*? If *not*, you are to *blame*; and if it *be*, you must certainly have *more* instances, and *freſher* than J. A. who has been deceased almost thirty years. But this shews your uncharitableness, that any *thing*, at any *time*, or at any *band*, shall serve you to back your unwary and unreasonable charges against us.

5. And we believe J. A. was too *good* a man to intend G. F. in that sense you take it, and G. F. to *accept* it; whose labour was to turn the eyes of people from *man* to *Christ*, which lays the axe to all *human* and *creaturaly* exaltation. And G. F. lived a true example of *humility*, and abominated all such appearances of *evil*. And they that ever saw or heard him *pray*, would not think he should like being any one's *idol*; since, above all men, he appeared to express the *profoudest* reverence to God and *Christ* in *prayer*; as strangers, to him and us, have occasionally observed and declared. And as he lived he died, in care for nothing, but the glory of God; and the exaltation of the kingdom of his Son in his people; and, as it was said of David, "He left us in a good old age, full of days, and of durable riches and honour."

PART

PART III.

In answer to the ATHENIAN MERCURY of the 14th of the 4th Month, called June:

THE first part of your *Third Mercury* finds an answer in the conclusion of ours to your second: yet since you make such a voluminous potter about R. B's words of the body of Christ, as well as of this letter to G. F. taking up, in their aggravation, more than the room of seven other charges, we shall consider what you say: which is this. 'If the nature of this eternal light, substance, or spiritual body, that is in all of them, be material; as it must be, because, according to them, a divisible substance; then there is plain penetration of dimensions, and every Quaker carries about all transubstantiation in his belly.'

But why, pray you, must it be a *material substance*? Do you find it in the first of John, iv. 9? for there is our light asserted and described. The *life* of the word is our *light*, and *your* light, if you please: "In the word was LIFE, and that life the LIGHT of men; and that was the true light, that lighteth every man that comes into the world." Is that life no *substance*? And if it be, is it a *material* or a *spiritual* one? And if it be a *spiritual* one, is it, or is it needful it should be, a *divisible* one? Consider well; is the *sun* divided because all see by it? No more is *Christ*: so that *divisibility* is your own conceit, and not our opinion or consequence of it, but of your mistaking it: and all the *transubstantiation* you thought was in our *belly*, proves, at last, to be in your own *heads*; and, it is hoped, this will help to get it out for you.

Again; you say, 'If immaterial, let them make sense of it if they can, for to us it is pure Quakerism.' How now, Athenians! Have you never met with *immaterial substances* in your reading? Then, surely, you have travelled but a little way in the commonwealth

of

of letters. Both the new and old philosophy must be strangers to you; and, which is worse, you are so to the *Bible*. Wash your eyes, therefore, I pray, and turn to John vi. from 48 to 63, and tell us, if you will, or can, ‘*Who is the living bread there that comes down from heaven; and what is that flesh and blood Christians must feed upon if they would be saved?*’ Here is an *immaterial substance* or *body* for you, one of *God’s* providing, which, you, in derision, call “*Pure Quakerism:*” but very glad we are of it, and should be more, that you were better acquainted with it. We pity your extreme ignorance of heavenly things; for nothing else could make you so gross, or abusive, upon so essential a part of religion, and us for asserting it. Take not that *strictly*, which is spoken with *construction*; nor that *properly* or *literally*, which is *figuratively* and *mystically* expressed, or to be understood, and we shall neither appear so monstrous, nor you so much mistaken. You may wring as great inconsistency out of scripture as any *other* book, if you take *that* course to expound it. Be therefore just to us, and shew you would inform us, or be informed by us, as sometimes you would have us to believe; but do not jeer at what you do not understand, nor charge what you do not know.

For your aggravation of the letter to G. F. and the confident conclusions you make of our *idolatry*, they are both untrue and abusive: it is not our principle, it was never our practice; abhorring utterly that extravagant as well as unchristian imputation; no people or testimony, since the world began, laying *men* lower than *we* have done, even to a fault, in our adversaries apprehension. For we have not only opposed an idolatry to *creatures* or *works of mens hands*, which is the grosser sort, but that of the *mind* also: the worship men too generally, and too zealously, pay to their own *imagination*s, or the *ideas* they have framed to themselves of *God* and *Christ*; and will, at any rate, make others do so too, if they can. A *refined* idolatry too many are guilty of, that exclaim against the
other;

other; and very pernicious to the soul's true knowledge and enjoyment of God and Christ.

