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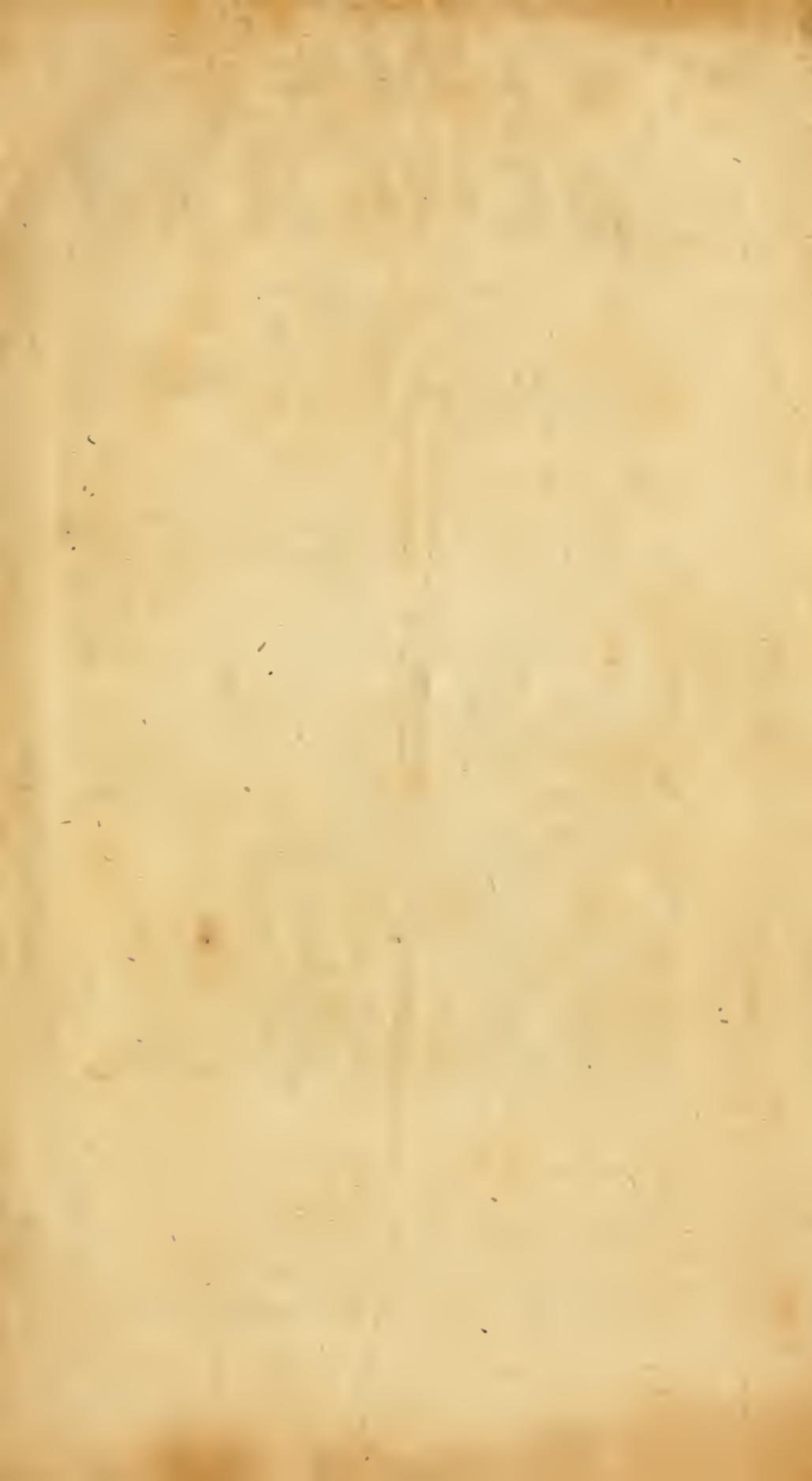
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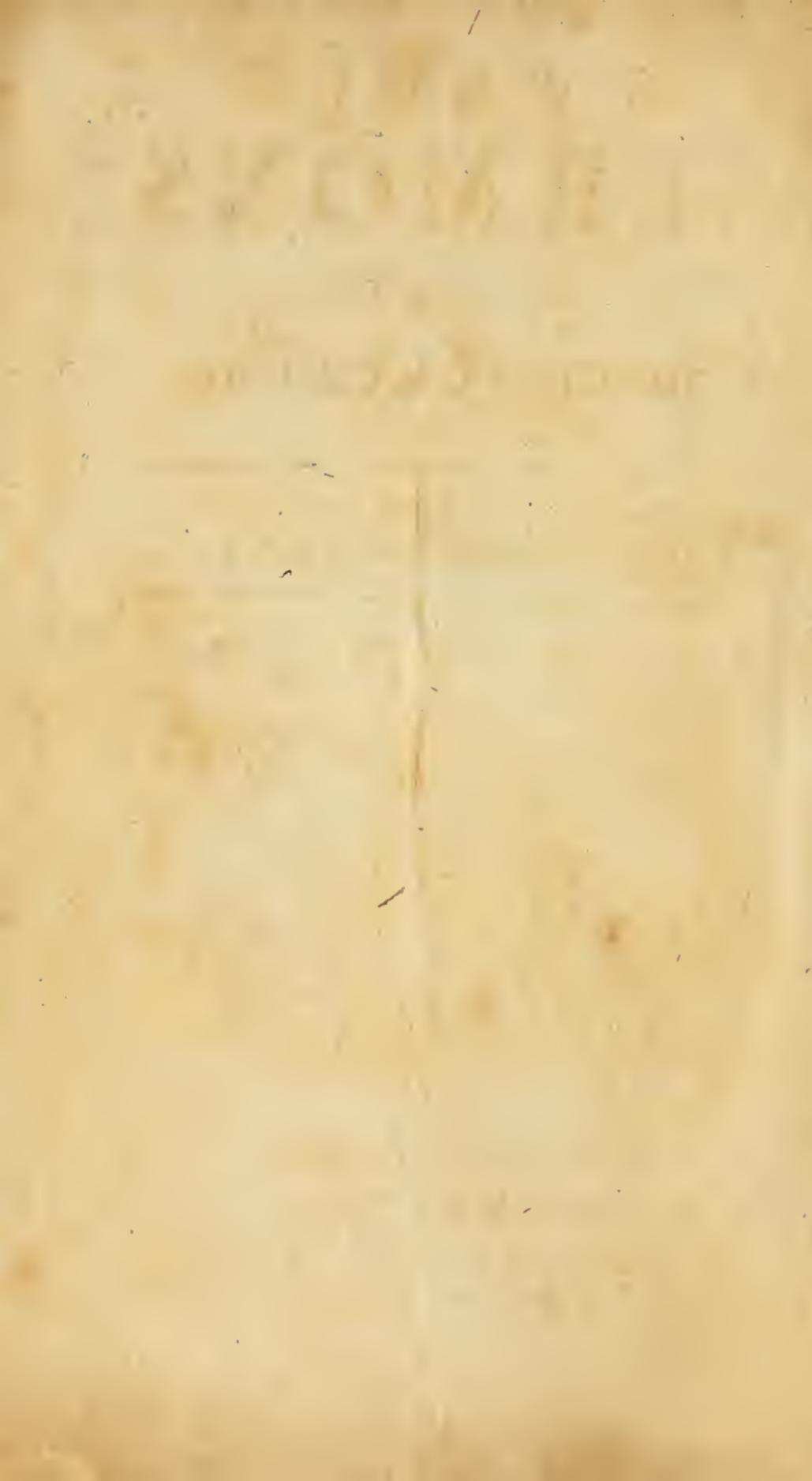
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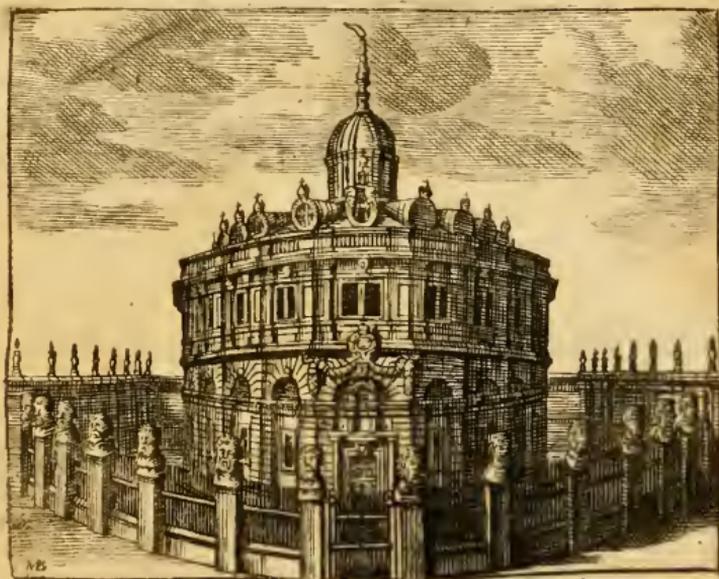




T W E L V E S E R M O N S

PREACH'D ON
Several Occasions

By the Right Reverend Father in God
GEORGE Lord Bishop of *BRISTOL.*
Geo. Smalbridge



O X F O R D,
Printed at the THEATER for JONAH BOWYER at the
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Imprimatur,

JO. BARON,

Vice-Can. Oxon.

Febr. 12. 1716.

To His Worthy Friends,
The Gentlemen of the Vestry,
And Others,
Who frequent the NEW-CHURCH
In *Tothil-fields Westminster,*
This Volume of SERMONS,
All, except the Last,
Before printed Severally,
Is Inscrib'd by

GEORGE Lord Bishop of *Bristol*:

In publick Testimony of his sincere Gratitude for the repeated Proofs they have given Him of an Heartly Affection, and Undeserv'd Esteem, during the whole Course of his Ministration amongst them near twenty Years.

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fary

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fary of the Martyrdom of King *Charles I.*

170⁸/₉.

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at *St. Werburgh's Church in BRISTOL,*
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rather than Silver and Gold.*

A SER.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the Honourable

House of Commons, &c.

GEN. XLIX. V. 6.

*O my Soul, come not thou into
their Secret; unto their Assem-
bly, mine Honour, be not thou
united.*

THE Context runs thus:
Simeon and Levi are Brethren:
Instruments of Cruelty are in their
Habitations. *O my Soul, come
not thou into their secret; unto their Assembly,
mine Honour, be not thou united: For in their*

Anger they slew a Man, and in their Self-will they digged down a Wall. Cursed be their Anger, for it was fierce; and their Wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.

These Words express in a very moving and lively manner the good Patriarch *Jacob's* just abhorrence and detestation of a Cruel and Barbarous Fact, with the most deliberate Malice contriv'd, with the basest Treachery carried on, and with the utmost Inhumanity executed by his two Sons, *Simeon* and *Levi*; Men every way Brethren; as nearly allied in Temper, as in Birth; in their Dispositions and Characters very much resembling, but still far out-done by those Regicides, who, as upon this Day, made themselves drunk with the blood of the Lord's Anointed. In the 34th. Chapter of this Book of *Genesis*, We have a particular Account of that Crime, which *Jacob* had in his view, when he utter'd these words; and it is impossible to consider it, with all its aggravating Circumstances, without passing this Judgment upon the Persons concern'd in it; that they were Revengeful,
Cru-

Cruel, Implacable, Treacherous; Men, who had no regard to the Honour of their Country, and who prostituted Religion, to the carrying on their wicked Purposes with the greater facility and success. An injury, it seems, had been done them by *Shechem the Son of Hamor*; and upon the first notice of it, without any demand of satisfaction from him, without any appeal to Authority for a Legal redress, they enter into an hasty resolution of avenging themselves. Having thus made themselves Judges in their own cause, they pay no regard to the stated Rules and Measures of Justice; nor observe any proportion between the Injury they had suffer'd, and the Punishment they award. Nothing less than the blood of the Offender can atone for his Offence; nay, Root and Branch, is their avow'd Principle, and for the sin of *Shechem* an utter extirpation is decreed against the whole Race of the *Shechemites*. Overtures of an Accommodation, when offer'd, seem'd to be accepted by them; but under the disguise of a Treaty they Prosecute their revengeful purposes; and

whilst they speak of Peace, they make themselves ready for War. An Action thus foul and dishonourable was sure to be universally detested; and would in the Language of their Father, *make them stink amongst the Inhabitants of the Land:* But being past all Sense of Shame, having shaken off all concern for the glory of their Nation, they obstinately proceed in the perpetration of a Crime, which must unavoidably expose both them, and their Posterity to the reproach and hatred of all Countrys; and all Ages. But to render their Villany compleat, and to give it its finishing stroke, a form of Godliness must be put on; They were the People of God, and could have no commerce with any who refus'd to enter into their Covenant: *We cannot, say they, do this thing, to give our Sister to one that is uncircumcis'd:* that had been a reproach to them, and a wound to their tender Consciences: but this Hypocritical pretence of Zeal for the true Religion serv'd only for the better compassing their irreligious ends; and those who were so scrupulous of having any Affinity with such as were Aliens to
 God's

God's Covenant, made no other use of initiating them into the sacred rites of it, than to Murder them with the greater Security and Dispatch. By this representation of the fact to which *Jacob* here alludes, it appears that the Contrivers of it were False, Violent, Ungodly, and Inhumane above the common measures of deprav'd Nature; and yet it may be affirm'd that their Crime, however extraordinary, both as to its Kind, and its Degree, bears no proportion to the much greater Sin of those unnatural, unparallel'd, and execrable Sons of *Belial*, to whose brutal Rage our Martyr'd Sovereign was this Day made a Sacrifice. Were it proper to appear an Advocate in so bad a Cause as that of *Simeon* and *Levi*, it would not be very difficult to find out some plausible Colours for the extenuation of their Crime; it might be pleaded, that they were under no ties of Subjection to those, against whom they lifted up their hands; that the injury done them was very heinous and provoking; that the treatment they had met with, was foul and inhospitable; that

the great Dishonour brought upon their Family was such as might seem to justify a more than ordinary resentment ; that their Blood was by such a just Provocation put into an high ferment, and that it was not yet cool'd, when in their Anger they slew the *Shechemites*. But can those who are unwilling to condemn, who are willing to excuse, who are daring enough to applaud the Fact of this Day, offer any one Shadow of an Argument to mitigate its guilt, or to lessen our detestation of it ? Were the Regicides provok'd to it by any unsufferable Injuries ? Or, were they not by many repeated Acts of Royal Favour and Clemency oblig'd ? Had there been any ground for their Complaints, yet how was Vengeance theirs ? or whence had They Authority to repay it ? Were they not under the strongest ties of Nature, and of Religion, to defend their Sovereign's Life even with the hazard of their own ? Were they not bound to support his Person, Crown, and Dignity by reiterated Oaths, Vows, Engagements, Covenants, and Protestations ? and must not those, who broke thro' all these restraints

straints have been possess'd with a Spirit like to that of the Demoniack in the Gospel, *whom no one could bind, no not with Chains, because that he had been often bound with Fetters and Chains, and the Chains had been pluckt asunder by him, and the Fetters broken in pieces; neither could any one tame him?* It would be some abatement of their Sin, if we could say of them, what *Jacob* here charges upon his Sons, that *in their Anger they slew a Man*: but the Murder of this Day was not the effect of a sudden and vehement Passion, but the result of long Thought, sedate Judgment, and mature Consultation. How often must Nature have started back from the thoughts of a Crime so inhumane, and shocking? How often must a Sense of Duty, Awe, and Reverence, have been awaken'd within their Breasts! And how much misplac'd pains must they have taken to lay such motions asleep! How often must they have heard the voice of a forewarning, and felt the Terrors of an upbraiding Conscience? With what force, with what Authority, must this Substitute of God in the Souls of Men have pleaded

the Royal Cause! and with what Difficulty were such powerful Pleas over-rul'd! Did the word of God furnish these Men with plenty of Curses, which they thundered out upon occasion against their Adversaries? and could they in the mean time be forgetful of all those Threats of the Almighty, which are so frequently, and so expressly denounc'd against those, *whom God has given over to a reprobate mind, being fill'd with all Unrighteousness, Wickedness, Maliciousness; full of Envy, Murder, Debate, Deceit, Malignity; Disobedient, Covenant-breakers, without natural Affection, Implacable, Unmerciful?* Were not these terrors of the Lord well known to them? and must they not have frequently set themselves in array before them? and after so much time to consider, so many Warnings to retreat, must not their Eyes necessarily be open'd to see *the Angel of the Lord standing as it were in the way with the Sword in his hand to oppose them, because their way was perverse before him!*

Thus complicated was the Guilt of these Sons of Violence; in whose Crimes we might seem in some measure to partake,

take, could we Hear, could we Speak, could we Think of 'em without an hearty Abhorrence, and just Indignation. Amongst the many good ends for which this solemn Memorial was by publick Authority at first appointed, is still continued, and will, we hope, for the terror of evil works be long preserv'd, this undoubtedly was One, that as the Virtues and Graces of the *Martyr* were to be mention'd to His immortal Honour, so the enormous Sin of his Murderers might be remembred to Their Everlasting Disgrace. For tho' we may be told by some Men of pretended moderation and temper, that it is now high time to lay aside the remembrance of Crimes so long ago committed; that the *Regicides* have long since answer'd for this Fact at the Bar of publick Justice, or at the Tribunal of God; and that it is not decent to implead them afresh who have already undergone their Tryal; Yet certain it is, that such an Act of Oblivion, as is claim'd in their behalf, is neither due to 'em by the Laws of the Land, nor by the Gospel of Christ. For, if to perpetuate the Memory of infamous Persons

sons and Actions were any ways unsuitable to a true Gospel-temper, if it were any Breach of Christian Charity to brand *Traitors* and *Unrighteous Judges* with an indelible Mark of Ignominy, the Names of *Judas Iscariot* and *Pontius Pilate* had not stood recorded in those Books, of which not *one jot or tittle shall perish, till Heaven and Earth pass away*. A generous Zeal against Savage and Barbarous Persons, some Warmth of Expression upon the mention of Uncommon and Unnatural Crimes, seems not only warranted, but even recommended to us by the Example of *Jacob*: He was just now expiring; and we cannot suspect that in his last moments He was transported by any immoderate, or unseemly Passion: He here gives us the Character of two of his Sons; and the Fondness of a Father for his Children should incline him rather to lessen, than to aggravate their Faults: He was now bequeathing his dying Blessing to his Children, and therefore must be dispos'd to speak the Language of Tenderness, and Affection. In these Circumstances, with these Dispositions, instead

stead of Blessing he breaks forth into a Curse ; That Indignation against the Cruelty of his Sons, which had been long since kindled within him, and which was not yet by the length of time extinguish'd, extorts from him this bitter Imprecation ; *Cursed be their Anger, for it was fierce ; and their Wrath, for it was cruel. I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.*

Now if we would keep out of the reach of such Curses, as are here denounc'd against *Simeon* and *Levi*, we must take care to avoid the like Guilt ; Nor must We be content barely to avoid it, but We must be careful that We make no approaches towards it ; We must not enter into any close Familiarities with Men of Their Character ; We must stand off from 'em, for fear of being infected by 'em ; We must often speak to our selves these instructive Words of the Patriarch ; *O my Soul, enter thou not into their secret ; with their Assemblies, mine Honour, be not thou united.*

The crying Sin of this Day had in all likelihood never been committed, had the Caution here given been duly observ'd ;

serv'd ; had Persons of the same Principles and Character with *Simeon* and *Levi* found no Countenance nor Encouragement from Men, whom we may suppose to have had different Intentions and more justifiable Designs ; had none engag'd in any common Measures with them, but those to whom the whole Mystery of their Iniquity was at first laid open. But Charity inclines us to hope, and for the Honour of our Nation we should be dispos'd to believe, that with those Rebellious Subjects, who imbrued themselves in the Blood of their Sovereign, Some at first sat out who were not from the beginning resolv'd to go the same lengths; Who, for want of seeing far enough into the Consequences of their Actions, were not sufficiently aware whither they were going, and with Whom they were engag'd. The best Use therefore we can make of our Reflections upon the mischievous Effects of such a Conduct, is to possess our selves strongly with a firm persuasion of the Truth and Importance of that Prudential Maxim, which is couch'd under the Words of my Text, that, *Good*
and

and well meaning Men ought to be very cautious how they join in publick Designs with Men of Ill Principles and Scandalous Characters.

Good Men are not by the Rules of Morality, or by the Precepts of the Gospel, forbid all manner of Correspondence with all sorts of Wicked Persons. Where there are probable hopes of making bad Men better, there Charity obliges the Good to converse with 'em in order to their Reformation : Or where Good Men are in no danger of being corrupted by the Wicked, there they are at liberty to converse with 'em, without any Impeachment of their Wisdom or Goodness. Nor have the worst of Men such a wide Power of doing Mischief to a Good Cause, as that Their appearing in it should make it unlawful or inexpedient for Good Men to promote it : what One pursues out of an ill Motive, the Other may prosecute with better purpose ; what One uses unlawful means to compass, the Other may endeavour to attain by such as are warrantable. But the Agreement of Good and Bad Men is then mischievous, and portends ill to the Publick, when they
act

act by joint Counfels, and concerted Measures ; when there is a thorough Understanding, and mutual Confidence between 'em ; when by a close and intimate Alliance they are form'd into one Band ; when the Opposition there is between them, as Good and Bad Men, appears much less remarkable than their Concord, as united in One and the Same Cause ; when they enter as it were into a League Offensive and Defensive, so that all who are willing to come into this Confederacy, whatever their Characters be in other regards, shall be lookt upon and embrac'd as Friends ; and all who stand out, without any other demerit, shall be consider'd and treated as Enemies. Now Good and well-meaning Men ought to be very cautious how they enter into such an Union of Interests as this with Men of Ill Principles and Scandalous Characters, for these two Reasons.