Your fifth charge is, 'That we deny the Trinity.' But you should, in justice, have added, of *persons*, with all the *school-niceties* and *distinctions* that belong to that sort of explication of scripture; for to *that* only it is your first proof refers, viz. *W. P's Sandy Foundation*, p. 12. 'For the scripture no-where calls God 'the Holy Three of Israel, but Holy One of Israel.' And if he had said, *imagined Trinity*, p. 16, as you cite, which he does *not*, in the copy we have, it ought not to be so heinous with you, since *three PERSONS* are not to be found in the *Bible*, which you exalt for the *only* rule of faith. And if you will not allow that council to be *infallible* that formed that article above 300 years after Christ's ascension, as to be sure you will not, I hope it must be *their imagination* of the *text*, if not a *Divine inspiration*. Your proof, 1 John v. 7. "There " are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, " the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three " are one," will not support your charge, because it contains not the *matter* controverted in it, viz. *Three PERSONS*, for *that* is the point in controversy. Let it suffice, if you please, that we believe the *scripture*, though we reject *that* interpretation; and that we own *three witnesses*, and that those *three* are *one*; without allowing the intricacy and confusion of the *schools*.

Your second proof is from '*Sweet Sips*;' but that is no *Quaker's* book, and so no proof upon us. Be more cautious another time, and know better what you do.

Your sixth charge, 'That we hold, the soul *sleeps*,' you yourselves retract, but would have it a fruit of your *ingenuity*; and because we would encourage a thing so rare with you, we will at this time spare your *disingenuity* in *making* it. But, as if you were more troubled at our being *clear* than *guilty*, and at yourselves for missing the blow at us, than for abusing us; to recover that slip, and to make us amends, your *ingenuous retraction* ends in two other charges.

1. 'That

1. 'That we deny the resurrection of the body.
 2. The distinct existence of the soul after death.'

Your proof for the first is G. Whitehead's saying, 'That he did not believe his body should rise again after death: (but G. W. *denies* that to be his answer:)' and William Penn's *not* denying it to John Faldo. Whereas they answer no other way than what the apostle said to the Corinthians, "Thou knowest *not* that body which *shall be*," 1 Cor. xv. 37. How is it then a crime, to deny *your* gross conceit of the resurrection? For, in all scriptural respects, we reverently and joyfully own the resurrection, as we have good cause to do, of all people. And if you believe, that death came by *sin*, that innocent, wise, and upright man, I. Pennington, 2 *Prin.* p. 34. was not out of the way; to say, 'That what we lost in the *first* Adam we regained in the *second*;' and the *resurrection*, to be sure, is not the least part; which is alone through him that was himself "the *first-begotten* from the *dead*." And for '*Sweet Sips*,' though none of ours, yet no proof for you; for the very quotation *owns* the resurrection. But *curious* questions we avoid, and count them the *foolish* and *unlearned* ones that the apostle forbid, 1 Tim. vi. 4, 5. 2 Tim. ii. 22, 23. being more solicitous that we appear *accepted* with God, than with what *bodies* we shall appear.

2. 'That we deny the *distinct* existence of the soul,' is as false as that we assert the *soul sleeps*; but, perhaps, you think that '*Sweet Sips*' will help you out, ch. 26. but for that very proof you owe us another *retraction*; and we wish you may do it *more* ingenuously than you did your last.

Your seventh charge is, 'That we have been looked upon as *fly-blows* of the *Jesuits*.' If so, upon what *church*, pray you, did they *beget* us? but out of the abundance of your hearts your mouths speak, and that *foully*, and *falsely* too, too often. But your proofs for this? 'Why, most writers *say* so.' Do they so? Where *are* they, pray? And for what *reasons*? But you say not a word of *that*. This you cannot think a fruit of

of your ingenuity. 'But,' it seems, 'if we would peruse *Ignatius's* life, we should think him as arrant 'a *Quaker* as *William Penn* himself.' So that while you take it ill of us to refer you, for our *belief*, to our own *books*, and do not write *new* ones to tell you our religion, you take upon you to send us to *other* people's books to learn our *own*, and that with *reflections* also. In this, whatever you think, you are not over-modest or reasonable. But if *INSIDE*, be *outside*; if *SPIRIT*, be *forms*; *PLAINNESS*, *pomp*; *CONVICTION*, *implicit faith*; and *CHRIST'S KINGDOM* be of *THIS* world, you are in the *right*, or else you *abuse* us.