I. Because, by such an Union they will bring a Scandal upon themselves, and upon Religion, tho' they should not concur in the worst Designs of those Wicked Men with whom they unite.

2. Be-

2. Because, by such an Union they are in great danger of being carried on to concur with such Wicked Men in their very worst Designs.

And first, *By such an Union they will bring a Scandal upon themselves, and upon Religion, tho' they should not concur in the worst Designs of those Wicked Men with whom they unite.*

Some Good Men seem to have entertain'd very wrong Notions concerning the value and advantages of a fair Reputation. If they can approve themselves to God and to their own Consciences, they are not at all sollicitous how they stand in the Opinion of the World. But certain it is, that this indifference of theirs to their being Well or Ill spoken of is so far from being commendable, that it is unwarrantable and dangerous ; attended with many ill Consequences, and highly prejudicial to the interest of Virtue, and Religion. The Gospel of Christ is indeed much more careful to provide for the purity of our Hearts, and the sincerity of our inward Intentions, than for the bare surface and external appearance

ance of our Actions. But tho' we are by the Gospel oblig'd to make the Glory of God, and the approving our selves in His sight, our first and chief aim ; yet a due care of our own Esteem and Reputation, as far as they may be subservient to God's Glory, is also by the same Gospel required at our Hands, as a strict and indispensable Duty. However therefore some Men may think it an instance of Humility and Self-denial, to be wholly unconcern'd about a Good or Bad Character, yet we may depend upon the truth of that Observation which a judicious Moralist has long since made, that, *to disregard what others think of Us, is the property not only of an Arrogant, but Dissolute Person.*

Now there is nothing that can give a more fatal Wound to the Reputation of Men otherwise Good, than too close an Intimacy with Persons of Infamous and Profligate Characters. It is so natural for all kinds of Men to consort with those of their own Dispositions and Principles, that it is generally lookt upon both as a Compendious and Sure way of forming a right Judgment concerning any Persons

struction; what Truth is in Words, that Goodness is in Actions; and as a downright Honest Man will take all possible care that his Words be true, not only in his own Sense who speaks them, but in their Sense also, who hear them; so a perfectly Good Man will be equally concern'd, that his Behaviour be right, not only in his own Opinion, but also in the esteem of all who shall observe it. Whosoever therefore *enters into the secrets, and unites himself to the Assemblies and Interests of Wicked Men*, when he is aware of the Scandal of such an Alliance, is justly accountable to God and Man for all the mischief of that Scandal, which is not only taken, but given. What Opinion must all Lookers on entertain, when they see the Professors of Religion unequally yok'd together with its declar'd Enemies! How unnatural, how monstrous must the Alliance be, when the clean are pair'd with the unclean! for, *what Fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness! or what Communion hath Light with Darkness, or what Concord hath Christ with Belial! or what part hath he that believeth with an Infidel!*

Can

Can it be thought that Religious Ends will be promoted, and Righteous Purposes carried on by the Servants of Unrighteousness! Will it not be a Disparagement to a good Cause, that the Champions of it should be thought to want the Concurrence of Wicked and Hellish Instruments? Let therefore the Endeavours of good and well-defigning Men to promote the Honour of Religion be never so sincere; let their Lives and Conversations be in other respects never so Exemplary; let them use all other means possible to allure Mankind to the love and practice of Virtue, yet the encouragement and support they give to Vice by such an Union with Vicious Persons, as hath been described, will in the issue be found to do more disservice to Virtue, and to bring a greater dishonour upon Religion, than the most scandalous Actions of the most notorious Sinners.

Some perhaps may think that several of those, who, in the late times of confusion, joyn'd in an Interest contrary to that of the Royalist, were Persons who meant well, and who truly intended the

publick Good ; no Enemies of our Constitution, but sincere Lovers of their Country, and affectionately zealous for the Liberties of the People, and for the Purity of Religion. God alone knows their hearts, and it becomes not Us to be too forward in judging of their Intentions : but were their Designs never so innocent, yet we have reason to lament, that their unhappy Conjunction with those Men, whom no excess of Charity will permit us to think well of, has brought a lasting disgrace upon Their Memory, and a great dishonour upon our Holy Religion. How hard has Posterity found it to distinguish between those who are said to have intended the Support, and those who are known to have procur'd the Overthrow of our English Constitution ? How difficult is it at this distance to discern, Who they were that design'd to Reform publick abuses, and Who resolv'd to Overturn the establishment of Church and State ? Common Fame has made little difference between Those who Resisted, and Those who Murder'd the King ; and whilst they, who
pre-

pretended only to oppose the encroachments of Arbitrary Power, have been listed under the same Colours with the Enemies of Regal Government, it has not been easie for the generality of Observers to find the difference between the Precious and the Vile, and to discriminate the Patriot from the Rebel. Nor has this suspicious Conduct cast a greater blemish upon the Characters of Men professing Religion, than upon the Honour of Religion it self; whilst pretenders to extraordinary Purity have acted in conjunction with notorious Rebels, Religion has been misunderstood as if it were too much a Friend, or at least not enough an Enemy to Faction and Rebellion; and because Seditious and Traiterous practises have been carried on under the form of Godliness, Some running into a contrary extreme have thought they could not sufficiently shew their dislike to Sedition without laying aside all appearance of Piety; and, for fear of being rankt with Hypocrites, have chose rather to be numbred with the Prophane. By these means a great Reproach has been brought

upon Religion in general, and greater still upon *the* Reform'd ; *That it is lawful to depose and murder Princes,* was a doctrine heretofore thought peculiar to the *Church of Rome* ; to Protest against that doctrine, amongst other abominations of that Church, was the design and glory of the Reformation : how great a Scandal therefore must those Men have brought upon the Protestant Religion, who at the same time that they profess'd a more than ordinary Zeal against Popery, gave too much countenance to some of the *worst* principles, of the *worst* Men, of the *worst* Church in the World, in its *worst* and most *corrupted* State ! From this great Scandal our holy Religion had been free, had all those Men, who we would hope were truly in its Interests, taken sufficient care to keep at a due distance from the Councils and Measures of Such as had no Religion ; had they not by *uniting with their Assemblies,* and engaging too far with them, given us a plain proof, how necessary it is that *Good and well meaning Men should be nicely cautious how they join in publick designs with Men of Ill principles*
and

and Scandalous characters; least by such an Union they bring a scandal upon themselves, and upon Religion, tho' they do not concur in the Worst designs of those wicked Men, with whom they are united.

A second reason for this Caution is, because by *Such an Union they are in great danger of being carried on to concur with such Wicked Men in their very Worst designs.*

When Good Men are embarkt with Bad, they lie under this great disadvantage, that the intentions of the One are open and manifest, while the designs of the Other lie hid, and under ground. Little skill is requir'd to know what the Former aim at; but there is need of more penetration, than falls to the share of every Good Man, to dive into the intricate Counsels of the Latter. Were wicked Men so ill advis'd as to display the whole Scheme of their flagitious purposes at one view, none but such as were equally Wicked with themselves would come into it: in order therefore to draw in Men of better intentions, such pernicious Ends must be industriously kept out of their sight, and they must be let into the main

Secret by leisurely Steps, and insensible Degrees. Now whilst Good Men are unhappily prevail'd upon to go hand in hand with the Wicked, and are not sufficiently aware, whither their Companions are bent, it is no wonder, that being thus Blinded, they are too easily led out of the Way. And they are the more liable to be thus practis'd upon by such as lie in wait to deceive, because their own Plainness and Integrity makes them unapt to suspect others of Artifice and Doubling; for an Honest Simplicity of acting by the rules of Uprightness, and an Happy Dexterity in finding out the wiles of the Crafty and Dishonest, do not always go together; Good Men, when engag'd with Bad, are in our Saviours Language, like *Sheep in the midst of Wolves*; but few of 'em are able, upon this Occasion, to follow our Saviour's advice of *being wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves*. And as for want of this necessary Wisdom they are too often over-reach'd by those who are well-vers'd in all the Arts of Delusion, so are they frequently betray'd into the same fatal Mistakes by a misplac'd Charity; which
doth

doth indeed of it self dispose them to *think no evil, to believe all things, to hope all things*; but is never observ'd to operate so strongly, even on Good Men, as when they are to pass a Judgment upon the Actions of those, with whom they are engag'd in one common Cause. For the appellations of Honest, Worthy, Well-principled, do in the Language of those who most use 'em, generally signifie no more, than that the Persons thus stil'd and distinguish'd do in the Political opinions they maintain, and the Civil Interests they espouse, intirely agree with those who thus denominate 'em; So evident is it, that a much less degree of Charity is necessary to make Men believe and hope well of their Own party, than is requisite to make 'em equally dispos'd to judge favourably of Others. An hearty Affection therefore to a Cause will go a great way towards misleading even the best Men in their Opinions concerning those, who joyn with them in the service of it: for so far as any are well-wishers to this Cause, they are adjudg'd of Course to be truly Good Men; and if after this, there be any thing doubtful in their Carriage, it will
be

be Construed in the best Sense for the sake of that One Quality, which is lookt upon to be without doubt worthy of Praise. Wicked Men will take all possible care to hide their faults from the Personal knowledge of those Good Men, by whom, if they were better known, they would be less trusted; the Notice therefore of these faults must come to 'em from the testimony of Others; which must be very strong and convincing to persuade Men of what they have no mind to be persuaded. Now whilst Good and Well-meaning Men are under such strong prepossessions to think well of their own party; whilst all care possible is taken to keep 'em in the Dark, and whilst they are willing enough to shut their Eyes against the Light, if ever it should break in upon 'em; can it reasonably be expected that those who are resolv'd to judge so favourably of the Persons with whom they are linkt, should be over-suspicious of their Designs? is it not much rather to be fear'd, that for want of a just Suspicion they should be Unwillingly subservient to 'em? Now when Good Men, for lack of
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sufficient fore-sight have unawares made those steps, which, when they give themselves leave to reflect upon, they cannot but think were false Ones, tho' they may perhaps have now and then a faint inclination to go back, they will find it very difficult to come to a steady resolution of retreating : For in such a case to recede is to confess that they were in the wrong ; which is a greater degree of mortification than even the Best Men can readily submit to. Those Wicked Persons, who have by False and Specious pretences prevail'd upon 'em to go so far, will fright 'em from all thoughts of a retreat by the odious Names of Apostate and Desertor ; and thus having by Craft persuaded 'em *to go one mile*, they will by Force *compell 'em to go twain*. And they are now under the stronger inducements to Proceed, because by this Confederacy with Evil Men, they have justly forfeited their Reputation with the Good ; so that should they be dispos'd to leave their present Friends, they would have no great reason to hope for an hearty reception from Those, whom they have been at so much pains
to

to make their Enemies. Having therefore no encouragement to expect good quarter from the Opposite side, they are necessarily determin'd to stay where they are: Nor are they here any longer Welcome, than they are Useful; and must therefore hope for Protection upon no other terms than an Unshaken Fidelity to the Cause. When they were at first entered into it, they might be allow'd to judge for themselves; but being now engag'd beyond retreat, they must be intirely under the direction of their Leaders. *Whilst they were Young they girded themselves, and walkt whether they would; but now they are Old, they stretch forth their hands, and another girds them, and carries them whither they would not.* Thus are Good Men, whilst they act in Conjunction with Men of an Opposite Character, carried on step by step to those Extremes, which at their first setting out they could not have thought it possible for 'em ever to have arriv'd at. It was in their own power at first whether they would at all *unite themselves to the Assemblies* of the Wicked; but when they are once got into the Circle, they

they are so far enchanted, that they cannot find their way out again : They might perhaps be so Credulous as to hope that the Wicked, with whom they are join'd, might be made subservient to Their Good purposes ; but their Experience will in the issue teach 'em, what they might have learnt at a cheaper rate, that *Good Men, who have too little Knowledge of the World, are very proper tools for Bad Men of greater reach to work with.* The most profligate Persons may indeed be made the unwilling Instruments of great Good to the world ; but it should seem to be the peculiar Prerogative of the Almighty to make this right Use of 'em. God's Holiness is indefectible, and can therefore receive no taint from his making even the Sins of Men cooperate to the bringing about his Righteous purposes : He is a Being of infinite Wisdom, who seeth thro' the most hidden designs of those Wicked Persons, whom he employs in his work ; and he is furnish'd with infinite Power to check 'em at his pleasure, and so to bend and turn 'em, as that they may do His work, whilst they think they are doing Their own. But such

a management of Evil Men to Good purposes, as this, is too difficult for the Best of Mortals ; it is above 'em, *they cannot attain unto it.* Neither is Their Sanctity so inviolable, as to be proof against infection ; nor Their Knowledge so infallible, as to secure 'em from being impos'd upon ; nor their Power so uncontrollable, that They should be in no danger of being over-rul'd. Great is the Contagion of Vice, and Good Men cannot be too careful to keep out of the reach of it : *He that toucheth pitch, saith the Wise Man, shall be defiled therewith.* Great is the Frailty of Virtue, and Good Men cannot be too cautious how they expose it to the Assaults of the Wicked. For as the same Wise Man observes ; *How agree the Kettle and the Earthen Pot together ? If the One be smitten against the Other, it shall be broken.*

That what has been said concerning the great danger of being carried on to the worst designs of Wicked Men by too close a Combination with them, is not an empty Speculation, but grounded in the Nature of the thing, and verified by Experience,

perience, is plain from the Progress of that Rebellion, which at last ended in the consummate Villainy of this day. Could Those who *took counsel together against the Lord's Anointed*, have foreseen from the beginning all the fatal Consequences, which were successively hastning on; Could they, when they espied *as it were a little cloud arising out of the Sea, like a Man's hand*, have from that time prognosticated, what *Winds and Storms* were thenceforth gathering; Could they have taken in at One view the Confusions of a long War, the Desolation of a flourishing Kingdom, and the Overthrow of a truly Primitive and Apostolical Church; Could they have been then convinc'd, that the Measures they took would necessarily end in the total loss of all their Civil Rights; that the intire frame of the Government would be shatter'd, and broken to pieces, and that the Wise and Wholsom Constitution of Parliaments would be effectually destroy'd; Could they have fore-known that their struggle for Liberty would in the event make them Absolute Slaves; that the Weapons which they put into the
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hands of Mercenary Men would be pointed upon Themselves ; and that instead of a Lawful Prince governing them with a Paternal Affection, Tyrants should set themselves over them, *who would chastise them with Scorpions* ; Could they have pre-fag'd, what a long train of Evils they would entail upon their Posterity ; Evils, which We at this day feel, and from which nothing but the Conduct of a Valiant Prince, the Wisdom of a truly English Parliament, and the Providence of a Gracious God can rescue Us ; Could they, in a word, have had a clear Prospect of all those Sins and Miseries which were to usher in, to accompany, and to follow an Intestine War ; Such a frightful Scene as this would have scar'd all, who were not desperately Wicked, from having any share in beginning those troubles, of which they could see no End. But those Master-workmen, who laid the Foundation of all these mischiefs, were too wise to let their Under-labourers into the knowledge of the whole Scheme : This was a Secret proper to be imparted to them by degrees, and according as they were able to bear

bear it. To have told them at first, that they were oppress'd, and that they could not do themselves and their Country Justice without Murdering the Tyrant, who oppress'd 'em; would have been too harsh a Doctrine, and not easily digested : To make it therefore less distastful, and more likely to be receiv'd, it was expedient that it should be given *precept after precept, line after line, here a little, and there a little.* Those, who are told and perswaded that they were oppress'd, were easily wrought upon to Petition for a Redress of Grievances : had they stopt there, and been decent in their Addresses of this kind, the Constitution might thus far have justify'd them : but *Petitions* soon pav'd the way to *Remonstrances*, and *Remonstrances* to *Tumults* : When they had insulted their Sovereign in his Palace, they were less scrupulous of taking up Arms against Him in the Field ; to treat Him as a Captive whom they had overcome in War, and to seize upon the spoil, was with them only to exercise the right of Conquest : After they had dethroned their Prince, to pass Sentence upon Him, and to Condemn and

Execute Him as a Common Malefactor, was a larger step indeed than any of the former, and which few therefore, even of Those who had gone on undauntedly thus far, could be prevail'd upon to make, but which after such a Progress from one degree of Insolence to another, is not wholly impossible to be accounted for.

Thus have I endeavour'd to represent the fatal Consequences of too strict an Union of Good and well-meaning Men with Persons of Ill Principles and Characters, both from the Reason of the thing, and from the Remarkable Instance, which the Sin of This Day affords Us; and God grant that neither our *State*, nor our *Church*, may ever in this Age, or in those to come, feel the Mischiefs of such an unhappy Conjunction. May We be nicely scrupulous how We enter into too near a Fellowship with Any sort of Evil-doers; may We be in a more Especial Manner cautious, how We joyn our selves with Persons of such Principles and Practices, as the Patriarch of my Text Detested and Curs'd in his two degenerate Sons, *Simeon* and *Levi*.

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We have here in the presence of *GOD* humbly and devoutly implor'd his Mercy, *That the guilt of that Sacred and Innocent Blood, which was as upon this Day shed, may not at any time be visited upon Us, or our Posterity.* Now if we have not offer'd unto *GOD* the Sacrifice of Fools, if We have not been guilty of the grossest Hypocrisy and Prevarication, We must in our Consciences be throughly perswaded of the Piety and Innocency of the Royal Martyr: What we have confest with our Mouths, We must believe in our Hearts, that the Murder This Day committed was a Sin Abominable in the Sight of *GOD*, and which ought to be Abhor'd by all Good Men. And undoubtedly, whilst there shall be any Distinction kept up amongst Us between Right and Wrong, Order and Confusion, Government and Anarchy; Whilst *to do well and suffer patiently for well-doing* shall be esteem'd *praise worthy*; and *to persecute the Righteous, and slay the Innocent* shall be a Character of Reproach; Whilst (a) *Love, Peace, Long-suffering, Gen-*

(a) Gal. 5. 22.

zleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, and Temperance, shall be numbred amongst the Fruits of the Spirit; and (a) Hatred, Variance, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies, Envyings, Murders, and such like shall stand in that black Catalogue which St. Paul has given Us of Capital and Damnable Sins; So long the Memory of this Righteous Prince shall be blessed, and the Name of his Wicked Destroyers shall rot. And Blessed, I doubt not, is He who was persecuted for Righteousness Sake, for His is the Kingdom of Heaven: Cursed shall be the Memory of Those who took a reward to Slay an Innocent Person; and all the People shall say, Amen.

(a) Gal. 5. 20.

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MATT. X. 16.

*Behold I send you forth as Sheep
in the midst of Wolves; be ye
therefore Wise as Serpents, and
Harmless as Doves.*

THE Holy Evangelist hath given us, in this Chapter, an Authentick Copy of a Commission, which issued from the Highest Authority; which convey'd the fullest Powers that were ever granted to any of the Sons of Men; which was not to

be executed without the utmost Difficulty and Danger ; but was accompanied with such Instructions, as, if duly observ'd, would render all Difficulties superable, and be a sure Guard against all Dangers. This Commission was given to the Apostles by our Saviour, *The Blessed and Only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords* : It's Purport was to rescue not One People or Nation, but the Whole Race of Mankind, from a State of the most abject and wretched Slavery ; to put an end to the Tyranny of a proud and cruel Usurper ; and to establish the Kingdom of God upon Earth. Such a Design as this, which threatened an entire Overthrow to the Dominion of Satan, would be sure to meet with all the Opposition, that the Fury of Hell could raise against it ; and tho', from the Success of it, Men might promise to themselves the most perfect Liberty, and an Affluence of the greatest Blessings, yet They were grown so much in love with their Chains, and were so insensible of their true Interest, that They also would unite all their Forces to stop the Progress, to de-

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feat the Enterprize, and to outrage the Persons of Those, who came for their Deliverance. The Message, which the Apostles were to carry into all Places, whither they were to go, was, *Peace upon Earth, and Good Will towards Men*: but the Entertainment they were every where to look for, was Hatred, Persecution, and Death. They must not hope, that the Sacredness of their Character, and the Majesty of Him, by whom they were sent, would secure them from Indignities and Wrongs: for they were to represent a Despis'd, Insulted, and Persecuted Master: and from the Reception which He had found, might plainly foresee, what sort of Treatment They were to expect. *The Disciple, he tells them, is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord: It is enough for the Disciple, that he be as his Master, and the Servant as his Lord.* Naked, and Unarm'd they were to expose themselves to the Rage of a Stiff-neck'd, Hard-hearted, and Merciless People: against such they are taught to Provide, and are allow'd to Use no other Arms, than Wisdom and Innocence.

Behold I send you forth as Sheep in the midst of Wolves; be ye therefore Wise as Serpents, and Harmless as Doves.

The Wisdom of the Serpent might seem to include in the Notion of it, some Degrees of Subtlety and Guile: The Simplicity of the Dove might be thought to intimate some Defect of Wariness and Prudence: Our Saviour therefore requires such a Temperature of Both, that what was wanting in Either, might be supplied from the Superabundance of the Other; so that from their Conjunction might result perfect Wisdom, free from all Guile; and a well-guarded Innocence, without the least mixture of Indiscretion.

Higher Degrees of Wisdom and Integrity were requisite in the Apostles, than are absolutely necessary to every Disciple of Christ: for they were to lay the first Foundations of that Church, against which *the Gates of Hell were never to prevail*; and their Eminence in Wisdom and Virtue would, in a great measure, prevent the Mischiefs, that might redound to our Holy Faith from any Defect of the like Qualifications in those Christians,
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who should come after them : but, since the Church of God in all Ages is best Preserv'd by the same methods, by which it was at first Established, the same Qualifications of Prudence and Innocence, which were necessary for the Planting of Christ's Church, are, tho' in more scanty proportions, still requisite for its Support and Maintenance. But neither are Equal Measures of these Graces at this time requir'd in All Christians : Much less Detriment would ensue to the Church of God from the want of either of these in Private Persons, who are only to adorn It with their Lives, than from the like want in Pastors, who are to guide It by their Vigilance ; or in Magistrates, who are to protect It by their Authority : And therefore larger proportions of Wisdom and Integrity are requir'd in Princes, who are *to go out and come in before God's People*, than are necessary in those, who, being plac'd under their Government, reap the Benefit of their Wise and Just Administration : A more plentiful share of God's *Urim and Thummim*, Brightness of Understanding, and Perfection of Virtue, ought

ought to rest upon his *Holy Ones, who are,* by their Doctrine and Example, *to teach Jacob God's Judgments, and Israel his Laws,* than are of necessity requir'd in 'Those, who are *to seek the Law at their Mouths:* But tho' higher Degrees of Wisdom and Innocence are requir'd in Some Christians, than in Others, yet the Duties themselves are not appropriated to Any Orders of Men: All who are numbred among the Sheep of Christ, All who are in the midst of Wolves, are concern'd in this wholsome Advice of our Saviour, *Be ye Wise as Serpents, and Harmless as Doves.*

Were Wisdom and Innocence so closely link'd together, that they were never to be found afunder, or were they Singly sufficient to the purposes of Life, so that there was little or no harm from their being Separated, this Precept of our Saviour would be less necessary: But the Ill Consequences of their Disunion, the Expediency of their Conjunction, and consequently the Necessity of our observing this Precept of our Lord, will evidently appear, if we take a View

I. Of the great Mischiefs that arise from the want of Wisdom in those that are Harmless.

II. Of the still greater Mischiefs that arise from the want of Innocence in those that are wise.

III. Of the mighty Advantages that result from our being at the same time both *Wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves.*

Of these Heads I shall speak in General, tho' not without an Eye all along to Our Enemies of the *Church of Rome*; to whom I shall afterwards more particularly apply what shall have been delivered.

First then, Let Us take a View of the great Mischiefs that arise from the Want of Wisdom in those that are Harmless.

There is so near an Affinity between Wisdom and Goodness, that, according to the Notions of the Moralists, Prudence is an Essential Ingredient of every Virtue; and even according to the Language of Holy Writ, which is much more to be depended upon, Wisdom and Piety, Folly and Wickedness, are terms equivalent. But then this must be Understood

rather of the Highest Perfection of Virtue, consider'd in Theory, than of those Lower Degrees of it, which are to be met with in Common Practice ; for Experience assures Us, that there are many Persons, whose Hearts are Sincere and Upright, and who make it their earnest and unwearied Study *to have a Conscience void of Offence, both towards God, and towards Man* ; of whom notwithstanding it must be confess'd, That they do not more excel others in Virtue and Piety, than they are surpass'd by others in sharpness of Wit, in subtlety of Counsels, and depth of Understanding. They have Wisdom sufficient to save their own Souls, and to obtain Eternal Happiness in the Life to come ; but they have not Circumspection enough to Espy, nor all the Dexterity, that is necessary, to Escape those manifold Dangers, to which they are expos'd in their Passage thro' a Wicked and Deceitful World. There is in them a sweetness of Nature, and tenderness of Conscience, which will not suffer them to do the least Injury to Any : Hence they are not apt to suspect any Evil Intentions in Others towards Them ;

Them; and for want of this due Caution, are unprovided against the Attempts of Crafty and Ill-designing Men. They form their Judgments of Mankind, not from Observations of what is done Abroad, which these good Men seldom make, but from Reflections upon what passes within their Own Breasts, which they are much more intent upon: hence they frame a Probable Opinion of the Integrity of Others, from what they Certainly know of their Own: and as it hath been observ'd to be a frequent Error, and very familiar with Wise Men, to measure Other Persons by the Model of their Own Abilities, and thereby often to shoot over the Mark, as supposing Men to project to themselves deeper Ends, and to practise more subtle Arts, than ever came into their Thoughts; so is it a no less frequent Mistake with very good Men, who measure Others by the Standard of their Own Uprightness, to think of them, and to deal with them, as if they were much more Honest, than they Truly are.

There is in good Christians so great an Hatred of all Falshood and Dissimulation,
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that it would not only give a deep Wound to their Consciences, but would even do a Violence to their Natures, to tell a known Lie ; and thinking Others to be fram'd just as they Are, and to act upon the same Principles as they Do, they are too liable to be impos'd upon by Men of false Tongues, and deceitful Lips : whatever is barely Affirm'd, is by them easily credited ; what is vouch'd with solemn Asseverations, leaves still less room in their Breasts for Doubt : what is confirmed by Oaths, and ratified by an Appeal to the Omniscience, and an Imprecation of the Vengeance of God, hath with them all the Force and Credibility of a Self-evident and Mathematical Truth. And as Honest and Sincere Christians are thus apt to lay themselves open to the Practices of others, by their too great Credulity, so also are they wont to discover those Secrets of their own Hearts, which might with a good Conscience be conceal'd, and which cannot without Prejudice be disclos'd, thro' their too great Freedom and Openness : They are so much afraid of disguising their Thoughts by Lying and Hypocrisie,

pocrisie, that they often want that prudent Reservedness, which is no ways inconsistent with the Sincerity of a downright Honest Man, or the Simplicity of a Good Christian; they bear Testimony of themselves and of their Inward Sentiments, even in their Ordinary Conversation, as if they were to give Evidence upon their Oaths at the Bar; and deem it not sufficient to maintain the Character of their Veracity, that they speak nothing but what is True, unless they at the same time speak out All the Truth. That *Lying Lips are an Abomination to the Lord*, is an Aphorism, which never slips out of the Thoughts of these Honest and Well-meaning Persons: but they are often apt to forget that other Observation of *Solomon*, that *a Fool uttereth all his Mind, but a Wise Man keepeth it in till afterwards*. For want of this prudent Reserve, they heedlessly incur Dangers; which, without any Prejudice to their Virtue, they might escape, if they would call in the Succours of Wisdom to their own necessary Defence. Where these are not call'd in, Men are apt to avoid one Extreme by running
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into another, which, tho' not equally Sinful, may be very Hazardous : so far are they from Revenging Injuries, as to Invite them ; so far from being Cruel, as to be Tame ; so far from Hating their Enemies, as to Cherish them ; so far from Persecuting, as not to fence and guard themselves against Persecution ; so far from using those Offensive Weapons of Force and Oppression, which the Gospel forbids, as not to make use of those Defensive Arms of Prudence and Caution, which the Soldiers of Christ are both Allow'd and Requir'd to be Expert in.

When the Wise Man adviseth Us to *search after Wisdom, to put our Feet into her Fetters, and our Neck into her Chains ;* He assures Us, for our Encouragement, That *her Fetters shall be a strong Defence for Us, and her Chains a Robe of Glory.* We have seen some of the Mischiefs which happen to Virtuous Men, through want of this Defence ; and it would not be difficult to shew what farther Detriment accrues to Virtue it self, from the lack of this Ornament. For when Men, through a Natural Disposition to Goodness, are very Honest,
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but through a Defect of Good Understanding, are not equally Wise; This Unguarded Simplicity is too apt to betray them into some little Weaknesses and Indiscretions, which may cast a Blemish both on Them, and on those Virtues, which they practise, but in an unbecoming Manner, and with an Ill Grace. And though good Nature and Christian Charity should over-look a Few Small Faults in those, who are conspicuous for Many Eminent Virtues, yet, in an Ill-natur'd and Uncharitable World, the want of Discretion in Good Men may chance to cast a greater Blemish on Religion, than the Honour done it by their Virtue and Integrity will ever be able to wipe off.

Let any one calmly consider, how Contemptible a Figure Devotion makes, when it degenerates into Superstition; how great Mischief Zeal hath done in the World, when it has wanted the Guidance of Discretion; and how often Conscientious Persons have unwittingly been made the Instruments of Men of no Conscience, to bring about their most Wicked Purposes; and he will be convinc'd of the

Necessity of *adding to our Virtue Knowledge,* and of joining the *Wisdom of the Serpent to the Innocence of the Dove.*

That Prudence, which is by Our Saviour prescrib'd, as the most proper Preservative against the Rage of Persecutors, is more especially necessary to guard Us of the Reform'd Religion against the Furious Attempts, and subtle Machinations of our Sworn, Inveterate, and Implacable Enemies of the Church of *Rome*. If the *Wisdom of the Serpent* was therefore necessary to the Apostles, because they were *sent forth as Sheep in the midst of Wolves*; it becomes Us, who are encompass'd with the Like Adversaries, and expos'd to the Like Dangers, to arm Our selves with the Like Wariness and Precaution. We profess the same pure and undefiled Faith which the Apostles Preach'd; and as our Reformers took especial Care, that Our Church should, as to its Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship, be Restor'd to the same State, wherein it was by the Apostles at first Constituted: so the Malice of our Enemies has farther provided, that, as to its being Hated also and Persecuted,

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it should be Primitive and Apostolical. I have before observ'd, how difficult it is for those, who are endued with the Simplicity of the Dove, to form adequate Notions of the exquisite Malignity of which some Men, and even some Christians are capable; Were a Good Man, who is unacquainted with the History of this Day's Conspiracy, to sit down and consider with Himself the utmost Mischief, that an Uncontrolled Malice, assisted with the Deepest Subtlety, could possibly devise, any Imaginary Scheme of Wickedness, which such a One could with the greatest Stretch of Invention conceive, would, I am persuaded, fall much short of the Complicated Villainy of that Hellish Design; and although we have unquestionable Evidence of the Truth of it, yet such is it's Blackness, and so heinous it's Guilt, that it can scarce enter into the Heart of a Good-natur'd Man to believe That to be possible, which the Notoriety of the Fact leaves him no room to doubt of. But though such Wicked Designs, before they were discover'd, could not have been suspected; yet after Repeated Deliver-

ances from the Attempts of *Rome*, not to be suspicious of Danger from the same Enemies, would not be Charity, but Folly: not to be Awake, and upon our Guard against those, who have taken so much pains to rowse Us out of our Sleep, would be an Instance of down-right Lethargy. It is foretold indeed, that under the Gospel-dispensat ion, the *Lamb shall lie down with the Wolf*; but then it is suppos'd, that the Wolf hath first laid aside his Natural Fierceness, and hath left off *to do hurt, and to destroy in God's holy Mountain*. But whilst such Ravenous Wolves retain their Savage Temper, whilst there is in them an insatiable Appetite after Blood, whilst their Mouths are continually open to devour Christ's Flock, Common Prudence will suggest to Us the Use of all Honest and Lawful Means to keep Our Selves out of their reach; and to preserve our Country from Papal Tyranny; our Laws, our Estates, our Liberties from Papal Invasion; our Lives from Papal Persecution; and our Souls from Papal Superstition and Idolatry. God forbid, that We should use any Inhumane, any Unchristian Methods,

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even for the compassing these good Ends; or should think All those means warrantable in the Service of the Best Cause, which our Enemies make no Scruple to use for the Maintenance of the Worst: far be from Us those fraudulent Arts, and that Spirit of Persecution, which we so heartily condemn in Them: But, if there be any thing laudable in these Our Adversaries, if any Means, by Them misus'd for the Support of a False Religion, may by Us be commendably employ'd for the Advancement of the True One, let Us not disdain to be Imitators of their Wisdom, whose Wickedness We so deservedly abhor. It would add great Strength to our Cause, if We exerted our selves in Defence of our Establish'd Church, with that hearty Zeal, that unwearied Industry, and above all, with that firm Union among Our Selves, which we cannot but Observe, Approve, and be Afraid of in our Enemies. All the jarring Parties among the *Romanists*, cordially agree in promoting the Interest of their Church. *Franciscans* and *Dominicans*, *Jansenists* and *Jesuits*, *Seculars* and *Regulars*, lay aside their mutual Quarrels,

and join their Forces against the Heretick, as a Common Adversary : and tho', notwithstanding their so much boasted Concord, there is, after all, neither Unanimity in Opinion, nor Uniformity of Rites in that Church, it must be confess'd, that there is among them an Union of Interests, which reconciles all Differences, and makes them One entire and Well-compact Body. Thus, when the Jews were employ'd in rebuilding the Holy City, We read that their Adversaries, however Divided among themselves, were all United in Obstructing that Work. *It came to pass, saith the Sacred Historian, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Asbdodites heard, that the Walls of Jerusalem were made up, and the Breaches began to be stop'd; then they were very wroth, and conspir'd all of them together to come, and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it.* Nehem. 4. 7, 8.

Against this United Strength of our Enemies We should be much better able to bear up, if We were as firmly combin'd in the Defence of our Religion, as they are in Assaulting It : if Our Scatter'd

• Forces

Forces were brought to a closer Order for the securing that Church, which is most vigorously attack'd by the Papists, as being by them known to be the strongest Bulwark against Popery. Wise was the Observation, and wholesome the Advice, which *Nehemiah* gave to the Nobles, to the Rulers, and to the rest of the People, upon a like Occasion ; *The Work is great and large, and we are separated upon the Wall, One far from Another; In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the Trumpet, resort ye thither unto Us: Our God shall fight for Us.* May our Nobles, and Rulers, and the rest of our People be thus United in the defence of those Ramparts, which the Wisdom of our Lawgivers hath provided against the Assaults of Popery : May this *Great and Large Work* be carry'd on by joint Assistance, and by well-concerted Measures : May Those, who at present are *Separated too far One from Another*, draw nearer together for their Common Defence : May every one in his Place and Station diligently labour in this necessary Work : May *God fight for Us* : and under God may Prudence be unto Us as a Wea-

pon of Defence, against the treacherous Designs of our most Subtle, and most Pernicious Enemies!

Many and Great are the Mischiefs, which have been observ'd to arise from the want of Wisdom in those that are Harmless: but still these are Few and Inconsiderable, in comparison of those, which we propos'd to consider in the Second place.

II. The Mischiefs that arise from the want of Innocence in those who are Wise.

Wisdom is the Gift of God; in it self Useful, and by the Author of it Confer'd on Us, for the noblest Purposes; for the discovery of Truth, and the detection of Error; for the promoting our Temporal and our Eternal Welfare; for procuring to Our selves and to Others all the Good things of which our Natures are capable, and for averting from Our selves and Others all the Evils to which we are liable; for the Establishment and Preservation of Kingdoms and States, by wholesome Laws, wise Counsels, and prudent Administration. But this Talent, which is by the Author of our Nature, and the Giver of all Grace, bestow'd upon Men for such Great
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and Glorious Ends, is capable of being perverted, and is, by Persons destitute of that Innocence, which ought to be the inseparable Companion of Wisdom, often misus'd to the very Worst of Purposes; for the disguising of Truth, and the palliating of Error; for extirpating God's True Religion, and introducing a False One; for the fomenting Schisms in the Church, and Tumults in the State; for disturbing the Peace of the World, and bringing all things into Disorder and Confusion. The pest and bane of Mankind, all the Sins which we Commit, and all the Evils which we Suffer, had their first Spring and Origine from that Serpent, *which was more subtle than all the Creatures that the Lord God had made*; and by Persons of the same Serpent-like Subtlety have all the Mischiefs, which have since plagued the Sons of *Adam*, been contriv'd and carry'd on. A Wise and Sober Heathen was wont to pronounce a Solemn Curse against those, who first found out the unlucky Distinction between *Profitable* and *Honest*; and Several, who had only the Light of Reason to guide them, have judg'd it extremely scandalous,

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not only to prefer Profit to Honesty, but even so much as to bring the Former into competition with the Latter: But some Persons, who call themselves Christians, and Some, who have appropriated to themselves the Holy Name of *Jesus*, have thought it a plain Indication of Weakness and Folly to forego any thing which is greatly Profitable, because it is a little Dishonest; and have laught at the idle Scruples of those, who have given themselves the trouble to enquire, whether an Action be Lawful or not, after it has once appear'd Expedient.

That it is Unlawful for Us to do Evil that Good may come; that we should be strictly careful, not only that the Cause we are engag'd in be Just, but that the Methods, whereby we promote it, be also Warrantable; that we should chuse rather to Suffer the Greatest Injury, than to Do the Least; that to deprive another of his Just Right, and to promote our Own Gain by our Neighbour's Loss, is a more intolerable Evil than Pain, than Poverty, than Death; that we ought inviolably to do the thing which is Right, and to speak
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the Truth from Our Heart ; that He who sweareth to his Neighbour should not disappoint him, tho' it were to his Own Hurt ; that the Publick Weal is always to be preferr'd to our Private Interest ; and that Every Good Man should be ready to sacrifice his Ease, his Fortunes, his Life for the Benefit of his Country ; are the Principles of undeprav'd Reason, and of our most Holy Religion : but those Persons, in whom the Wisdom of the Serpent is so far Predominant, as to leave no room for the Innocence of the Dove, finding that such Maxims as these cramp them in the Pursuit of their Wordly Aims, take care to shake off these cumbersome Notions ; and in their stead take up a Set of Principles, which, tho' they are not so well calculated for the Good of Society, are more convenient for Private Use. That the Shortest Ways to an End are fittest to be chosen, be they never so Foul ; that the Appearance of Virtue is an Advantage, but the Practice of it a Burden ; that Charity ought to Begin at Home, and to End there too ; are Maxims, which, tho' own'd by Few, are by Many made the Measures of their Actions. Now,

Now, what Limits, what Stop can be put to the Hurt that may be done by Persons, who have once strongly imbib'd these Notions ! by Persons, who have Policy enough to Contrive, Cunning enough to Dissemble, Insinuation enough to Persuade, Dexterity enough to Execute any Mischief; and have no Sense of Common Honesty to restrain them, no Principles of Sound Religion to controll them, or, which is worst of all, are, by the Prejudices of a False Religion, Encourag'd and Push'd on to perpetrate the greatest Villainies ! The Wisdom of such Men must be the very Reverse of that Wisdom, which is from Above ; it is neither Pure, nor Peaceable ; neither Gentle, nor Easie to be entreated ; it is Void of Mercy, and of Good Fruits ; Partial and Hypocritical : in short, it is from Below, from the Old Serpent ; and where ever it is found, there is Confusion, and every Evil Work. From a Wisdom thus Anti-Christian, thus Sensual, thus Devilish, there must of course issue forth Mischiefs too many to be number'd, and the less Necessary to be farther insisted on in General, because no General

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ral Discourse can give Us so just and lively an Image of the Wisdom of the Serpent, abstracted from the Simplicity of the Dove, as We may form to Our Selves by reflecting on the Wily Conduct, the Subtle Intrigues, and the Refined Policy of the Church of *Rome*.

The Interest and Grandeur of the Holy Church is the End, which All of that Communion constantly, steadily, and regularly pursue. All their New Doctrines are so modell'd, all their Discipline so form'd, and all their Designs so laid, as jointly to promote this One End. All Means are judg'd not only Fit or Unfit, but even Lawful or Unlawful, according to their Expediency or Inexpediency for the compassing this End. This is always Uppermost in their View, always First in their Intention ; and Such Intention sanctifies all Methods, that may any Ways contribute to the Accomplishment of It. Treachery and Violence, Breach of Promises and of Oaths, Privy Conspiracies and Open Rebellions, the Assassination of Princes, and the Massacre of their Subjects ; the Excision of a Royal Family, with

with all its Branches ; the mingling of King, Nobles, and Commons, in One General Slaughter ; the cutting off an Whole Nation, both as to its Present Support, and as to its Future Hopes, by One compendious Blow ; the Destruction, not only of the Bodies, but even of the Souls of Obstinate Hereticks, dying, according to these Mens Uncharitable Opinion, out of the Pale of the Church, and without the means of Salvation, are all deem'd, not only Innocent and Allowable, but even Commendable and Meritorious ; are justified by their ablest Casuists in their Writings ; are encourag'd by the Directors of Consciences in private Confessions ; are recommended to the Furtherance of God's Blessing by Prayers, by Sacraments, and Masses ; are celebrated with Applause in the Holy Conclave ; are ratified by the Sovereign Authority of their Infallible Judge ; and entitle those, who are engag'd in them, to Saintship, to Hymns, to Incense, and to Religious Worship ; as often as they are perform'd with a good Intention, and design'd for the Maintenance and Propagation of the Catholick Cause.