Your eighth charge makes us to 'deny the plenary satisfaction of Christ, and to rest upon our own merits.' It is some comfort to us, that there is not one charge that is a *text* of *scripture*, or delivered in *scripture-phrase*. Where do you find *plenary satisfaction* in the *bible*? Or what do you mean by it? *You*, that would have it the *only* rule, should make it *yours*. You cite J. N's *Love to the Lost*, p. 7. 'his righteousness *imputed*, or *put into* the creature;' and this you squib at; not considering that Abraham was *really* righteous, when his faith was *imputed*, or *accounted*, to him *for* righteousness; or you will charge the Holy Ghost with wrong reckonings. But *any* thing rather than have *Christ's* righteousness *within* men. Pray read 1 Sam. xxii. 15. Psal. xxxii. 2. and you will find *impute*, or *imputeth*, so applied. Your second proof is R. B. p. (*no where*) saying, 'We are justified by Christ formed in us.' And so we are, in the *complete* sense of the word; for the word comprehends *remission* of *sins* that are *past*, upon *repentance*, and *sanctification*, or being made holy and just *inwardly*. And, to be plain with you, we do believe, 1st, "That Christ died for *all*, and is a propitiation for the sins of the *world*," 1 John ii. 1, 2. 2dly, "That he was here- in the *effect*, rather that *cause*, of the Father's love;" as John iii. 16. & 1 John iv. 9, 10. "God so loved the *world*," &c. 3dly, That *justification*, as taken for *remission* of *sins*, accounting penitents as *just* as if

they had not sinned, refers to Christ as a propitiation. 'He was our common offering for sin;' and as the word is taken for man's being made inherently just and holy, it refers to Christ as the sanctifier of his people; so that it is Christ still, every way, by which we hope for salvation. And for our works, even the best, such as James meant, James ii. they are rewardable, but not meritorious; because there is no proportion between the work and wages; for "the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom. vi. 23.

Your ninth charge is, 'That we deny the divinity of Christ;' (but your reasons shame your charge); 'And this they do with a witness,' say you, 'if they make him nothing but themselves.' But if we do not, what have you made of yourselves, think you? Who, of us, ever said so? Are we the "Light that lighteth all that come into the world?" Or did we make the world? Indeed you are very gross. Your other proof is as lame; you say, 'We deny him to be God;' but not a word of ours cited to that purpose; for we believe, that "Christ was God manifested in the flesh;" as John i. 14. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

Your tenth charge is antartick to your ninth: for now you say, 'We more plainly deny his humanity.' Thus you make us shift and take turns at faith, till you have left us none: but what are your proofs? G. F. Myst. p. 71. 'Christ is not human: where doth the scripture speak of human? We deny the word human.' But that all readers may deny you, till you deny yourselves the pleasure of abusing us, we will repeat the place as it lies.

Priest saith, 'Christ's human nature,' &c.

G. Fox Anf. "Where doth the scripture speak of human? The word human, where is it written? Tell us, that we may search for it? Now we do not deny, that Christ, according to the flesh, was of Abraham, but not the word human: and Christ's nature is not human, which is earthly, for that is the first Adam."

“ Adam.” Now, Athenians, if you can, blush! What! make us deny that Christ came of the seed of *Abraham* after the *flesh*, by a place that *owns* it, and that owns it *fully, scripturally*, and as it *should* be owned and worded by Christians, that use the form of sound words, given them by the Holy Ghost, denying only a *school-term*, borrowed from the *ground*: this is hard!

Thus you serve us also in your last charge, where you will have us to deny *angels, spirits, heaven, and hell*; and so make an end of us, and our religion. And to prove it, you bring a book, that is none of ours; and not without injury to the author neither; and then conclude us ‘ a compendium of all heresies;’ naming twenty-two of them rank and file, and a *cum multis aliis* at the tail of them. But if *they* had as foul play from *their* judges, as *we* have had from *you*, they will deserve a better name. However, you are obliged to us, that we have abbreviated heresy for you; and yet you have not convicted us of any one point that deserves that black name. We must say, we are sorry to see you act as if you thought us exempted from the common claims of humanity; to be dealt with as you please, and as if injuries could not be committed upon such wretches as we are in *your* esteem: for you *add, diminish, pervert*, and that boldly; and when you have shaped and dressed up the *monster*, you are pleased to write *Quaker* upon him, and then lead him about the streets, in your *Mercuries*, for a show, at a penny a-piece: God Almighty shew *you* mercy, that allow *us* none, but refuse to be just! for, after all your black charges, you fall to asking what our faith is? which should have been *first* done.

You objected upon us, ‘ Of turning the other ‘ check;’ saying, ‘ It was patience *per* force.’

But you are mistaken in fact; we have *put-up* legal advantages many times, and endured and forgiven innumerable personal injuries from those *out of* office as well as from those that have been in *government*; nay, oftentimes dared cruelties and oppression with a *literal*

conformity to the text. Speak not so peremptorily what you do not know; you expect better things from our religion, than your own, and yet would have ours to be worse.