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Heathen *Rome*, as ambitious as it was of Dominion, scorn'd to advance it self by such Dishonest Methods, as Christian *Rome* is not ashamed to use for the Establishment of it's Universal Empire. A *Roman* Consul, when an Overture hath been made Him by the Subject of a powerful Enemy to dispatch his Own Prince, and thereby to put an end to a dangerous War, hath generously rejected the Proposal, and sent the Traitor back to his Master, to be punish'd for his Treachery. But can Christian *Rome* furnish Us with such an Instance of Moral Honesty? Would such a generous Refusal of a mighty Advantage to the Church of *Rome* meet with as much Applause Now in a Consistory of Cardinals, as That formerly did in the *Roman* Senate? Would the Holy Father reject an Offer, which promis'd the Extirpation of Heresie, and the Establishment of the Catholick Religion, because it could not be made good, without the Commission of Treason? Would he send back? would he Punish? would he Discover? would he Discourage the Traitor? Nay, have we not reason to judge, from the
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History of this Day's Conspiracy, that tho' the Ancient *Romans* were so scrupulous as to refuse an Advantage, which could not be compass'd with Honesty ; yet, according to the Casuistical Divinity of the Modern *Romanists*, Nothing is Dishonourable; Nothing Dishonest, which may serve to promote the Catholick Interest ? Such Practices, and such Principles, shew our Adversaries to have a Plentiful share of the Wisdom of the Serpent, but to be wholly Destitute of the Innocence of the Dove. Pass we on therefore, from Men of this Infamous Character, and proceed we in the

III^d. place, to take a View of those mighty Advantages, which result from our being at the same time both Wise as Serpents, and Harmless as Doves.

Perfect Wisdom, and Perfect Holiness are the incommunicable Attributes of God Almighty : and as far as Men take care to excel in these Divine Qualities, so far do they approach towards the unattainable Perfections of the God-head. Hence it is, that the Wise Man, when he would give us a lofty and becoming Idea of God,
cloaths

cloaths Him with the same Armour, which our Saviour hath here in the Text provided for the Good Christian. *He shall put on Righteousness; saith he, as a Breast-plate, and true Judgment instead of an Helmet. He shall take Holiness for an invincible Shield.* Wisd. xv. 18, 19. The immaculate Purity of God makes him utterly detest all Manner of Iniquity; the Infinity of his Wisdom places him without the Reach of any sort of Calamity. Such a degree of unfullied Holiness is too high for frail Man; He cannot attain unto It: Such a State of uninterrupted Bliss is unsuitable to the Condition of poor Mortals; they must not hope, on this side the Grave, to be possess'd of it: But as far as Humane Nature can go, so far will Wisdom and Innocence carry Men: Integrity will make them strictly careful to do nothing which is Sinful; and Prudence will guard them against all Mischiefs, that are fairly Avoidable. Such is the Steadiness of their Virtue, such strong hold hath Religion got of their Souls and Consciences, that no prospect of Temporal Advantage can allure them, no appearance of Danger can deterr them

from their Duty ; And, on the other side, such is the Soundness of their Judgment, that they will not lightly forego any Interest, which they might Preserve with a good Conscience ; or heedlessly run into any Danger, which they might Escape without forfeiting their Integrity. Their Honesty will not suffer them to do Wrong, though an Opportunity should offer it self of doing it with Secrecy and Impunity : and their Prudence will secure them from being over-reach'd by the Fraud of Crafty and Treacherous Persons, *who lie in wait to deceive*. They are too Generous, to Impose upon Others ; and too Cautious, to be Impos'd upon : their Sincerity never allows them, upon any Occasion, to fly to the sordid Arts of Lying and Dissimulation ; and their Discretion puts a Bridle into their Mouths, so as that they do not suffer those Truths to escape their Lips, which it is adviseable to Conceal.

The Christian Religion has taught them to *Love their Enemies, to do good to those which hate them, and to pray for those which despitefully use and persecute them* : But Prudence di-

directs them to be aware of their Enemies ; to be upon their Guard against the Malicious Designs of those, which hate them ; and to use all Honest and Lawful Means of securing themselves from despiteful Usage and Persecution. The Goodness of their Nature, and the Charitableness of their Christian Temper, will not permit them to entertain evil Surmises, vain Suspicions, and groundless Jealousies : They have not so bad an Opinion of Human Nature, as to think all Persons Inclined to do them wrong, who are Able to do it ; to look upon themselves as Unsafe, whilst it is in the Power of their Neighbours to Hurt them ; and to esteem it a Necessary part of Precaution to invade the Rights of Others, for fear that Others may invade Theirs : but, where they have been taught by long Experience, that the Power and Inclination to do Mischief go hand in hand together ; where the Sense of what they have Already felt from an avow'd Enemy, leaves no room for Charity to hope for a Kinder Treatment ; where they find their Adversaries grasping after an Increase of Power,

with a manifest Intention of employing it to Their Ruin, there Wisdom awakens their Vigilance, and sets them upon their guard, to do every thing which Religion allows, and Prudence prescribes; for their Own Preservation.

The Integrity of such Men, will not suffer them to do any thing, which their Consciences tell them is sinful; and their Discretion will instruct them, how to fence their Innocent and Laudable Actions against the Danger of being mistaken by the Ignorant, or misrepresented by the Malicious. A due Sense of Religion, and an awful Fear of God, is the first and governing Principle, which influences all their Thoughts, and Words, and Actions, and makes them rigorously careful to do Nothing, which may Offend Him, *who sees the inmost Secrets of their Hearts*: and, when they have thus taken care to approve themselves in the Sight of God, their Wisdom doth farther direct them to place their Virtues in such an Advantageous Light, as may best cover them from the Calumnies of their Adversaries; so that *their good may not be evil-spoken of.*

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Wisdom, though not necessary in the same Degree with Honesty, yet, when joyn'd with it, is of marvellous Use to give a due Lustre to Virtue, and to set it out to the best Advantage. That Good Actions may not want the utmost Beauty, they are capable of, nor fail to gain the Praise and Admiration of all, who observe them, those Christians who are Eminently Wise as well as Virtuous, do always take strict Care, that their Actions be, not only as to the Substance and Matter of them, agreeable to the Laws of God, but moreover, that, as to the very Manner of their Performance, they be so done, as to appear Graceful and Amiable in the Sight of Men. In order to this, such Good and Wise Persons are always careful to observe that Decency, which those who have best understood it, have been more able to exemplify by Special Instances, than to describe in General; which is the highest Perfection of Every Art, and yet can be taught by None; which, where ever it is found, doth, by a Secret and Irresistible Force, move Our Admiration, though We cannot distinctly

assign what it is. We so readily applaud; which pleaseth the Nicest Judges, and at the same time takes equally with the Unskilful; which, in a Word, all Men agree to extol where ever it doth appear, but which only Persons of great Prudence, as well as unquestionable Integrity, are able to shew forth in all their Actions. These have an accurate Discernment of what is, upon every Occasion, Fit and Agreeable: These know exactly how to make a Judicious Choice of that which is not only suitable to the Laws of Reason, as they are Men, and to the Holiness of their Profession, as they are Christians; but is also agreeable to their Particular Condition, and to that Peculiar Station, which they are to Adorn: These can adapt themselves aright to all Circumstances, and fit every thing they do to it's peculiar Time and Place: These are acquainted with the Temper, Sentiments, and Interest of those, with whom they are conversant; and foreseeing what is most likely to gain their good Esteem, can take care so to demean themselves, as may best Procure it: These have carefully observ'd what it is, which usually

usually lessens the Credit of Good Actions, and therefore are prepar'd to Use all Diligence to avoid the like Occasions of Offence.

These are the Persons, Who, by their Excelling in Wisdom as well as Virtue, do Honour to the Religion which they profess: These are they, who must retrieve it's Reputation in a loose and profligate Age. We live amongst Men, who will not give themselves the trouble to examine the Grounds of our Holy Faith, but reject it in the Gross, and condemn it without Trial; If they can discover any the least Failing, or if they can pitch upon any Indiscreet Action in those who pretend to believe the Gospel, and to act by its Rules, this they greedily lay hold of as a just Prejudice against Religion it self: and if we appeal from the Vices and Follies of the Christians of our own Age, to the Exemplary Virtue and Singular Wisdom of those who first preached and embraced it, such Men are ready to call in question the Truth of those pretended Originals, of which they can see no Copies: but if We can point out unto them, Men,

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who prove the Sincerity of their Faith by the Holiness of their Lives, whose Actions are agreeable to their Principles, and who are as conspicuous for their Wisdom as for their Integrity, whose Sober Conversation and Manners will bear the most rigorous Test, and in whom the most malicious Wit can find no Weakness and Indiscretion to Expose and Ridicule; then the Mouth of Profaneness is presently stopt, the Infidel is convinc'd and silenc'd, and having nothing to object to the Religious and Wise Conduct of such Men, is forc'd to confess, that *God is in them of a Truth.*

And as it is from Persons of this Character alone, that we can hope for a Reparation to the Honour of our Holy Religion, so it is from Persons endow'd with the same Qualifications of Integrity and Wisdom, that a divided Church, and a Distracted Nation must hope for a Healing of their Wounds and the Restoring of their Breaches: for, next to the Grace of God, which inspires Men with an hearty Desire of Concord, and to the Guidance of his Holy Spirit, which directs them in the

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Pursuit of *such things as make for Peace*, no Means are more likely to put an End to Our Differences, and to reconcile the Minds of Fellow-Citizens, and Fellow-Christians, unhappily tearing one another to pieces, and ripping up the very Bowels of their Common Parent by their Mutual Diffensions, than the Honest Endeavours and Sage Counsels of such Illustrious Worthies, on whose Integrity all Men can safely rely, that they will not willingly betray the Publick Interest, and on whose Prudence all Men can entirely depend, that they will not, through Ignorance, mistake it.

From Persons thus qualified, We may promise Our selves the strongest Succours against the Open Assaults and Secret Attempts of the Church of *Rome*. Their Sagacity will penetrate into the most intricate Designs of Popish Treachery; and Their Integrity will stand firm against the bold Encroachments of Papal Usurpation. They are too Honest to be brib'd out of their Religion by the prospect of Interest; and they are too Wise to be cheated out of it by the Delusions of Sophistry.

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They were Persons of this Character, who when, in a late Reign, Popery, like an Inundation, was breaking in upon Us, bravely stood in the Gap, and resisted the Torrent: and Persons of this Character will always go on Steadily and Conscientiously to oppose Popery, though they should be traduc'd as Favourers of It, by those very Men, who, in that Day of our Distress, were busie in breaking down those Fences, by which alone it was to be kept out. The Craft of Popish Emissaries, void of all Honesty, may Suggest; and some Well-meaning, but Mistaken Protestants, may possibly Entertain Fears of Danger from the Pretended Popery of the Church of *England*: but such Jealousies will never prevail with Persons, who are Wise as well as Honest, to do any thing for the weakening of that Establishment, which, under God, is our best Security against the Real Popery of the Church of *Rome*.

The Courage of such Men will vigorously oppose our cruel Enemies, when they appear in their Own proper form of Ravenous and Devouring Wolves; and their

their Caution will descry them, when, for the deluding of Unwary Souls, they put on Sheep's-cloathing; Honest and Wise Men are neither to be frighted by those Anathema's, which our Adversaries thunder out against Heresie in their General Councils; nor to be caught by the crafty Wiliness of these Impostors, when, under a false Disguise, they rail against Forms of Prayer, against Superstitious Rites, and against Antichrist (as, from Unquestionable Authority We know they have sometimes done) in the separate Assemblies of deluded Sectaries. Whether these Enemies of our Constitution would overthrow it by laying Gun-powder under our Houses of Parliament, or by scattering the Seeds of Division amongst Us; We may hope, that their wicked Purposes will still be defeated by Persons always Vigilant, always Zealous for preserving our Establish'd Church and Government. Men of Prudence cannot but be careful to prevent the Growth of that Power, which threatens Ruine to all their Civil Interests; Men of Conscience will never fail to oppose that Religion, which is Destructive
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of their Spiritual Welfare. Persons of approv'd Integrity will faithfully maintain the good Laws already made for excluding such from the Supreme Government of our Church, who are by Principle engag'd to destroy It ; and Persons of singular Wisdom will find out such Expedients, as may be still necessary for Our farther Security. No Human Methods, that can be lawfully us'd in order to our Preservation, will escape the Sagacity of such Men ; and whilst they take care to adorn the Holiness of their Profession by the Sanctity of their Lives, whilst their Manners are Reform'd as well as their Faith, We may hope, that the Blessing of God will go along with their Honest Endeavours.

Great Blessings might a Nation expect, great Support might be given to our Establish'd Church, great Honour might redound to our Holy Religion, even from a few Persons, eminent for these Qualifications ; Men of warm Hearts, and cool Heads ; Zealous, but with Discretion ; Honest, but not Weak ; Wise, but not Crafty ; in short, strict Observers of
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this Divine Precept of our Blessed Lord;
and genuine Disciples of Him, in whom
*were hidden all the Treasures of Wisdom; who
did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his
Mouth.*

*To whom, with the Father, and the Holy
Ghost, Three Persons, and One God,
be all Honour, Glory, Dominion, and
Power, both Now and for Evermore.*

A SER.

Received of Mr. J. B. ...
the sum of ...
for ...

Witness my hand and seal ...
this ... day of ...
1873

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A
SERMON

PREACH'D BEFORE

The Right Honourable the
Lord Mayor, &c.

HEB. XIII. Vers. 16.

*To do good, and to communicate,
forget not; for with such Sacri-
fices God is well pleased.*

THE Author of this Epistle, having treated at large of the Legal Sacrifices prescrib'd by the Law of *Moses*, and having prov'd, that they were Typical in their first design, Prefigurative of the Death of
Serm. III.
Christ,

Christ, and consequently to cease after he had put away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himself, doth here, in the close of his Discourse, intimate to the *Hebrews*, That though Carnal Sacrifices were now abolish'd, yet there were Others of a Spiritual Kind, which were still in force under the Gospel, and were to be of perpetual Obligation:

Thanksgiving to God for the Benefits receiv'd from Him, and Beneficence to our Brethren, in communicating to Them a due proportion of those good things, which are by God's Providence dispensed to Us, were, even under the Law, of superior Obligation to the Sacrifices requir'd by it: For These receiv'd all their Value from positive Institution; but Those were in their Own Nature proper for God to exact, and for Men to perform. Sacrifices were only acceptable, when accompanied with the Love of God and Men: But when separated from These, they were of no worth in the estimation of Him, who, in the appointment of them, could propose no other end than his own Honour, and the Benefit of Mankind.

That

That Thanksgiving was the principal Thing intended by the Eucharistical Sacrifices under the Law, we are plainly instructed in that passionate Expostulation of God with his People, which we find in the 50th Psalm. *Hear, O my People, and I will speak, O Israel, and I will testify against thee; I am God, even thy God. I will not reprove thee for thy Sacrifices, or thy Burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most High.* Thanksgiving therefore, being the principal Aim of such Sacrifices, under the Legal Oeconomy, was not superseded by the abrogation of them, but was to remain of equal force under the Gospel-dispensation. The Sacrifice of Praise was, before the Establishment of the Law, and doth, after the disannulling of it, Continue to be, an indispensable Duty: tho' the Fruits of our Land, and of our Cattle, are now no longer to be brought to the Altar, yet we are taught by the Apostle, in the Verse before my Text, *still to offer the Sacrifice of Praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his Name.*

And so likewise as to Acts of Charity, even whilst the Law was in its full Vigor, God had solemnly declar'd, *that he would have Mercy, and not Sacrifice*; i. e. not Sacrifice alone without Mercy; but if they must be separated, Mercy in contradiction to Sacrifice; and where they were joyned, principally Mercy, as in its Nature, Dignity, and Use preferable to Sacrifice. At the Sacrificial Feasts of the Jews, the Poor, the Fatherless, and the Widow were entertain'd out of those Offerings which were brought unto the Altar. Now tho' these Oblations ceas'd, yet the Apostle warns the *Hebrews*, that this Charitable Relief of the Poor was not to be intermitted: God was pleas'd that those Gifts, which were formerly offer'd to Him, who did not want them, should now be bestow'd on Those, who most needed them; and He vouchsaf'd to recede from his own Right, that He might transfer that Right on the Poor and Necessitous. Since therefore God had graciously releas'd unto the believing *Hebrews*, what He before claim'd from their Fore-fathers, as due unto Himself; they
 might

might Now afford a larger proportion of Charity to their poor Brethren : what should henceforward be given unto These, God would look upon as paid unto Himself ; and Alms-giving alone, without Sacrifice, should now be accepted by Him in the place both of Alms and of Sacrifice.

To do good, and to communicate, forget not ; for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased.

In which Words there are two things which deserve our Consideration.

- I. A Duty commanded in the former part of the Verse, that *to do good, and to communicate, we should not forget.*
- II. A Motive propos'd to enforce the Practice of this Duty in the latter part of the Verse ; *for with such Sacrifices God is well pleas'd.*

Of our *forgetting to do good, and to communicate*, there is the less Danger, because this Duty hath upon the return of these Pious Solemnities, been so often inculcated, that it cannot but be deeply imprinted on our Memories. The Nature and Properties of Charity ; the Root from which it ought

to ſpring ; the Branches, into which it ought to ſpread it ſelf ; the Fruits, which it ought to bear ; the Height, to which it ought to riſe ; the Obligations we are under, as we are Men, and as we are Chriſtians, to a conſtant and cheerful performance of this Duty, have, upon ſuch Occaſions as theſe, been ſet forth with ſuch variety of Reaſoning, ſuch ſtrength of Argument, and ſuch perſwaſive Eloquence, that it would be ſuperfluous to inſiſt upon a Subject ſo thoroughly Handled, and ſo perfectly Underſtood. But for the better quickning of you to the conſcientious Practice of a Duty ſo well known in Theory, I ſhall examine the Force of that Motive, which the Apoſtle here makes uſe of, to excite in us a conſtant readineſs *to do good, and to communicate* ; becauſe *with ſuch Sacrifices God is well pleaſed.*

In purſuance of which I ſhall ſhew,

1. What Analogy there is betwixt Acts of Charity and Sacrifices.

2. In what Senſe God is ſaid *with ſuch Sacrifices to be well pleaſed.*

And

And then in the Close, I shall apply what shall have been deliver'd to the Occasion of this present Solemnity.

1. I am to shew, what Analogy there is between Acts of Charity and Sacrifices.

Doing good and communicating wou'd not be term'd *Sacrifices well-pleasing to God* (as they are here by our Apostle) unless there was some Likeness between Acts of Charity and Legal Sacrifices: and unless these in something differ'd from Proper and Literal Sacrifices, they wou'd not be, as they in Scripture sometimes are, compar'd to them, and prefer'd before them. Acts of Beneficence therefore, and Sacrifices must be so far alike; Alms given to the Poor, and Incense offer'd to God, must have that Congruity One with the Other, as to justify their being both call'd by the same common Name; and at the same time, they must be so far Different and Distinguishable, as that some things may be said of the One, which do not at all belong to the Other. Acts of Charity towards the Poor, are not Sacrifices, in the Strict, and Literal, and Proper Sense of that Word; but they are Oblations in a

Larger, Figurative, and more Remote Sense : They so far differ from Oblations, that, when they are call'd Offerings, or Sacrifices, it must be own'd, that this is not their Proper, but a Borrow'd Name ; and yet they are so far like to them, that this Name is not abus'd, nor its Meaning perverted, when it is apply'd, as it is here by the Apostle, to Acts of Charity and Beneficence.

The Word, *Sacrifice*, is not so far appropriated to carnal Victims and Oblations by the Inspir'd Writers, but that even in the Old Testament, during the Mosai- cal Dispensation, we observe this Word us'd in a more refin'd and Spiritual Sense. In the same Psalm, wherein Burnt-offer- ings, and Oblations, and the Offering of young Bulls upon the Altar, are call'd *the Sacrifices of Righteousness*, a *Troubled Spirit* is also said to be *the Sacrifice of God* ; and we find this Appellation apply'd by the Prophets to Prayer, and to Thank- giving, as well as to the Bloody Sacrifices of the Altar. So that the Word, *Sacrifice*, in the largest and most extensive Sense of it, plainly took in all those Religious Acti-
ons,

ons, which the Servants of God were bound to perform by his Command, in his Worship, and to his Glory. True it is, that even this Larger Sense of the Word, (which frequently occurs in the Old Testament) will not take in Acts of Charity; which are not offer'd, strictly speaking, to God, but bestow'd upon Men; are no parts of the Worship due to the common Father of us all, but a Branch of that Duty we owe to our Brethren; and do not so properly belong to the Precepts of the First, as of the Second Table: so that it is no wonder, if in the Writings of the Old Testament we no where find Acts of Charity towards the Poor call'd (as they are here by *St. Paul*) Oblations, or Sacrifices. But under the Gospel, where Our Saviour, *who is God above all, Blessed for ever*, hath declar'd all Acts of Charity *done by us to the least of our Brethren, as done unto Himself*; such Charitable Actions being intended by Christians to promote the Glory of God; being perform'd by us as a Service acceptable and well-pleasing to Him; being done for His Sake, at His Instance, and to His Honour; and being,

in the gracious Construction of our Saviour, done, not so much unto Men, as unto Christ Himself, who is God, as well as Man ; may, in these regards, and upon these accounts, very properly be styl'd Sacrifices.

But if we enquire farther into the Nature of Sacrifices, and into the Ends for which they were appointed ; we shall still find more Lines of resemblance between these and Acts of Charity.

One great End of Sacrifices was, that those who Offer'd them should by such Oblations signifie, that they acknowledg'd God to be the Sovereign Creator and Disposer of all Things : By consecrating to him Part of their Substance, they profess'd, that they ow'd All to his Bounty, and paid him back a Portion of what they enjoy'd, as an Acknowledgment, that they receiv'd the Whole from his overflowing Goodness and Plenitude. How small soever this Acknowledgment was, and how little soever valuable for its own Intrinsick Worth, yet it had so far the nature of a Quit-rent, that it was exacted from them, and paid by them as a Proof of their Dependence ;
and

and that they were not Proprietors of what they possess, but Tenants, who held of Him, to whom, as to their Chief Lord, they paid this Homage and Service. Hence was it that God requir'd the First-Fruits of the Earth to be offer'd to Him, that the Offerer might thereby declare, that tho' He water'd and planted, yet it was God alone that gave the Increase, and God who was the Owner of the Soil. So also the First-born of all Cattle, as well as of Men, was to be Sanctified unto God; and of these some to be actually Sacrific'd, others to be redeem'd at a set Price, to express by this solemn Oblation, that *Children, and the Fruit of the Womb were an heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord*; and that whether He demanded *a Bullock out of the House, or an He-goat out of the Folds*, He ask'd nothing but what was by antecedent Right his own; since *every Beast of the Forest is His, and the Cattle upon a thousand Hills; the Earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof, the World, and they that dwell therein*. Now if this was the Principal thing signified by the Oblation of Sacrifices, that God is the Sovereign Proprietor

tor and Disposer of all things ; that We ought with Part of our Riches to acknowledge his Supreme Dominion, from whose Gift and Bounty We derive the Whole ; then Acts of Charity to the Poor and Needy, will, in this respect, have a near Relation to Sacrifices, and are, by our Apostle, upon good grounds, styl'd such in the Text ; since by our readines to part with some Share of our worldly Goods to the Poor (whom God has made his Proxies and Substitutes, to receive at our Hands what is due to Him) we do give *Honour to Him to whom Honour belongeth ; We render unto God the things that are Gods :* We re-pay Him a small part of that Abundance wherewith He hath enrich'd us ; and by dispensing our Riches to those whom He has commision'd to be His Receivers, we plainly shew, that we do not look upon them to be so properly our Own, as His ; as being not the purchase of our own Industry, but the Fruits of his Mercy ; not owing to Fortune and Chance, but to His Blessing and Providence ; in grateful Acknowledgment of which, we pay a kind of continual Tribute out of them ; as well
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remembering, under whom we hold; and that what we possess, is not our own Absolute, Free and Unburden'd Inheritance, but a Limited and Dependent Tenure, held upon certain Covenants and Conditions, and subject to such Burdens and Payments, as our Sovereign Lord hath been pleas'd, in the first Donation, to reserve to Himself out of it.

Another end of Sacrifices was, that those who offer'd them might, by consecrating to God some small Portion of their Substance, derive from Him a Blessing on the Rest. As they ow'd whatever they enjoy'd to his free Gift and Bounty, who at first liberally bestow'd it on them, so they ow'd also the continued and quiet Possession of it to his Providence, who secured it to them; they held of him as their Chief Lord, and therefore paid Homage to Him on account of his Dominion; and they were quieted in this their Tenure by his Protection, and therefore paid Tribute to him, as the Maintainer and Preserver of those Rights, which they had at first derived from him. God, as a Sovereign Lord, who had the Propriety of the Whole,

was

was pleas'd to accept of a Part, as an Acknowledgment of his Right to their Entire Possessions: But, tho' this was a Debt, which was strictly due to him; nay, tho' it was accepted by way of Composition, in lieu of a much larger, which he might justly have demanded; tho', upon both these accounts, it was so far from laying an Obligation upon him to make any returns, that the very Acceptance of it laid a new Obligation upon them, at whose Hands he accepted it; yet He was pleas'd, in his great Bounty, to recompense their Payment of what they ow'd him, by making them farther and larger Grants: He took care that their Possessions should not be Lessened, but Augmented by what they paid to Him; what by Oblations offer'd unto God they were requir'd to expend, that was abundantly made up to them, by the plentiful Increase with which God was pleas'd to bless them. *Solomon* therefore presses the observance of this Religious Duty of Sacrificing, from the consideration of those Temporal Blessings that were sure to issue from it. (a) *Honour the Lord,*

(a) *Prov.* 3. 9, 10.

saith he, *with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase, So shall thy Barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.* Now if this was another End intended by the Sacrifices of the Law, that by offering up to God part of their Substance, they might derive upon themselves and their Families, a Blessing on the Remainder ; then it is evident, that Acts of Charity to the Poor, have in this regard also, a still farther resemblance to Legal Sacrifices, since by thus dispensing them, we may secure to our selves God's Blessing on all our Enjoyments. To his Gift we originally owe what we have ; to his Protection we owe the Preservation of it ; to Him therefore is an Homage due, as our Lord, and a Tribute due, as our Protector ; and what we pay to him upon both these Titles, by the hands of those whom He hath appointed his Receivers, is so far from being an Incumbrance on our Estate, that it is an Advantage ; for what we possess is not Lessen'd, but Increas'd by this Deduction ; since it disposes God to pour down his Blessings in a more plentiful manner upon

us. For as to Sacrifices of old, so to Acts of Charity also are gracious Promises of Temporal Blessings made by him, who *is not a man that he should lie ; but what he hath said, that he will do ; and what he hath spoken, that he will make good.* Upon this View the *Israelites* were not only commanded to be Charitable to the Poor, in point of Duty ; but were encourag'd to be so in regard to their Worldly Interest : (a) *Thou shalt surely give unto thy poor brother, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him ; because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.* What is thus Laid out, is sure to be Repaid with Interest ; it will turn more to account by being thus dispers'd, than by being hoarded up, employ'd in the most beneficial Trade, disposed of in the most promising Adventure, or let out at the highest rate of Usury. Whatever is thus pour'd out, shall quickly be replenish'd with fresh Supplies from that Fountain of Goodness, which is Inexhaustible. He who thus (b) *draws out his soul to the hungry, shall be like a watered gar-*

(a) Dent. 15. 9. (b) Isai. 58. 11.

den, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. Be therefore the Effusion never so great, it shall never draw us Dry ; because as fast as we pour forth, so fast shall our Store, by the Secret and Hidden Conveyances of the Divine Providence, be constantly recruited. What the Charitable Widow of *Sarepta* experienc'd upon her Relieving the Prophet *Elias*, that *her barrel of meal wasted not, and her cruse of oil failed not,* but were Repair'd in the same measure as they were Spent, and were Fed upon without being Consum'd, however Miraculous, was not so Singular and Extraordinary, but that the Charitable Person hath good grounds from Scripture to hope, that what he gives to the Poor shall, in the like manner, thro' the secret Working of God's Providence, be taken from his Heap without Lessening it ; nay, shall Add to its Bulk ; and that those Loaves which are dealt out to the Poor, shall, like those that were distributed by our Saviour to his Disciples, be Multiply'd and Increas'd by this way of Consumption.

I might go on to pursue the Parallel between *the Sacrifices of the Law,* and *Acts of*
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Charity under the Gospel still farther, and might point out to you many other Marks, whereby they resemble each other, besides those that have been already mention'd. Sacrifices were accepted, not according to the Worth of the Offering, but according to the Ability and Good-will of the Offerer ; the Person who was not able to bring a Lamb, was to bring two Turtles, or two young Pigeons, which were accepted as well as a greater Victim from a richer Votary. And our Apostle *St. Paul*, hath assur'd us, that it is the very same case in the giving of Alms, for (a) *if there be first a willing Mind, it is accepted according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* God doth not weigh our Charity by the Quantity of what is given, but by the Cheerfulness of the Giver : He doth not scrupulously examine How much is parted with ; but graciously considers, Out of how much it is taken : And, according to our Saviour's Calculation, the Widow's Mite was not only an equal Sum to the greater Gifts of those who were

(a) 2 Cor. 8. 12.

more enabled to give, but *She cast in more than they all.*

Sacrifices of old, went along both with the Prayers of those who implored God's Mercies, and with the Praises of those who offer'd their Thanksgivings for Mercies receiv'd ; whether the People of God deprecated his Judgments, a Free-will-offering back'd their Petitions ; or whether they acknowledg'd his Benefits, an Eucharistick-offering went up with the sound of their Hallelujahs to the Throne of God. And This also holds true in Acts of Charity and giving of Alms, which the Saints of God have always join'd with their Prayers, to render them more effectual for drawing down God's Favours ; and with their Thanksgivings, as the most proper and suitable Return for Benefits already receiv'd.

But the main design of Sacrifices, and that for which they seem chiefly to have been intended in the *Mosaic* Dispensation, was, that they might make an Atonement for Sin, and reconcile God unto Men, when by their Transgressions they had provok'd him. For besides the Burnt-offer-

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ings,

ings, which were offer'd to God, as the Creator and Sovereign of the World; and the Peace-offerings, which were offer'd to him, as the *Giver of every good and perfect Gift*, there were also Sin-offerings, and Trespass-offerings, which were offer'd to him as an offended God, in order to appease him: The Victim stood in the Place of the Votary; what He deserv'd, that the Victim suffer'd; and thus for many Sins an Atonement was made, and He, for whom it was made, was forgiven. Now the Apostle may seem to allude to this special kind of Sacrifices, when of *doing good and communicating*, he pronounces that they are *Sacrifices*, wherewith *God is well pleased*. How far Acts of Charity bear an Analogy to these Propitiatory Sacrifices, in what Sense God is here said to be *well-pleased with these Sacrifices*, whether they are of any efficacy towards Reconciling God to us, and appeasing his Wrath, is what we propos'd in the Second place to enquire.

II. When it is said of Acts of Charity, that *with such Sacrifices God is well pleased*, as is here said by the Apostle, and that they

they are *an odour of a sweet smell, a Sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God*, as is (a) elsewhere said by the same Inspir'd Writer, those of the Romish Church think, that the Least we can understand by these Expressions, is, that by such Sacrifices we Merit or Deserve God's Favour, we make thereby some kind of Satisfaction for our Sins, and in virtue thereof, render him Propitious to us. The Terms *well-pleasing* and *acceptable* do not, they own, of themselves, imply so much; but they cannot, in their Opinion, be understood to signify Less, when they are join'd with Sacrifices, with which God was delighted, and by which he was aton'd: So that if Acts of Charity are *well-pleasing to God* Now, as Sacrifices were of Old; if These are substituted in the place of Those; if the Language of the Old Testament, whereby the Atoning Virtue of Sacrifices was express'd, and understood, is rightly apply'd in the New Testament to Acts of Charity, then they are not only Acceptable, say they, but Propitiatory; they give a Right and Title to Remission

(a) Phil. 4. 18.

of Sins ; they have in them the Nature of Satisfaction, and are properly Meritorious.

Now, I think, it must be allow'd, that there is more Authority, both from the Fathers, and from the Scriptures, to ascribe Merit to Alms, than to any other Good Action ; and that it is usual with the Writers of the purest Ages of the Church to attribute to them an Healing and Atoning Power ; to speak of them in the same Language, as they do of Propitiatory Sacrifices ; and to assert, that by them we do deserve well of God, and reconcile him to us, when by our Sins we have provok'd him.

It is the Doctrine of St. *Cyprian*, an Ancient Father of the Church, and one, whose Testimony we do often appeal to, against the Errors of the Church of *Rome* ;
* “ That those defilements of Sin, which

— * *Sordes postmodum (post Baptismum) quasunque contrahimus, eleemosynis abluiimus. Sicut lavacro aqua salutaris gehenna ignis extinguitur, ita eleemosynis atque operibus justus delictorum flamma sopitur. Et quia semel in Baptismo remissa peccatorum datur, assidua & jugis operatio, baptismi instar immutata, Dei rursus indulgentiam largitur : --- Misericors docet ac monet misericordiam fieri, & quia servare quarit, quos magno pretio redemit, post baptismi gratiam sordidatos monet denuo posse purgari. — Remedia propitiando Deo, ipsius Dei verbis data sunt ; quid deberent facere peccantes, magisteria divina docuerunt ; operationibus justis Deo satisfieri, misericordia meritum peccata purgari. Cyp. de opere & elemos. Tract. p. 197, 198, 199. & alibi passim.*

“ we

“ we contract after Baptism, are by our
 “ Alms wash'd away ; that as the Fire of
 “ Hell is extinguish'd by the Laver of
 “ Baptifmal Water, fo the Flame of our
 “ Sins is put out by Alms and good Deeds ;
 “ and because Remiffion of Sins is but
 “ once given in Baptifm (which cannot
 “ be repeated) therefore daily and con-
 “ ftant doing Good, having in it a like
 “ Efficacy with Baptifm, doth again pro-
 “ cure us God's Pardon : That our Sa-
 “ viour, who is merciful, prefcribes to us
 “ Works of Mercy ; and because he de-
 “ fires to fave thofe, whom he hath re-
 “ deemed at a great Price, he instructs
 “ them, how thofe, who after Baptifmal
 “ Grace have been polluted, may again
 “ be cleansed : That Remedies for A-
 “ toning God are appointed in the Word
 “ of God ; that the Divine Oracles have
 “ instructed Sinners what they are to do ;
 “ that by Works of Righteoufnefs God is
 “ fatisfy'd ; that by the Merits of Alms
 “ Sins are purged.

Thefe are the Strains of One, who hath
 been always esteem'd a Pious and Judi-
 cious Writer ; of One, who mightily a-
 dorn'd

dorn'd the Christian Religion by the Holiness of his Life, and who dy'd a Martyr for the undefiled Faith of Christ. His Soul was possess'd with an exalted Opinion of the Excellency of this Christian Grace ; and out of an earnest desire to kindle in the Hearts of his Brethren that Holy Flame, which glow'd so warmly within his own Breast, he might suffer Expressions to fall from his Pen, which might not bear the Test of a severe and rigorous Examination. For the Expressions by him us'd are Loose and General ; no Distinction is professedly made betwixt lesser Neglects and Failings in our Duty, and those Sins that are Gross and Presumptuous ; betwixt the Inward Principle of Charity, and the bare Outward Acts of it ; betwixt Charity, taken, in its most comprehensive Sense, for the Love of God and Man, and that one particular Branch of *Charity*, which consists in relieving the Poor and Needy ; betwixt the Extraordinary and Ordinary degrees of Charity ; betwixt the Power of Charity to prevail with God for a release from Temporal Punishments, and from Eternal Death ;

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betwixt its being graciously accepted of God as a Term and Condition of our Pardon, thro' the Merits of Christ's Blood, and its purging away our Sins by any proper Virtue and Efficacy of its own. Such Limitations as these, tho' not express'd by that Holy Father, were, without doubt, by him intended, and by those, to whom he address'd himself, well understood: And I am verily perswaded, that in that charitable Age no Suspensions were entertain'd, no Suggestions were spread, no Exclamations were made, to the Prejudice of that Excellent Preacher; as if, by an undue extolling of this One Virtue of Charity, he derogated from the Worth or Necessity of Other Christian Duties; or taught Men, that, provided they gave Alms, they might be secure of Salvation, without Holiness of Life.

The high Encomiums given to Charity by this, and by other Writers of the first Ages of the Church, tho' they may sound harshly now in the Ears of Protestants, who have just reason to be jealous of all Expressions, which seem to give any Countenance to the Modern Opinions of the

Church of *Rome*, concerning the Merit of Good Works, are yet, I doubt not, in that Sense in which they were meant, and with those Restrictions, with which, even when not expressly guarded, they were well known to be limited, very agreeable to the Language and Doctrine of Holy Writ. If this matter were to be decided by the Authority of Apocryphal Writers, there would then be no room to dispute the saving Virtue of Alms. For we are by them taught, that (a) *Alms deliver from Death, and shall purge away all Sin; that they suffer not to come into Darkness-----that Water will quench a flaming Fire, and Alms maketh an Atonement for Sins.* But, besides the Testimony of these Writers, whose Authority (tho' appeal'd to in this Case by the Compilers of our own * Homilies, as well as by the Ancient Fathers of the Church) is not Decisive; what is said of the great Price and Value, and wonderful Efficacy of Alms, seems sufficiently warranted by those inspired Pen-Men,

(a) Tobit. 12. 9. & 4. 10. Ecclus. 3. 30. * *Serm. of Alms-deeds, part 2.*

who,

who, we are sure, wrote by the guidance of the Holy Ghost.

The *Covering* and the *Pardon* of Sin are, in the Language of Holy Writ, equivalent Expressions: When therefore of Charity it is affirm'd by (a) *St. Peter*, (what is also affirm'd of one particular Branch of it by *St. James*,) (b) *that it shall cover the multitude of Sins*; when the covering of Sins is not specified as an Act, or Instance of Charity, but propos'd as a Motive to the Exercise of it; it is easie and natural to understand the words of the Apostle in this plain and obvious Sense, that *God is pleased to remit many Sins to the Charitable on account of their Charity*.

That merciful Alms-dealing is profitable to purge the Soul from the infection and filthy Spots of Sin, the Compilers of our Homilies, following therein the Sense of Venerable Antiquity, do infer from that remarkable saying of our Lord; (c) *Give Alms of such things as you have, and behold all things are clean unto You*. The Pharisees marvelled, that he had not first wash'd 'ere He sat down to Meat. Upon this our

(a) 1 Pet. 4. 9. (b) James 5. 20. (c) Luke 11. 41.

Saviour observes, that Outward Clean-ness is not so much to be regarded as Inward Purity ; and then, that they might not be at a loss how to attain this Inward Purity, he prescribes Acts of Charity, as the most proper Catharticks, which would cleanse and purify them, better than all their Washings and Lustrations.

The Wise Man hath laid it down as a sure Aphorism, that (a) *By Mercy and Truth Iniquity is Purg'd*: and this General Medicine for the healing of our Spiritual Diseases is by *Daniel* applied to the Particular Case of *Nebuchadnezzar* ; (b) *Let my Counsel be acceptable unto thee, and redeem thy Sins by Alms-giving, (for so the Original, and so all the Ancient Versions run) and thine Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the Poor.*

The Same wholesome Remedy, against the Same raging Distemper, had been before prescrib'd to the People of *Israel* by the Prophet *Isaiab*: They were (c) *a sinful Nation, a People laden with Iniquity, a Seed of evil doers ; Children that were corrupters ; that had forsaken the Lord ; that had provoked the Holy One of Israel to Anger.* In such a de-

(a) Prov. 16. 6. (b) Dan. 4. 27. (c) Isai. 1. 4.

perate State as this, the Sacrifices of the Law were of no Efficacy to expiate their Guilt ; even Repentance it self, without Works of Charity, was not sufficient to procure the pardon of their Sins, and to restore them to the Favour of God : but if, after (a) *ceasing to do Evil, and learning to do well, they would also relieve the Oppressed, judge the Fatherless, and plead for the Widows ; then, tho' their Sins were as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow, though they were red like Crimson, they shall be as Wooll.*

That, in the strict, and now generally receiv'd Sense of the Word, either our Alms, or any other good Works of ours do merit God's favour ; That there is any equality betwixt the Alms we give, and the Mercies we expect from God ; so that the Former should be the Price, whereby the Latter are to be purchased ; That God's Justice would be impeach'd, if he did not recompense our Alms in that manner, in which we are assur'd from his word He will recompense them ; That the Alms-giver is worthy of eternal Life, as the Labourer is worthy of his Hire ; that there

(a) *Isai. l. 17, 18.*

is any equivalence or parity of Worth betwixt the good we do to our Brother, and the good we hope for from God ; That God, who is well pleased with our Alms, is any ways better'd, or oblig'd by them ; That those, who in their Lives, or at their Deaths, are liberal in the giving of Alms, shall obtain eternal Life, or shall escape eternal Death, tho' they Live in the habitual practice of any gross Sin, and Die without Repentance ; That no other Enquiry will be made at the Day of Judgment, but whether we have relieved the Poor, or not ; and that our final State will be determin'd according to the Answer we make to that single Enquiry : These, I say, are Tenets, which all good Protestants do, upon just grounds, Deny and Abhor, and which the moderatest of the *Romanists* will not venture to Affirm. But then, on the other side, That Alms are made a necessary Condition of our receiving the Blessings of God ; That, upon our due performance of this Condition, God will make good his Promises ; That God hath bound himself to reward our Alms, and that he cannot, or rather, that he Will
not

not depart from his Word ; That every one shall receive a Reward according to his labour of Love, not a Reward barely equal to his Love, but proportionable to it, *i. e.* a Greater Reward for a Greater Charity, and a Less Reward for a Less ; but still such a Reward, as, even when Least, is greater than his Charity, when Greatest ; That our Alms, whether they deserve, or not, will procure for us God's Mercies, and give us such a title to the Divine Favour, as, whether of Right it can be over-rul'd, or not, will certainly in Fact not be over-rul'd ; That at the Day of Judgment a very Particular, and Distinguishing regard will be had to our *Acts of Charity* ; that, for the sake of them, many Sins of Surprize and Infirmity shall be graciously overlookt, in those who are placed on Christ's Right Hand ; and that even those, who are set on his Left Hand, if they have been Charitable, shall be condemn'd to more tolerable Punishments, than if to their other Sins they had added that of Unmercifulness ; These, I say, are Doctrines, which those, who are most opposite to Popery Need not, which those, who

who have a due regard to the Holy Scriptures, and to that Sense in which they have been understood by the earliest Writers Cannot, and which those of our own Communion Do not deny.