2. You say, 'It was not conscience, but an unaccountable, not to say brutal, stubbornness.' You have endeavoured to rob us of our religion; will you now rob us of our suffering, and the good intention of it too? For that word of yours, authorizes all the imprisonments, plunders, banishments, and murders we have suffered since a people; and, if we should strain consequences, intitles you as arrant persecutors, as bishop Bonner, or Dr. Story.

But, 3dly, You say, 'We give hard words:' Do we? Such as the *things* call for, doubtless: I hope no *personal* reflections? 'Yes, Whitehead complains of a 'new persecution:' and with very good reason, when the *old* is justified by you, and you proclaim us a 'Compendium of two-and-twenty heresies,' with *multis aliis* at the end of it: which, in other words, is saying, 'Take them, Dr. Pinfold.'

Again; 'You take it ill,' *he* says, 'you make beasts, and devils, of us:' but what else, pray, do you make of us, when you cannot make *worse* of us than you have?

You add, 'That we call you *impertinent*:' and pertinently, we think, to ramble, as you have done, from your province, to spread invectives upon us. '*Wicked*:' what can you think it less, to abuse an whole people in the tenderest point? '*Followers of blind guides*:' how else could you have missed your way so much? For it is plain nothing can be more mistaken. 'It is a wonder,' say you, '*dumb dogs* do not come in too, though we have no *silent meetings*.' We cannot think why you should wonder at *that*, since you know how much you have *barked* at us. There is no danger of your being *dumb*, but *deaf*. And since you brought in this to introduce your profane jest at our *silent meetings*, we must tell you, you may see in yourselves the use of *silence*, by your abuse of *speech*; and therein

therein a defence of *us*, and a reproof to *you*. In short, we recommend *silence* to you, as Pythagoras did to his scholars, till you have learned to speak *better* than you do.

The next thing is your ten questions, an unreasonable as well as an unsuitable conclusion: for you first judge; and then query; and, after charging us home, you ask, 'What is our *belief*?' It shews too great a levity, for men of your claim to sense; and, though not *enthusiastical*, yet, if you will not be angry, it looks very *filly*. But because, for that reason, it does not look *malicious*, you may have an answer, though least of all for *your* sakes, by *another* hand. But, before we part, pray take this along with you: *our* religion, and the *true* religion, which makes people *truly* religious, is the fear of God, planted in the soul by the *grace* of God, which sanctifies and rules the heart and affections; and not *creeds* of words, though never so true: for the *devils* have knowledge and faith; but their knowledge does not work by *obedience*, nor their faith by *love*; and therefore they are never the better for it: nor are wicked *men*, as the world shews. *Religion*, then, is a divine *experience* and *work* in the *soul*, by the *divine spirit*. It is regeneration, and that a new creature, Gal. vi. 15, 16. And as the *Jew inward* is the circumcision of the heart, so is that the character of a *true Christian*. A *short* creed of words served of old with an upright heart. "Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the " King of Israel," was Nathaniel's *confession*. " My " Lord and my God," was all Thomas's *retraction* and *creed*, John xx. 28. And *Peter's* confession of faith is little larger, Mat. xvi. 18. Thus also the blind, lame, and sick, that come *believingly* to him.