To the Enquiry therefore how far doing good and communicating Sacrifices are pleasing to God, and what Efficacy they have towards atoning him, this in short seems to be the true Answer; that altho' Acts of Charity cannot give us a rightful claim to the Promises of God, and to the pardon of our Sins, exclusively of other Duties; yet that such liberal Promises are no where in the Gospel made to any Other Single Duty, as are to Charity: that, altho' our Sins shall not be remitted to us for our Charity without Repentance, yet Acts of Charity when join'd with Repentance are of great Use to render it effectual for procuring Forgiveness: that, altho' Christ our Saviour is our only proper Propitiatory Sacrifice, for whose sake alone our Sins will be pardoned, yet Acts of Charity perform'd to our Brethren for the sake of Christ have, through the all-sufficient Merits of Christ's Blood,

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a Subordinate Efficacy towards procuring God's Grace and Favour, and are in that respect *Sacrifices with which God is well pleased.*

I proceed now, in the last place, to apply what hath been delivered, to the Occasion of this present Solemnity.

Under the Old Testament Sacrifices were offer'd as well by Communities of Men, as by Private Persons, and were appointed by God as proper Means to procure National Blessings, and to remove National Judgments. And that we of this Kingdom and City do not groan under those Calamities, which our Sins have deserv'd; that We are still permitted to enjoy those numerous and signal Blessings, which by our repeated transgressions We have justly forfeited, is, next to the infinite goodness of God, principally owing to those Gospel-Sacrifices, *of doing good and communicating*, which have now for many Years in the Hospitals of this City, as in so many Temples of Charity, been offer'd up to the Honour of the Almighty.

A report of the Charities of this last Year will now be read unto you.

Here

Here the Report was read.

These are the several sorts of Oblations which by the Piety of Devout and Charitable Souls have been presented; the Sacrifices, which we do earnestly Beseech and Exhort You, may with the same ardent Zeal, and in an Equal, or rather Exceeding Measure, be still offer'd unto God, as being *Odours of a sweet smell, Sacrifices* which we know to be *acceptable, and well-pleasing unto him.*

(a) *A Father of the Fatherless is God in his Holy Habitation:* and therefore cannot but with Pleasure look down upon those, who do here upon Earth imitate Him by a Tender and Paternal Care of the Fatherless and Orphans.

It is the Character of God's *beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased,* that He (b) *went about doing good;* that He (c) *heal'd the sick People, that were taken with diverse Diseases, and Torments, and those which were Lunatick;* that by Him (d) *the Lame were made to walk, and the Poor had the Gospel preached unto*

(a) Psal. 68. 5. (b) Acts 10. 38. (c) Matth. 4. 24.
(d) Matth. 11. 5.

them :

them: When therefore we follow our Saviour's Steps; When we gladly embrace all the Opportunities of *doing good* that are offer'd Us, and are diligent in seeking out such Opportunities, when they do not offer themselves; When by our Charity Health is dispens'd to the Sick, Soundness of Body is restored to the Maim'd, and Soundness of Mind to the Distracted; When at our Expence Children are instructed in the saving Truths of the Gospel, and *Nurtur'd in the Fear and Admonition of the Lord*; We do by these Acts of Mercy and Goodness approve our selves the Children of God, and may be as well assured, as if we heard it by a Voice from Heaven, that in Us also, as being, thro' the Grace of Adoption, his Sons, *God is well pleas'd*.

It is an Ordinance of God, that (a) *if any Man will not Work, neither shall he eat*: It is the Rule of the Gospel, that (b) *He who hath stole shall steal no more; but labour, working with his Hands the thing which is good, that He may give to Him that needeth: A rod for the Fools back, is the Discipline,*

(a) 2 Theff. 3. 10. (b) Ephes. 4. 28.

which the Laws of God, as well as of Men, do appoint for the Correction of Evil-doers : When therefore by the care of wise and good Magistrates, Idle Vagabonds are compell'd to earn their own Bread with the Sweat of their Brows ; When Felons are by close confinement restrain'd from pursuing their former courses of Theft and Rapine, and necessitated by Hard Labour both to provide for themselves, and to contribute to the Maintenance of those Poor, who are Willing, but not Able to work ; When Lewd and Profligate Persons, on whom Reason and Religion have no hold, are by the wholesome Discipline of Corporal Punishments charitably Reclaimed ; these Acts of Justice, Temper'd with Mercy, are agreeable to God's reveal'd Will, and do mightily redound to the Honour of his Name ; and with These therefore an Holy and Righteous God cannot but be delighted.

To Magistrates is delegated the Authority of God ; to Them in Holy Writ is sometimes ascrib'd the very Name of God ; but they are never more God-like, the
Image

Image of the God-head doth never shine forth in them with greater Lustre, than when out of their Fulness Streams of Bounty do issue forth for refreshing the Poor and Needy, and by the Emanations of their Goodness, concurring with Providence, Men are supported in their Life and Being. For as, to do Good without any possibility of receiving Good, is the incommunicable Prerogative of God: So to do good to those, from whom we have no Prospect of a return, is that which makes the nearest approaches towards the Divine All-sufficiency.

Of the *Roman* Senators We read, that, when their City was storm'd by a Barbarous Nation, they, array'd in their Purple, and plac'd on their Chairs of State, appear'd with such Awful Majesty, that they were even by their Enemies lookt upon, and reverenc'd as Gods; but this Veneration was soon abated; they were quickly discover'd to be Mortal, and by the brutal Fury of their Enemies they died like Men. To Christian Magistrates Charity adds a greater Ornament than all the Ensigns of Dignity and Robes of State:

When they, with Holy (a) *Job*, deliver the Poor that cry, and the Fatherless, and Him that hath none to help him: When the Blessing of him that is ready to perish comes upon them, and they cause the Widows Heart to sing for Joy: When they put on Righteousness, and it cloaths them, and Mercy and Charity are to them as a Robe and a Diadem; there is then Something in them, that is truly Majestick and Divine; Something which will strike the Eyes of all Beholders with a deep and lasting Veneration; Something that will render them truly Immortal; and which, by entitling them to the Divine Protection, will best secure both Them and the City, over which they preside, from all Hostile Attempts, and from the Invasion of the *Gauls*.

In the midst therefore of our Other Preparations for War, let us not forget (b) to lay up our Alms in our Store-houses: For this shall deliver us from all Afflictions; it shall Fight for us against our Enemies, better than a mighty Shield, or strong Spear. In the Day of Battle such a Comely Band of well-nurtur'd Children, as We here See, bred

(a) *Job* 29. 12, 13, 14. (b) *Ecclus.* 29. 12, 13.

up in the Fear of God, and daily employ'd in Praying for their Benefactors, and for the Peace and Prosperity of Our establish'd Church and Government, will, by procuring the Blessings of God upon our Nation, prove as strong a Guard against the Power of our Enemies, as the best disciplin'd Army of Grown Men, expert in War.

The Heathens, when upon any great enterprize they would render their God's Propitious, had recourse to some ancient Books, said to be sent from Heaven, deposited with their Priests, and lookt into, with great Pomp and Ceremony, in order to know, what Religious Rites they were to use by way of Atonement. We Christians are sure that we have in Our Custody the Oracles of God, given to us from above: These therefore we have now consulted, and in these we have found directions, how we may propitiate God; what those Sacrifices are, which will procure his Favour, and find a gracious Acceptance with Him. (a) *Wherewith then shall we come before the Lord, and bow our selves*

(a) Mic. 6. 6.

before the high God? Shall we come before him with Burnt-offerings, with Calves of an Year old? In These God had no Pleasure, even when they were offer'd by the Law; much less doth He require them now at Our Hands under the Dispensation of the Gospel. In this Last, this Fullest manifestation of his Will, He hath shew'd us what is good; to love Mercy is what the Lord requires of us; ; to do good and to communicate are the Sacrifices wherewith we may hope to please God, and to draw down his Blessings upon our Persons and upon our Families; upon our Counfels, and upon our Enterprizes; upon our Nation, and upon our Sovereign; upon the State, and upon the Church; upon our Bodies, and upon our Souls.

With which Blessings may God of his infinite Mercy enrich us through the Merits of his Blessed Son Jesus Christ our Lord!

A S E R.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before

The Right Worshipful the
COURT of ALDERMEN,

A T T H E

Cathedral Church of *St. Paul, London*;

On *Monday, January 31. 1708*⁸/₉.

B E I N G

The Anniversary of the Martyrdom
of King *Charles I.*

THE HISTORY OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

FROM ITS INSTITUTION

TO THE PRESENT TIME

BY JOHN VAUGHAN

ESQ. OF THE SOCIETY

LONDON

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To the Right Hon.^{ble} S^r Charles
Duncombe, Lord Mayor of
London, and to the Court of
Aldermen.

Right Honourable,

That Honest Zeal, which
the following Sermon ex-
presseth against the Mur-
der of King Charles the First, is
the Only Thing in it, which could
deserve Your Thanks, and recom-
mend it to Your Approbation: So
that Your Order for its being made
Publick, is an Open Testimony to
the World, that a Discourse against
Rebellion is as acceptable in the
City, as at Court; And that Those,
who have forborn to Speak their
Minds, on such Occasions, for fear
of displeasing, have been afraid,
where no Fear was.

It is to the Immortal Honour of
that Great City, over which You
preside, that it had (even in the
worst of Times) this Character
given

given of it by the Royal Martyr, That much the better, and greater Part of it, was full of Love, Duty, and Loyalty to His Majesty; And, that Persons of the like good Affections to Our present Sovereign, may never hereafter, through Want of Vigilance, Zeal, and Activity, suffer the Infinitely Meaner Part in Quality, and the much Lesser Part in Number, to prevail so far, as to Alter the Government, so well establish'd amongst Us; but may gather up the Courage and Resolution to join with Her Majesty, in Defence of that Religion, Law, and Liberty, which hitherto hath, and which only can, make Themselves, Her Majesty, and Her Kingdom, Happy; is the Hearty Prayer of,

Right Honourable,

Your most Humble,

and Obedient Servant,

GEORGE SMALRIDGE.

A

SERMON

Preach'd before the
Right Worshipful the COURT of
ALDERMEN, &c.

Judges XIX. 30.

*And it was so, that all that saw
it, said, There was no such
Deed done, nor seen, from the
day that the Children of Israel
came up out of the Land of
Egypt, unto this day: Consider
of it, take Advice, and speak
your Minds.*

THE barbarous Fact, to which
these Words refer, is set forth
at large, with all its aggravating
Circumstances, in the forego-
ing Verses of this Chapter. To enter into
Serm. IV. the

the Particulars of it, is neither Necessary, nor Proper : I shall only, in General, observe, That it was committed in a Time of Anarchy and Confusion, (a) *when there was no King in Israel*; That it was not a Crime of any One Single Denomination, but a Complicated Piece of Villainy, involving in it the Guilt of many Gross and Enormous Sins; and, That the Persons concern'd in the Commission of it, were (b) *certain Sons of Belial*, Void of all Pity, Regardless of Shame, and as Unrestrain'd by any Principles of Religion, or Remorse of Conscience, as if they had been equally sure, that there was then no God in Heaven, as, *that there was no King in Israel*. This Consummate Wickedness was done in *Gibeah*, and a Report of it sent to the Tribes of *Israel*. All those, whom the Fame of it reach'd, did, upon their first hearing it, pronounce, that *There was no such Deed done, nor seen, from the day that the Children of Israel came up out of the Land of Egypt, till that day*. But although they had, without the least deliberating about it in their own Breasts,

(a) Ver. 1. (b) Ver. 22.

and without consulting the Opinions of Others, pass'd this Judgment upon it; Yet they are call'd upon farther to *Consider of it, to take Advice*, and then to *speak their Minds*: So that from the Words, there do arise these Three Observations.

First, That there are Some Actions so shocking, that All Men do, upon the First hearing of them, without taking time to consider, without asking the Opinion of Others, Unanimously agree to condemn them.

Secondly, That although Such Actions do, at the First View, appear very Odious, Yet, in order to Confirm or Rectify our first Judgments of them, it is proper to *Consider* them farther, and to *take* in the *Advice* of Others.

Thirdly, That when any Actions do, both at the First View, and also upon farther Enquiry, appear very Flagitious, We should then, without any Reserve, Openly and Freely speak our Minds concerning them.

To Each of these Heads I shall speak severally, and apply what I shall say upon
Each,

Each, to that Execrable Fact, for which We are this Day humbling Our selves in the Sight of God.

First, then I observe, That there are Some Actions so shocking, that All Men do, upon the First hearing of them, without taking Time to Consider, without asking the Opinion of Others, Unanimously agree to condemn them.

However Men may differ in their Opinions concerning the Measures of Truth, and the Ways by which We do arrive at the first Notices of Things; Yet it is agreed by All, because attested by the common Experience of All, That there are Some Truths, which We do more easily Discover, and more readily and firmly Assent to, than Others. For, Some are the Results of Long Enquiry, and Close Reasoning; whilst Others offer themselves to our Thoughts of their Own accord; thrust in upon Us, whether we will or not; and seem not so much to Court our Assent, as to Command it. We find Our selves necessarily determin'd, in Some Cases, to judge One way rather than Another; and though We strive never so much,

much, We cannot prevail upon our selves to Alter, or so much as to call in Question, such Judgments. These Truths, when examin'd afterwards by Reason, are found to be very agreeable to it; but they do not wait for Such Examination, before they can gain Admittance into our Belief; but are allow'd, without passing any Test, barely on their Own Account and Credit. Those, who never reason at all about them, are as Strongly, though not upon so Good Grounds, perswaded of them, as those who reason most; and though they may be capable of receiving, from Proof and Authority, an Additional Strength, Yet they do not at all want it.

Now, amongst those Truths, which do thus prevent all Reasoning, and gain our Assent upon the First View, I think, We may justly reckon those Judgments, which We form, concerning the Essential Differences of Moral Good and Evil. For Our Sight is not more quick in discerning the Variety of Figures and Colours, nor more taken with the Beauty of Some, or displeas'd with the Deformity of Others; the nicest Ear hath not a more distinct Perception

ception of the Harmony or Discord of Sounds ; nor doth the most delicate Palate more accurately distinguish Tastes, than our Intellectual Faculties do apprehend the plain and familiar Distinction between Right and Wrong, Honest and Dishonest, Good and Evil, and find an Agreeableness and Satisfaction in the One, a Disagreeableness and Dissatisfaction in the Other. Hence is it, that the Prophet *Isaiab*, when he pronounces a Curse upon all those, who confounded what God had plainly distinguish'd, supposes the Opposite Kinds of Humane Actions to be at as great a distance the One from the Other, as the most contrary Qualities, which We are inform'd of by the Reports of Our Senses. (a) *Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil, that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.*

I do not say, that this Power of readily discerning betwixt Moral Good and Evil upon the first View, doth extend it self to all the Differences of Humane Actions ; or that in our Enquiry into the Rectitude

(a) *Isaiab* 5. ver. 20.

or Obliquity of Such as are very Complex in their Nature, and whose Lawfulness or Unlawfulness depends upon a great Variety and Combination of Circumstances, We can, in a Moment, positively and surely determine, whether they are Good or Evil; worthy of Praise or Dispraise; fit to be by all Men Admir'd and Imitated, or to be Condemn'd, and Avoided. Our Senses themselves do not inform Us of every Minute Difference, which is to be found in those things which fall under their Special Notice and Cognizance. The first Departure from Streightness is not, perhaps, perceiv'd by the most curious and piercing Eye; it suffices, that what is Very crooked doth presently betray it self to the Sight, though We cannot precisely determine, where its Obliquity doth first commence. And thus also it is in Moral Actions; Some of them are of a mixt Nature, in which the Colours of Good and Evil are so blended and confusedly put together, that it is sometimes very difficult to determine, with which Sort they ought to be rank'd; but still, what is Eminently Good, or Notoriously Evil, doth soon

discover it Self: There is that Beauty and Comeliness in Some Actions, which the most negligent and transient View cannot but take Notice of, and be Charm'd with; that Hideousness and Deformity in Some Sins, from which Humane Nature, as corrupt as it is, doth instantly Start back and Recoil.

And it is for very wise and good Reasons, that God hath so form'd our Faculties, that, concerning Such Actions as are Extraordinary in Either Kind, Such as are Extremely good, or Extremely wicked, all Men should be able to judge thus Readily, and thus Truly. For, in Humane Life, it often happens, that an Occasion is given us of doing Some great Good, or a Temptation laid before Us to commit Some great Evil, when there is no Leisure allow'd Us of entring into a long Deliberation, whether the Good or Evil, to which We are invited, be really Such, as they do at the first Sight appear, or not: In which Cases it is necessary, that We should act according to our Present Light, and, therefore, by Providence wisely order'd, that we should enjoy such Open and Plain Day-light, that there should be

no Danger of our Stumbling. By this Method, God hath made the Same wholesome Provision for the Security of our Souls, as He hath done for Preserving the Health of our Bodies: To Such Meats as might prove noxious to Us, and being once taken down, digested, and mingled with the Mass of our Blood, might quickly destroy our Lives, We have often so strong an Antipathy, that We refrain from them, merely on account of this Natural Aversion, without considering the mischievous Consequences, that might arise from Our indulging Our Selves in them: And in the like manner, those Sins, which carry with them the greatest Malignity, and which are most perillous to the Souls of Men, do create in our Minds such an utter Abhorrence and Detestation, that We are thereby more powerfully restrain'd from the Commission of such Sins, than We should be by the bare Consideration of those evil Principles, from whence they flow, or those manifest Dangers, to which they do expose Us. All Men are not endu'd with so much Penetration of Thought, so much Strength of Reasoning, so much

Dexterity and Skill, in deducing One Truth from Another, as to Discover, or so much as to Perceive the Force of those Arguments, which may be brought to prove a thing Wicked and Abominable; but without Reasoning, without drawing any long Train of Inferences, without enquiring into the Hidden Grounds and Causes of Evil, All, who are not destitute of Common Sense, do quickly perceive, in Gross and Heinous Sins, that monstrous Turpitude and Deformity, which is, in it self, Visible, and not to be Overlookt.

Thus, as soon as the Children of *Israel* were inform'd, that a Daughter of One of their Tribes had, by the Men of *Gibeah*, in a Violent and Outragious manner, been Assaulted, Abus'd, and Murder'd; the Indignation, which presently arose in the Breast of Every One, who heard it, superseded the Necessity of any tedious Search into the precise Demerits of the Action; and the Voice of all the People spoke aloud what the Voice of Nature had before whisper'd to each Man's private Thoughts, that so Unparallel'd a Wickedness

ness deserv'd the severest Censure, and warranted the keenest Resentment.

And, doth not the Treason of this Day kindle in our Breasts the like just Indignation! Can We hear of a Sovereign Prince murder'd by his Own Unnatural Subjects, and doth not the bare Mention of it excite in our Minds the utmost Abhorrence of so barbarous an Action? Do not *our Ears tingle*, as soon as we hear of it? Are not our Spirits immediately in a Ferment, at the First Report thereof? Doth not a Fire presently burn within Us? Do We not feel our Hearts glowing, on a sudden, with an holy Zeal, against so Ungodly, so Unchristian, so Inhumane a Deed? And are We not, by a sort of Natural Instinct, which prevents all Reasoning, which leaves no room for Deliberation, necessarily determin'd to conceive in our Thoughts, and with our Tongues to express a *Perfect Hatred* of it? Can We look upon it to be Necessary, can We judge it to be even so much as Lawful for Us, Calmly and Sedately to Deliberate, whether such a Fact is to be condemn'd, or not? Is it not, in some Degree, Blame-

worthy to be Cool, and Dispassionate, upon so provoking an Occasion? And, should We not betray too much Indifference and Lukewarmness, if We should take time *to Consider and Advise*, before We pretend to Form any Judgment about it? Need We to suspend our Opinions concerning it, till We have more Carefully and Thoroughly examin'd it? Are We afraid of being Rash and Precipitate, unless We Impartially weigh, in an equal Balance, what is to be said For it, as well as what is to be said Against it? Must We wait, till the Apologists for Rebellion and Murder have *brought forth their strong Reasons*, and till We have tried the Strength of those Pleas, which they have to advance, in Defence of Blood-shed and Parricide, before We proceed to determine any thing in our Own Thoughts about them? Might We not, in this Case, safely appeal to the first Judgments of Those, who are so hardy as to Defend this Day's Treason, or even of Those, who were so wicked as to Commit it? For, although there be No Crime so Heinous, which may not find some Advocates; None so shocking to Humane

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Nature, which Men, violently push'd on by the Instigation of the Devil, and given over to a Reprobate Mind by the just Judgment of God, may not bring themselves, at Last, to Consent unto ; Yet We have no Reason to doubt, but that the Execrable Fact, of which We are now Speaking, did, at the First Proposal of it, appear in the same black Colours to the Patrons of it, Yea, and to the very Traitors themselves concern'd in it, as it doth to Other Men ; that Natural Conscience did, in them, for some time, bear the same Testimony against it, as it still doth in Others ; and that they must have taken a great deal of pains to stifle the Convictions of their Own Minds, before they could bring themselves to Excuse, to Justify, and to Approve an Action, which must, at First, have stricken Them, if they were not of a different Make from All Other Men, with a Natural Horror and Aversion. But that We may not seem, in a Matter of so great Moment, to lay too much Strefs upon the First Judgments, that Men form, which, after all, perhaps, may be but Prejudices,

it will be proper for Us to proceed to Our

Second Consideration, That although some Actions do, at the First View, appear very Odious, Yet, in order to Confirm or Rectify our First Judgments of them, it is proper to Consider them farther, and to take in the Advice of Others.

When an Action is immediately to be done by Us, and there is no time allow'd Us to deliberate about it, the Dictates of our Own Conscience, being the best Guides We have, must be follow'd by Us. But concerning Actions Already done, We have more leisure to judge, and, therefore, ought to take more care to judge aright. If they do, at the first View, Appear wicked, this is a shrewd Indication, that they are so in an Eminent Degree ; but, upon a farther Examination into the several Circumstances of them, We may find either good Reasons to Alter our first Opinion, or clearer Evidence to Confirm Us in it. Such Notions as prevail in the Age, in which We live, and among the Persons, with whom We converse ; such as have been instill'd into Our Minds from our Infancy,

fancy, and have all along grown up with Us ; such as We have heard often Inculcated and never Contradicted, We are apt to look upon, as engraven in our Hearts by the Finger of God ; when, perhaps, after all, they are only the Prejudices of wrong Education. That We may not, therefore, be misled into Error by any such Prepossessions, it will be expedient for Us to re-examine our former Judgments, and to enquire, how things will appear upon a Nicer and Closer Scrutiny. When a thing appears Crooked to the Eye upon the first View, We can't but pay so much Deference to the Testimony of our Senses, as to presume it such ; but because this Appearance may sometimes chance to proceed from a Defect in the Organ, and not from any real Crookedness in the Object, for our better Satisfaction, we measure it by a Rule, and then pronounce with more Certainty concerning it ; and the same Method We ought to observe, in judging of Moral Actions ; if they, at the First Sight, appear Notoriously Wicked, we cannot but entertain a violent Suspicion of their being such ;
but

but because this Appearance may arise from some Corruption of our Judgment, when there is no Obliquity in the Actions themselves, the best Way to prevent all Possibility of Error, will be to examine them by the only Infallible Test, the Law of God: If they will abide that Trial, they are not, by Us, rashly to be condemn'd; if, upon a Deliberate, Fair, and Impartial Examination, they are found plainly repugnant to the declared Will of God, We cannot be thought too dogmatical or peremptory, in passing Sentence of Condemnation against them.

But this Sentence will carry still more Weight and Authority with it, if We do not depend too much upon our Own Judgments, but call in the Advice of Others. Men are so apt to differ in their Opinions, and take so great a delight in contradicting Each Other, that those Truths must carry with them a more than Ordinary Degree of Evidence, in which All or Most Men do agree; He who considers, what a wide Difference there is in the Ways of Mens Thinking and Judging, from the Difference of their Complexions,

plexions, Tempers, Education, Character, Profession, Age, Religion, and other innumerable Specialties, by which they are distinguished One from Another, and dispos'd to form very Different Judgments concerning the same Persons or Things, will not be surpriz'd to find, that several Men do seldom concur in the Verdict, which they pass upon those Actions, that fall within their Observation and Cognizance. Some Speculative Truths there are, in which the Interests of Men being not at all concern'd, All may Unanimously agree: Some Rules of Life there may be, (tho' these much fewer than the Other) which Most Men may join in the Approbation of: Some Virtues or Vices, which, consider'd Abstractedly, and without Regard to Persons, they may agree to Praise, or to Condemn: but when they come to judge of Actions, not as they are in Idea and Theory, but as they are in Reality and Fact; not as they are in Books, but as they are perform'd by such and such Men; here several things will offer themselves to influence and bias their Judgments. When, therefore, notwithstanding

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ing there are so Many and Strong Obstacles to hinder Men from concurring in their Opinions, any Actions are condemn'd by a General Consent, this Unanimity of Judgment is, though not a Demonstrative Proof, yet a very Strong Presumption, that Such Actions are Notoriously Wicked, and in Reality Such, as they do Universally appear.

Now, if We take these Measures in regulating our Judgments concerning that black Treason, which hath made this Day unto Us *a Day of Shame and Reproach, a Day of Mourning and Lamentation*; if We examine it narrowly in all its Parts, if We try it by the Rules of Morality, Law, and Religion; there will be as much Difference between the Degrees of Guilt, which will Then appear, and those which it Seem'd to have upon a Transitory View, as there is between the Dimensions of an Object Closely observ'd by the Help of the Best Glasses, and Slightly glanc'd upon by the Naked Eye: But This flagitious Wickedness hath been so Often, and so Thoroughly consider'd; the Best and Wisest Men have so frequently declar'd their
Opi-

Opinions of it, and have confirm'd those Opinions with Such Strength of Reasoning, the heinous Guilt thereof hath been plac'd in so clear a Light, and describ'd in so lively Colours, that it would be scarcely excusable, at this Time, to attempt a faint Copy of that Night-piece, which hath been drawn by the most Masterly Hands. Should We bring into One Comprehensive View all the various Circumstances, which jointly contribute to enhance the Demerit of this enormous Sin ; Should We draw up an exact Catalogue of all the Insolences, Indignities, Perjuries, Tumults, Rapines, Devastations, and Murders, that prepar'd the Way for it ; and all the Disorders, Confusions, Oppressions, and Tyrannies, that follow'd it ; Should We take into our Consideration the Personal Virtues, and Sacred Character of that blessed Prince, whose Innocence ought to have Secur'd Him from all Harm, had he been Responsible for his Conduct at any Humane Bar ; and whose Majesty ought to have exempted Him from Violence, had he been guilty of the Crimes Unjustly laid to his Charge ; Should

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We represent to our Thoughts the Many and the Strong Obligations, which his Rebellious Subjects lay under, from Gratitude, Honour, Fidelity, the Laws of Nature, the Laws of the Land, and the Laws of God, (all which Bonds, *when the Spirit of the Lord, as they impiously pretended, came mightily upon them, were presently broken, as a Thread of Tow is broken, when it toucheth the Fire*) Should We run through the Tragical History of Their Crimes and His Sufferings, and follow Him from Palace to Palace, from Camp to Camp, from Prison to Prison, till, at last, We attend Him on the Scaffold; Should We reflect on the deliberate Malice, wherewith this hellish Deed was Design'd; the steady Wickedness, wherewith it was Carry'd on; and the remorseless Cruelty, wherewith it was Accomplish'd; Should We take in to the Account the Dishonour done thereby to our Country, and to our Religion, and the bold Profanation of God's Name, in begging his Guidance and Aid in the Violation of his Laws, and ascribing to Him the Praise of those Actions, whereby He was, in the most Sacri-
legious

legious manner, Blasphem'd; Should We, in short, look Backwards upon all those Calamities which Our Fathers and We have felt, or Forwards upon all those Miseries, which We and Our Posterity have yet Reason to fear, either as the Natural Consequences of this great Sin, or as the just Judgments of God on the Account of it: Such a Representation as this, however Imperfect and Short of the Truth, must necessarily Confirm Us in the Opinion, which We had, upon the First View, entertain'd, of the Execrableness of this Fact; and extort from Us an Open Declaration against that Wickedness, which We cannot but, from the very Bottom of our Hearts, Abhor. For, as We observ'd, in the Third and Last Place,

When any Actions do, both upon the First View, and also upon a Farther Enquiry, appear very Flagitious, We should then, without any Reserve, Openly and Freely *Speak our Minds* concerning them.

In vain do our Natural Consciences bear Testimony against Notorious and Crying Sins; in vain is that Testimony strengthen'd by the concurrent Suffrages of Reason

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son and of Religion ; if, when We have taken due care to form our Opinions aright ; and are under any Obligations of Justice or Charity to declare them, We are either so False as to speak Against our Minds, or so Pusillanimous as not to *Speak our Minds* Frankly and Plainly. A Mark of Infamy hath, by the Universal Consent of all Civiliz'd Nations, been set upon some Actions, tending either to the great Disparagement of Humane Nature, or to the great Disturbance of Civil Societies ; that a Sense of Shame, and Fear of Disgrace, might be powerful Curbs to restrain Men from doing Such vile Things, as would be sure to Stain their Reputations, and to Fix an indelible Blot of Ignominy upon their Memories : But this Dread of Infamy can no longer prove a Restraint, than whilst Actions really scandalous meet with that just Reproach, which they deserve ; this Law of Opinion or Reputation, whereby it is agreed, that Such and Such Vices shall be punish'd with Disrepute, will, like other Laws, lose all its Force and Energy, unless those, who are entrusted with the Administration

tion of it, take care to put it duly in Execution.

Whatever good Reasons there are, why the Names of Persons eminent for Virtue should be mention'd with Esteem in their Own Time, and deliver'd down with Honour to Posterity, the Same are equally Strong for branding the Memories of Wicked Men with lasting Marks of Disgrace ; since the Canonizing of Saints doth not more manifestly tend to the Advancement of Virtue, than the Stigmatizing of Villains doth to the Suppression of Vice. There are, indeed, greater Rewards laid up for the Godly, and forer Judgments kept in Store for Sinners, than their being remembred with Honour or Infamy : But still, it is one considerable Part of the Just Man's Recompence, that *his Memory shall be blessed*, and of the Wicked Man's Punishment, (which ought to come home to Him) that *his Name shall rot*. The greatest Mischief that can possibly be done to the Souls of Men, is to discourage them from doing their Duty, by speaking Evil of what God has Commanded, and to Encourage them in the Com-

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mission of Sin, by speaking Well of what God hath Condemn'd; and, therefore, a *Wo* is (as You have heard) justly denounc'd, by the Prophet *Isaiah*, against those *who call Good Evil, and Evil Good*: But the Interests of Virtue and Piety are also very much endamag'd by those, who, though they do not go so far as to call Evil Good, do yet, by a Criminal Silence, forbear to call it Evil; and, therefore, those Priests are accus'd, by God, of violating his Laws, and *profaning his Holy Things, who put no Difference between the Holy and Profane, neither shew the Difference between the Clean and the Unclean.*

God forbid, that any Preachers of the Gospel should so far exceed the Bounds of their Commission, as to *Curse those, whom God hath not curs'd, or to Desy those whom the Lord hath not desy'd*; As it becomes none but *Mad-Men* to throw about *Fire-Brands, Arrows, and Death*; so is it proper for None but wild Enthusiasts, to thunder out, at random, Hell and Damnation. But still, if We will be true to our Trust, We must declare the Laws and the Judgments of God against Notorious Sinners; and when
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God requires, that *Curses*, in his Name, should be proclaim'd against those, *who remove ancient Land-Marks*; against those, *that pervert Judgment*; and against those, *that take a Reward to slay the Innocent*; neither do the *Levites* discharge Their Duties, unless they *speack these things aloud*, in the Ears of the People; nor the People Theirs, unless, in Acknowledgment that the Curses of God are due to these Sins, *they say, Amen.*

A false Notion seems to have been taken up, of late Years, as if it were not consistent with a true Christian Temper, to inveigh against the Treason of those Regicides, who embrued their Hands in the Blood of their martyr'd Sovereign; as if it became Us rather to cast a Veil over it, than to Expose it to publick View; and as if the Memorial of it ought, at last, to be discontinued, lest, by going on to ripp up old Sores, We transgress the Bounds of Charity and Moderation. But, are Murder and Rebellion Sins that, at any Time, ought to be touch'd Gently, and to be handled with Caution and Tenderness? or, Are those Sins become less

Abominable in the Sight of God, or less Detestable by Good Men, in Our Days, than they were in the Days of Our Fathers? Hath not the Legislative Authority set apart this Day, on purpose, that the Guilt of that Sacred and Innocent Blood, which was shed thereon, might be Confess'd and Lamented? and should that Guilt be, on Such Occasions, Stifled, Extenuated, Dissembled? Is it Seasonable, to preach against Rebellion upon the Fifth of *November*? and, Is the Same Doctrine Unseasonable upon the Thirtieth of *January*? Are Treason and Bloodshed Things of So indifferent a Nature, that We ought not rashly to censure Them, who spend this Day in Revellings and Feastings, but charitably to suppose, that, as (a) *He that regardeth the Day, regardeth it unto the Lord; so He that regardeth not the Day, to the Lord He doth not regard it?* Have any Alterations been made, of late, in the Decalogue? and, Is the Fifth Commandment, which enjoins Reverence and Obedience to our Governours; or the Sixth, which prohibits Murder, repeal'd? Was the Mur-

(a) Rom. 14. 6.

der of King *Charles* committed so long ago, that it's high time it should now be forgotten? But, Is not the Murder of the *righteous Abel* of a much earlier Date, and hath not God, in his Word, *set such a Mark upon Cain*, that his Sin shall never be forgotten? Was not *Aaron's Rod*, by the positive Command of God, laid up in the Ark, (a) *that it might be kept for a Token against the Rebels*, through all succeeding Generations? (b) *The Acts of Zimri, and his Treason that He wrought, were they not written in the Books of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?* And were they not Therefore written there, that they might be sure to be remembred? Were none of the Four Evangelists Men of a Gospel-Temper? And, doth any One of them let the Name of *Judas* pass, without fixing a Mark upon Him, as a *Traitor*? Did not *St. Stephen*, at the same time that he pray'd unto God, *that He would not lay to the Charge of his Murderers their Sin*, display the Guilt of Them, and their Ancestors, in its proper Colours? (c) *Ye Stiff-necked,*

(a) Num. 17. 10. (b) 1 Kings 16. 20. (c) Acts 7. 51, 52.

and Uncircumcised in Heart and Ears: Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as Your Fathers did, so do Ye. Which of the Prophets have not Your Fathers persecuted? And, they have slain them, which shewed before of the coming of the Just One, of whom Ye have been now the Betrayers and Murderers. Shall we accuse this Holy Martyr of Bitterness and Wrath, because He used this Plainness of Speech, when He spoke of Traitors and Murderers? But had not the Blessed Jesus Himself spoken the very same Language upon the same Occasion? (a) Ye be Witnessess unto Your selves, that Ye are the Children of them that killed the Prophets: Fill ye up then the Measure of your Fathers, Ye Serpents, Ye Generation of Vipers,—that upon You may come all the righteous Blood shed upon the Earth, from the Blood of righteous Abel, unto the Blood of Zacharias, Son of Barachias, whom Ye slew between the Temple and the Altar. It is no wonder, if such keen Re-proofs of Treachery and Murder, as these were, cut to the Heart Persons Guilty of these Crimes, and approving the Deeds of their Guilty Ancestors: But, certainly, We may Disapprove, Condemn, Expose

(a) Matth. 23. 31.

Traiterous and Blood-thirsty Men, without giving Offence to any Guiltless Hearers, to any Favourers of the Royal Cause. All Men of Religious and Peaceable Principles, all who Fear God, and Honour his Vicegerents, will be ready, at the first Hearing, to Condemn; upon farther Consideration, to Detest; and upon all proper Occasions, to Declare their Abhorrence of, such Unchristian, such Unnatural Parricides: They will admire the Virtues, pity the Sufferings, and reverence the Memory of the Royal Martyr: They will, with Shame and Sorrow, look back upon those Days of Darknes and of Gloominess, (a) *when the Lord cover'd the Daughter of Zion with a Cloud, and in the Indignation of his Anger took away from Us the King and the Priest*: They will bless his Holy Name, for restoring, together with the Monarchy, Peace and Order, to the State; the True Religion, and the Beauty of Holiness, to his Church: They will be deeply sensible of their Own Happiness, in living under the Best of Governments, and the Mildest of Princes: They will dis-

(a) Lam. 2. 1.

countenance all Seditious Principles, that tend to disturb the Quiet of Her Reign, and to shake the very Foundations, on which all Government stands : They will pray unto God, that Her Designs for the Good of this Church and State, which are as Sincere as the Blessed Martyr's were, may be more Successful ; That God would preserve Her from the Machinations of Men of the same wicked Principles with Those, who made themselves drunk with the Blood of Her Royal Grandfather : That She may have a much Longer, much Quieter, and much Happier Reign, over Loving and Obedient Subjects ; and that, without treading any of the same Wearisome Steps, which He did, She may, at last, arrive at those happy Mansions of Bliss, where His Righteous Soul liveth and dwelleth amongst the Glorious Saints and Martyrs of God in Heaven.

A S E R.

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S E R M O N

Preach'd at the
Cathedral Church of St. Paul,
Before the Right Honourable the
Lord Mayor, &c.

I T H E S. II. 4. Latter part of
the Verse,

---*Not as pleasing Men, but God,
which trieth our Hearts.*

ST. Paul doth here speak of pleasing Men, and of pleasing God, as things not only different in Speculation, but inconsistent in Fact. When he professeth of Himself, that in the Discharge of his Ministry, He did not aim at

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pleasing Men, but God, which trieth our Hearts; He seems to imply, that these are two Opposite Ends, and that those who pursue the One, do thereby plainly shew that they have no regard at all to the Other. But in other parts of his *Epistles*, he speaks as if he was of a quite contrary Opinion: He advises the *Corinthians* against doing any thing that might displease any sort of Men: And that we may not think He exhorted them to what he did not practise himself, He recommends this Advice to them, by the Authority of his own Example, (a) *Give none Offence, saith he, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God; even as I please all Men in all things.* What therefore He in this place declares, must receive some Limitations; and it may be of Use to us, not so much to justify *St. Paul's* Conduct in this matter, as to regulate our Own, to know what those Limits are; to enquire into the Measures we ought to prescribe to our selves, in our Study to please Men; to examine, when, and in what Cases an Endeavour to please Men is Innocent,

(a) 1 Cor. 10. 32, 33.

when Unlawful, when the Duty of a good and sincere Christian. I say, an Endeavour to please ; for the Actual Pleasing of Men is not within our Power, nor doth it depend upon our Choice ; so that it cannot properly be the Subject of any Command or Prohibition. When *St. Paul* therefore saith, That he did not please Men, but God ; this cannot be understood of his Actual pleasing Men, but of his Aim and Endeavour to please them. Men may be pleas'd with those Actions that are perform'd, without any Design to please them ; but this Pleasure cannot be ascrib'd as a Vertue, or imputed as a Fault, to those who intended it not : When therefore we are either commanded or forbidden to please Men, this Precept is of the same Nature, and must admit of the same Interpretation, as that of *St. Paul to Timothy*, *Let no Man despise thee*. It was not wholly in *Timothy's* Power, whether he should be despised or not ; nor is it in Ours, whether We shall please Men, or not : But as by that Command *Timothy* was enjoyn'd to do such things as might procure Reverence, and to forbear such

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as might cause Contempt ; so, when we are either commanded or forbidden to please Men, we are enjoin'd or prohibited to do those things which are most likely to please, or to intend the pleasing of Men by our Actions : So that in this case, we are to measure the Goodness or Evil of our Actions, not by their Actual pleasing, but by our Design and Endeavour to please ; and are to shew when, and how far, this Endeavour is Innocent, when it is a Sin, and when it is a Duty.

What is necessary to be said on this Subject, will, I think, be fairly included under these three Heads.

- I. Whatever Men may Innocently be pleas'd with, That we may Innocently do, in order to please Men.
- II. What Men ought not to be pleas'd with, That we ought not to do, to please Men thereby.
- III. What Men ought to be pleas'd with, That we are bound to do, that Men may be pleas'd therewith.

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I. Whatever Men may Innocently be pleas'd with, that we may Innocently do, in order to please Men.

God hath implanted in our Souls a natural Desire of Pleasure ; which consequently in some Cases we may give way to ; because otherwise this Desire would be implanted in Vain : To be pleas'd therefore, is not always a Sin, but is Good or Evil, according to its different Causes, Occasions, and Circumstances. What things God hath not forbid us to be pleas'd with, in Those we may Innocently take pleasure ; and as we may, without Guilt, be pleas'd Our selves, so may we, with Innocence, contribute to the Warrantable Pleasures of each Other : For what another can Innocently be pleas'd with, that I may do without Sin ; since if I could not do it without Sin, neither could he without Guilt be pleas'd in my doing of it, because no one ought to be pleas'd with any Action which is in the least Sinful ; and if an Action be in it self Lawful, it cannot become Otherwise by its pleasing others, unless there were some Law of God against doing any thing which might
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please our Brother. But that a thing pleases, is so far from making what is in it self Innocent to become Sinful, that rather of Indifferent, it makes it a Duty; for since we are bound to contribute to the Happiness of our Brethren, and so far as we do please them without exposing them to any Mischief, we do make them Happy; to please others, where it can be done without Sin, seems to be an Act of Brotherly Charity. God hath been so indulgent to us, that he hath debarr'd us from no Pleasures, but such as will at last end in Grief and Pain; and we are so far from being forbidden to promote the Pleasure of Others, that we are never restrain'd from pleasing them, but where the Pleasure which we afford them, will at last tend to their Hurt. This Rule will justify us in the Use of all Innocent Methods of pleasing each Other. We may comply with the Warrantable Customs of the Age, and with the Manners of those we live with: We may make our Persons acceptable to those with whom we converse, by Civil and Obliging Conversation: We may divert their Imagination with the Pleasantry

try of Wit, and Innocent Mirth; and much more feed their Understandings with Delightful Truths: In short, we may minister to any unforbidden Pleasure of each other, without being guilty of so pleasing Men, as to displease *God, who trieth our Hearts.*

But in the II^d. Place.

What Men ought not to be pleas'd with,
That we ought not to do, to please Men
thereby.

The Pleasures of Men are to be bound-
ed within certain Limits, beyond which
if they pass, they become Unwarrantable.
The Will of Man, by the Law of our
Creation, ought to be subordinate to the
Will of God: Whilst it conforms it self
to that Rule, it is Just: When it any way
transgresses That, it becomes Unjust.
When Man therefore is pleas'd with that
which displeases God, this Pleasure is sin-
ful, because Nothing, which is contrary
to the Will of God, ought to be the Ob-
ject of our Pleasure. And as Men ought
not to be pleas'd with any thing which is
Sinful, so ought they not to do any thing
which is Sinful, to please each other: For,
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what is in it self Unlawful, cannot become Lawful by its pleasing ; since the pleasing or displeasing Men is wholly extrinfecal to the Morality of our Actions, any otherwise than as God commands or forbids us to please them : To some Men indeed our Actions will be Pleasing or Displeasing, as they are Good or Bad ; but they are Good or Bad, only as they are pleasing or displeasing to God. This Rule will condemn all Endeavour to please Men, by doing any thing which is Evil ; Evil to Them, or to Us ; destructive to Their Salvation, or to our Own.

And *First*, We must not, to please Men, do any thing which is prejudicial to Their Salvation. It is the height of Folly, to be pleas'd with what tends to our Ruin, and of Cruelty, to please Others, at the Expence of their eternal Happiness. He would do a very inhumane Office to his Friend, who should administer him a deadly Draught, tho' it pleas'd his Palate, and were sweeter than Honey in his Mouth. By this vicious Complaisance, the Serpent first beguil'd *Eve* ; and She, being deceiv'd, brought *Adam* into the Transgression ;

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When She had tasted the Forbidden Fruit, and eaten thereof, She was willing, in great Courtesy, to oblige her Lord, by communicating to him, in the same Morfel, Pleasure and Death. Of the same fatal Treachery are all those Instruments of Satan guilty, who instruct raw and unpractis'd Sinners in the ways of Vice; bring them first acquainted with Sin; and take upon them, with the Devil on the Mount, to shew them the World, and the Pleasures of it. These make it their Business to call aside Passengers, who are going on right in the Ways of Vertue, and to lead them officiously into the more pleasant Paths of Vice. (a) *Whofo is simple, they bid him turn aside thither; and as for him that wanteth Understanding, they say unto him, stoln Waters are sweet, and Bread eaten in secret, is pleasant.* (b) Thus, *With much fair Speech they cause him to yield; with the Flattering of their Lips they ensnare him. He goeth after Pleasure straitway, as an Ox goeth to the Slaughter, or as a Fool to the Correction of the Stocks: As a Bird, he hasteth to the Snare, and knoweth not that it is for his*

(a) Prov. 9. 16, 17. (b) Prov. 7. 21, &c.

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Life; till at last he finds, by sad Experience, that this pleasant Way *leads to Hell, and goes down to the Chambers of Death*. Next to this First Rank of Sinners, who please Men by being their Tutors and Directors in Vice, are those complaisant Persons, who, tho' they do not plainly and expressly Invite Men to be wicked, yet Countenance them in their Vice, and Encourage them to continue in it, by Flattery or Connivance. They know how unable Vice is to sustain it self under Disgrace; and how glad a Vicious Man is, when His Sins, of which He himself is naturally ashamed, are kept in countenance by Those with whom he converses. These Courteous Men therefore, are careful strictly to watch all their Words, lest any should escape them, which might betray the least Dislike of what those Persons do, whose Ruine they had rather See, than Feel their Displeasure. If by opposing themselves to the licentious Practices of a daring Sinner, they should chance to offend him, some small Temporal Interest of their Own might be in danger; which, because it is their Own, they do not think worth hazarding, to pur-

purchase the Eternal Salvation of Another. If their deluded Friend should be so hardy, as to walk upon a Precipice, they are more complaisant than to spoil a Frolick, tho' the next step may be into the Depths of Hell. Over Men of such fordid Spirits, Sinners have as great a Power, as they have over their own Consciences: When Ungodly Men have once prevail'd with their Consciences not to accuse them, these Flatterers soon take the Hint, and presently stop their Mouths; and both together suffer the Habitual Sinner to go on quietly to Perdition: For such Men think it sufficient, that Their Charity to the Soul of their Brother, should keep pace with his Love to Himself: And if it is His Pleasure to sacrifice his Soul to his Lusts, He disposeth of what is his Own; and they will not be so impertinently rude, as to intermeddle in the Concerns of Another. They find it is his Humour to live without Controul, and they know how to make their Court better than to attempt to save a Man against his Will. This fordid Compliance with the Wicked, for fear of displeasing them,

as it is a Sign of a Base and Servile Spirit, where ever it is met ; so is it attended with greater Degrees of Guilt and Scandal in those, whose Peculiar Office it is boldly to rebuke Sin, and to shew the People their Transgressions. God hath denounc'd very severe Woes against those Seers, who *shut their Eyes, and will not see ; who speak smooth things, and prophesy Deceit ; who sow Pillows* under the Arms of Sinners, that they may sleep on securely, and take their Ease. Should the Ministers of the Gospel suit their Doctrines, not to the Edification, but to the Palates of their Hearers ; should they, *who are allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel, even so speak, not as pleasing God, which trieth our Hearts, but as pleasing Men ;* should they *handle the Word of God deceitfully, not by Manifestation of the Truth, commending themselves to every Man's Conscience,* but by Dissimulation of the Truth, commending themselves to some Mens Favour ; should they, in order to compliment Sinners of Distinction and Rank, represent the Way which leadeth unto Life, as much Broader, and the Gate which entreth into Heaven,

as a great deal Wider, than Christ in the Gospel hath taught Us they are ; should they take more care to advance Pleasing Errors, than to preach Useful Truths ; should they Alter, should they Disguise, should they Stifle any fundamental Points, either of the Christian Faith, or of the Christian Practice, which they had formerly inculcated with Zeal and Earnestness, not because they judged such Points to be less True, less Necessary, or less Seasonable, but meerly because they found them to be less Taking, less Popular, and less Fashionable, than they had been ; should, I say, *the Stewards of the Mysteries of God* be at any time thus Unfaithful, they would Probably incur the Displeasure even of those very Men, whom by so Scandalous a Conduct they sought to please ; they would Certainly expose themselves to the just Censures of all Wise and Good Men, and to the utmost Indignation of an Offended God. Should we thus *depart out of the Way*, should we *cause many to stumble at the Law*, should we *corrupt the Covenant of God*, it would be just in God to make us *Contemptible and Base before all the People*,

according as we have not kept his Ways, but have been partial in his Law. But were we sure to please Men by such base Compliances, yet should we deserve ill of those, whom by thus pleasing we expos'd to Ruine. Better are the keenest Reproofs of an Open Enemy, than the fatal Endearments of those false Friends, who whilst they flatter Men into Damnation, and betray those to whom they make their Court, have no other Title than *Judas* had, to be numbred amongst the faithful *Servants of Jesus Christ.* But,

Secondly, As we may not please Men, by doing any thing which is destructive to Their Salvation; so neither may we please them, by doing any thing which may endanger Our Own. Charity to my Brother, Obliges me rather to incur his Displeasure, than to contribute to his Ruine; and Charity to my Own Soul, will make me rather venture to displease Man than God. It is not lawful for any Man to make his Pleasure the Rule of his Own Actions; much less Ought another to make His Will the measure of Mine: He, who expects that I should comply with Him, is
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himself bound up by the same Laws as I am : We are Both limited by the Laws of God, and it can be no Excuse to either of Us, that We seek to gratify our Fellow-Servant, by transgressing the Commands of our common Lord and Master. When at any time we consult the Pleasure, and comply with the Desires of each other, it is not so properly Men whom we desire to please, as God, who hath commanded us in some things to please Men : And to shew that it is not the Pleasure of Man, which governs us any otherwise than in subordination to God's, when the Will of our Fellow-Creatures runs counter to the Commandments of God our Creator, we ought no longer to shew our selves Obsequious and Complaisant. Whatever Motives can be urg'd for our Compliance in any thing which is Sinful, will betray the Cause which they are brought for, and plead much stronger for a peremptory Refusal. If to work upon our Gratitude, Past Favours are pretended, why we should not stand out, the Mercies we have receiv'd from God are infinitely Greater, the Obligations to him Earlier, and the Ties by

which we are bound to him much Stronger. If those who would have us do Their Pleasure, address themselves to our Hopes, by shewing that it is our Interest to humour them, or would prevail upon our Fears, by representing to us the ill Consequences of disobliging them, yet Heaven hath greater Rewards in store than they can Promise, much more than they can make Good ; and Hell hath greater Plagues in reserve than they can Threaten, much more than they can Inflict. If we chuse to offend Them, rather than disobey God, we have just Reason to hope, that His Providence will shelter us from any ill Effects of their Displeasure : But if to please them, we Offend God, their Power is unable to secure us From, or to support us Under his Displeasure. His Anger is Unavoidable, so that there is no flying from it : His Vengeance is Insupportable, so that there is no abiding under it. We may sometimes Incur the Displeasure of Men, for not conforming Our Practice to Theirs, but we can never Deserve it ; and this Testimony of Our own Conscience, that we suffer Unjustly, will
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bear us up against their Frowns : But we can never displease God, but we must at the same time wound our Own Conscience, which will then be so far from supporting us under the Weight of God's Displeasure, that it will it self prove a Burden too great for Man to bear. From Men's Displeasure, be the Effects of it at present never so severe, there will in a short time be a final Release ; but the Divine Vengeance will pursue us out of This World into the Next ; in the Grave we shall not find any Sanctuary against that Punishment, which will last as long as the Guilt which deserves it, the Soul which Suffers it, and God who inflicts it. These Thoughts ought always to be present to our Minds, to deterr us from seeking to please Men by any sinful Practices ; for no Temptation, which Satan useth, turns better to his Account, or betrays more Souls into the Snares of Death, than this Fear of Displeasing Men : It is not the Persecution of Tyrants only, that makes Men fall from their Duty, but every private Man hath that Awe over his Neighbour, as to Fright him into Sin : It is not only out of
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the Fear of Death, or Banishment, or Poverty, or any Evils of the first Magnitude, that we transgress the Laws of God ; but the Fear of an angry Word, an unkind Look, a cool Indifference towards us, shall make us comply with what we know to be Sinful and Damnable.

Nor doth this Fear work only upon Base and Cowardly Spirits, but upon those also that have the Reputation of the most Brave. He that can undauntedly mount a Breach, and advance to the Mouth of a Canon, yet hath not Courage enough to be Sober amongst the Intemperate, or to refuse a Challenge. Nay, those very Persons who have not been afraid at the Frowns of a Prince, but have been content to lose all they had, rather than to abjure their Religion at his Command, yet have been known to live in direct Opposition to it, rather than by being Singular to disoblige those with whom they have conversed. This Compliance with sinful Practices, in order to please Sinners borroweth the Disguise of several good Qualities, and puts on very plausible Names. When the *Romanist* would have us believe,

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as the Church believes, he calls this Compliance Catholick-Communion: When one who gives himself a Latitude in Living, would prevail with us to do as he doth, he calls this Good Nature: To fall in with all the Modish Vices of the Age, is styl'd Good Breeding: And those who would perswade Others to run into the same Excess of Riot, as they allow Themselves in, term this Good Fellowship. That Indifference to All Religions, and All Communions, which is deservedly Odious, when it is call'd by its own true Name of Luke-warmness, must be recommended under the more specious Title of Temper and Moderation: And that Atheism and Infidelity, which would fright People from being Profelytes thereto, if they were directly propos'd as such, must, in order to gain Converts, borrow the gentler Appellation of Free-thinking, and divesting Our selves of the Prejudices of Education. The more frequent this Vicious Compliance is, and the more specious Appearances it carries, the more we ought to be upon our Guard against it, as knowing it is too great a strain of Complaisance to

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commit Sin, rather than to do what they call a Rude Thing: And we carry the Compliment too far, when we please Men at the Expence of our own Everlasting Salvation.

But tho' we ought not to please Men by doing any thing which may endanger Their Souls, or our Own, yet there are Other Cases, wherein it is not only Lawful, but our Bounden Duty to please Men, since in these the pleasing of Men is one part of that Duty, which we owe to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. For,

Thirdly, What Men Ought to be pleas'd with, That we Ought to do, that Men may be pleas'd therewith.

Since God's Will is the Rule of Man's, whatever Actions are agreeable to the Laws of God, Ought to be pleasing to Men; and as Men ought to be Pleas'd, when God's Name is Glorified by the Performance of his Will, so ought they to promote the Pleasure of each other, by the mutual Observance of His Commandments. Good Men are justly pleas'd, when the Laws of God are kept, and his Name is honour'd: This Pleasure they have a
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good Right and Title to ; and that they may have frequent Opportunities of exercising it, *Our Light Ought so to shine before these righteous Persons, that seeing these our good Works, they may be pleas'd, and glorify our Father which is in Heaven.* I do not say, that we ought to perform Good Actions only that we may please Men ; for if they be done barely for this end, they commence Bad Actions ; and such as Good Men, if they are aware that they proceed from this Bad Principle, ought not to be pleas'd with : But since God hath annexed Praise and Esteem to Vertuous Actions, which, as they are pleasing to Him, so they procure us also the Good Will of Men ; such Actions as these, are not Less, but More our Duty, for being Amiable and Pleasing. *Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any Vertue, and, if there be any Praise,* our Apostle commands us to *think on such things.* We are not to think of these only, because they procure us Love, Reputation, and Praise ; but because being Just, Pure, and Vertuous, they
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are such as ought to be Belov'd, Esteem'd, and Prais'd. This Love, Esteem, and Praise, were they separated from Justice, Purity, and Vertue, ought not to be aim'd at by us : But since the pleasing of Men naturally arises from our Performance of such laudable Actions, we must, by the doing these, contribute to the Pleasure of godly Men. This Rule will not only Warrant us, but Oblige us to please good Men, by keeping all the Laws of God : And because all Men, whether they are or not, yet Ought to be pleas'd with what tends to the Honour of Religion, to the Good of Men's Souls, and to the Publick Peace ; it will be our Duty to endeavour the pleasing of Men, in order to promote these great Ends. And,

1st, We must please Men, that we may thereby promote the Honour of our Religion. Some Men mistake Ill-nature for a certain Sign of Grace, and think they are not such as they ought to be, unless in every thing they are Singular : To Hate the World, and to be Hated by it, is, in their Opinion, the Duty and Lot of all Christ's Disciples ; and they are apt to sus-
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pect themselves, if Others think well of them, or are Pleas'd with any thing they do. Hence, in the whole Conduct of their Lives, they take a great Delight to thwart and to cross others : By a rude and churlish Behaviour, they declare an open Defiance to Mankind, and think they can never please God, but by displeasing Men. This sour and rugged Temper of some Men, who pretend to be good Christians, purely because they are not like other Men, and who exclude all such from being Religious, who are not like themselves, brings a great Scandal on that Faith which they profess, and by this Malignancy of Spirit disparagē. For Sweetness of Nature, and an Obliging Deportment, have a good Title to, and are in present Possession of, a very fair Reputation in all civiliz'd parts of the World ; so that Religion must needs suffer much in the Opinions of Men, if it should be thought to countenance Ill-nature and Ill-breeding. Courteousness and Affability, Meekness and Deference to others, have had a place amongst Moral Vertues, in all the Schemes of Duty that have yet appear'd in the World : And it would be a
 great

great Reproach on the Gospel, to suppose that we must put off all Humanity, before we can commence Good Christians. There are indeed several things, wherein it is Unlawful for us to comply with the Customs of the World; but the more we are bound up in These Cases, the more cautious we ought to be in Other things not to be Stiff and Humorsome. If in Some things we are forc'd to be Singular, because our Holy Religion will not permit Us to do as Others do; the best way to convince Mankind, that this proceeds not from Frowardness, and that we do not take delight to Oppose others, will be by shewing a ready Compliance, and a sincere Desire to please, where we have a greater Scope, and where the Laws of God are so far from Forbidding us, that they Oblige us to comply. This Endeavour to please Men, will free our Religion from the Scandal of Sowring Men's Tempers, of rendring them Morose and Unsociable, Sullen and Perverse, Ill-natur'd and Untractable, which are Qualities of so Odious a Character, that a Religion which should seem to inspire them,

would

would be thought very improper for Persons of Good Nature, and Ingenuous Education; that is, for the very Best part of Mankind to be govern'd by. And as we ought thus to please Men, in order to vindicate the Honour of our Religion, so

2dly, We ought to please Men, in order to promote the Spiritual Good of their Souls.

When our Apostle lays down this general Precept, (a) *Let every one please his Neighbour*, He immediately subjoins to what End this Pleasing of our Neighbour ought to be directed, i. e. *For his Good to Edification*. This, as it is the End which He recommends to Others to pursue, so was it the Scope to which His Own Endeavours to please, were constantly directed. (b) *I please Men*, saith he, *in all things, not seeking mine Own Profit, but the Profit of many, that they might be saved*. This was the Reason of his Easy Compliance, and adapting himself to the several Tempers and Humours of those he conversed with: If he was a (c) *Servant unto all Men*, it was

(a) Rom. 15. 2. (b) 1 Cor. 10. 33. (c) 1 Cor. 9. 19, &c.

that he might gain the more : Unto the Jews he became as a Jew, that he might gain the Jew : To them that were under the Law, as under the Law, that he might gain them under the Law : To them that were without Law, as without Law, that he might gain them that were without Law : To the Weak, he became as Weak, that he might gain the Weak : And was made All Things, to All Men, that he might by all Means save some. For our Apostle, who was perfectly well skill'd in all the Arts of Divine Oratory, understood very well how necessary it is, in order to convincing Men's Judgments, and influencing their Actions, to be first of all Master of their Affections. If we would have Men come in easily to our Opinions, and be govern'd by our Counsels, we must take care so to demean our selves, that they may be pleas'd with us, and have an Esteem for our Persons. It will be difficult to convince any, that we have an earnest Zeal for the good of their Souls, and a passionate Desire to promote their Eternal Welfare, if at the same time we do any thing which may justly offend and disquiet them, and make their Present

condition Uneasy and Unpleasant. He who pretends to advise and direct another, challengeth some sort of Superiority over him; which the Pride that is natural to all Men, makes them very difficultly bear: It is necessary therefore that he should temper his Advice with a Mixture of Sweetness, and take care, that his Demeanor be such, as may prepare the Mind of his Disciple to submit more willingly to his Direction. Those Wholsom Instructions, which Charity requires us to give to our Brethren, are generally such, as in their own Nature are not very Grateful and Pleasing to the depraved Appetites of Men: To make them therefore the more Acceptable, and that they may be the better Relish'd, they must be set off with an Air of Pleasantness; and what of it self is Distastful, must have its Bitterness dissembled, that it may be the easier taken down, and convey Health to the distemper'd Soul. Hence the Wisdom of the Ancients thought it proper to couch the severe Precepts of Morality under the Pleasantness of Fable; they cloath'd their Notions of Philosophy and the sober Di-

States of right Reason, in the gaiest Dress that Poetry could furnish ; and took care to Please the Fancies of their Hearers, that by these means they might insinuate themselves into their good Esteem ; and by Pleasing, might Profit them. And our Saviour, in condescension to the Infirmities of Men, hath vouchsafed to Use, and by his Using hath Sanctified this Method of Instruction. He hath deliver'd the Doctrines of the Gospel in the delightful Style of Parables, which in their first and literal Meaning are fitted to Entertain and to Divert the Hearer, and so to prepare his Mind for the Reception of those Practical Truths, which are conceal'd Under them, and convey'd By them. Now since Christian Charity obligeth us to seek the Spiritual Good of others, and Experience sheweth us, how naturally Esteem or Disesteem, Approbation or Dislike, pass from Persons to Doctrines ; that our Endeavours to promote the Spiritual Welfare of our Brethren may have the better Effect, we Ought to study the Pleasing those, whom without Pleasing we cannot Profit ; to this end our Apostle made it his utmost

most care to please Men, and by thus pleasing them, did the Office of an Apostle or Servant of Jesus Christ. And as the Private Interest of our Neighbour is a good end of endeavouring to please, so

3dly, We must endeavour to Please Others, in order to promote the Publick Peace. We are commanded *to follow Peace with all Men*; and because there are some proper Means of attaining this End, we are also Oblig'd to *follow after the things which make for Peace*. All those Words and Actions, which have any Influence towards the establishing an amicable Correspondence amongst our Fellow-Christians, are, by Virtue of this Precept, matter of Strict Duty; and all, which have the least Tendency to disquiet the Minds of our Brethren, are, by force of the same Precept, Utterly Unlawful. Now if we closely observe the Origine of all Quarrels, we shall find, that they arise from the Displeasure we conceive one against another. We may perceive by Our selves, how nicely tender Self-love is; how desirous we are, that every one should do what We like; and how we are presently upon the Alarm, if

any one betrays the least Slight of us, by doing what is Displeasing to us : We may be sure this Self-love is planted as Deeply, and works as Strongly in other Men, as in Us : They are as much addicted to their own Humours, as we are to Ours ; and love as little to be thwarted in them as We do : If therefore we are sensible, how quick and severe our Own Repentments are, when any thing is done which offends Us, if we would not awaken the same Repentments in Others, we must be careful not to do any thing, which may justly displease Them. We all naturally desire to be pleas'd, but if each should constantly follow his own Humour, we shall mutually interfere one with another. The best way to provide for our Own Satisfaction, and the Publick Peace, will be to gratify Each Other ; to procure the Courtesy of Others, by complaisance towards Them, and by a mutual Commerce of the Offices of Humanity to keep up that good Order, which, upon the least Failure of these Duties, is presently disturb'd. That Inward Peace which consists in Unity of Mind, and Agreement of Judgment, is rather to be
Wish'd

Wish'd, than