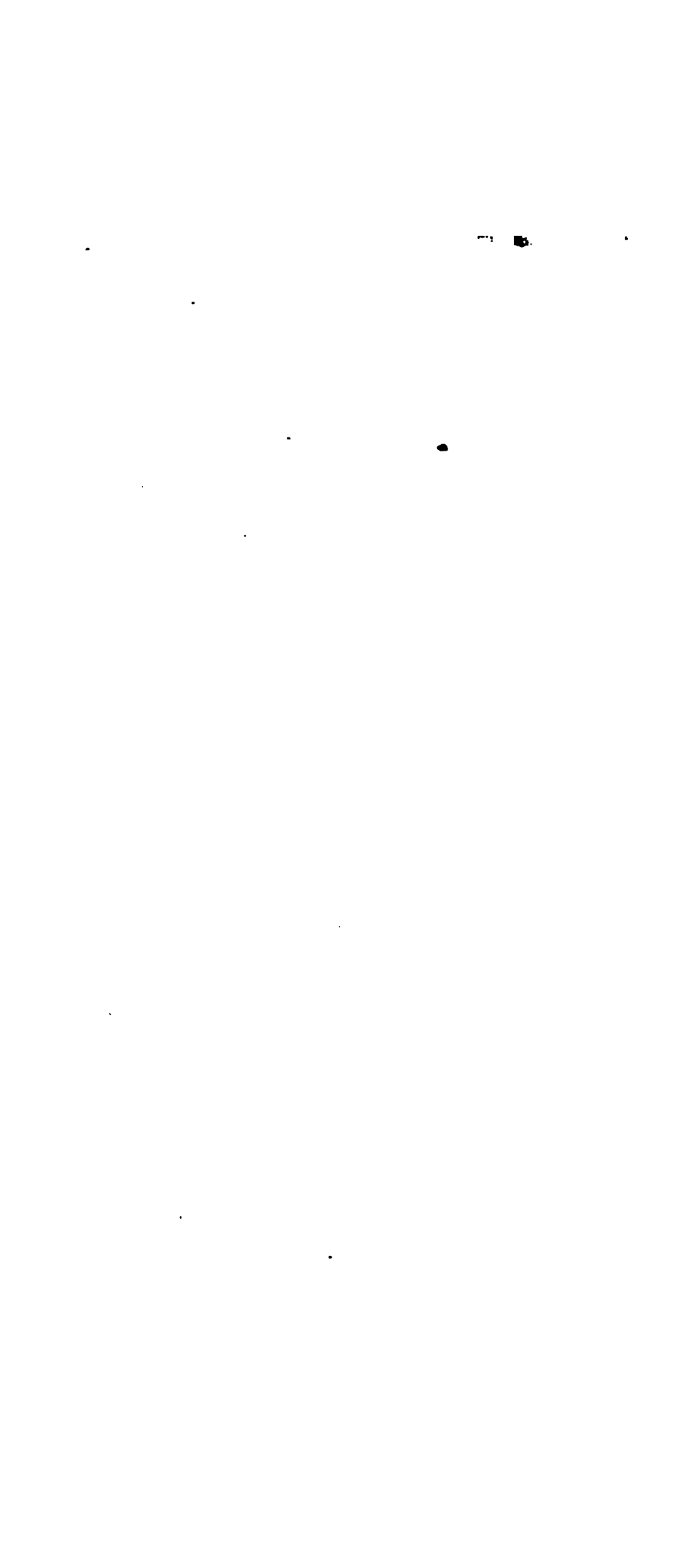
To be a Christian *then*, was to be, like *Christ*, meek, humble, holy, loving, patient; and *this* his *light* and *spirit* maketh those that embrace it. Unto which we refer and exhort you, and all to whom these papers may come, as the great agent of man's happiness; desiring earnestly that our care may be about our
confor-

THE NEW ATHENIANS, &c.

conformity to our Saviour, rather than *controversies* about him; since the true religion is *to be like Christ*, 1 Pet. ii. 21. Chap. iii. 10, 11, 12. 1 John ii. 6. Say not then, 'That we value our title to Christianity by human laws;' you wrong us much: *ours* hath an *higher* claim; and so must *yours*, if you expect to be saved by it. We spoke not of being therefore Christians in God's account, but of being esteemed enough to live *quieter* than your invectives seem to let us, among men. But it is not the least part of the cross we bear, to be, in almost every thing, so much misunderstood, and by some so evilly represented. One while they will have us deny the *divinity* of Christ; another while, the *humanity*. Sometimes we must be *Socinians*; then *Sabellians*. Very often we are told, 'That we expect to be saved by our own *works*;' and as often, 'That we will do nothing, unless the *spirit* move us.' Again, 'Sometimes we are said to send all to hell but *ourselves*;' and presently, 'We deny any such *thing*.' Ay, we are accused with '*Idolatry* to mens persons,' and yet 'Scorned for *denying* all honours or respects to the persons of men.' Just thus we are made to '*disown* all *ministry*;' and by and by accused, 'That *every one* among us is a *minister*, or may be so.' It would be tedious to repeat the *contradictions* and absurd *dilemmas* men have brought themselves into, by their rash and unjust attempts against us; which they will easily perceive, that please to peruse some of our controversial tracts, as, "*Rusticus ad Academicos*; the *Christian Quaker*, in two parts; *R. B's Apology and Defence*; *Quakerism a New Nick-name for Old Christianity*, and the *Rejoinder* in its defence; *The Way cast-up*; *Reason against Railing*, and *Wisdom justified of her Children*," &c. In which our belief is distinguished and defended, against the abuses which men, through ignorance or prejudice, have put upon it. God Almighty enlighten and forgive them. That is the worst of our wishes, for their many hard speeches against us, and our holy profession: concluding, after all your unfriendly usage,

Your well-wishing friends.

END OF VOL. IV.







20 AUG 1977

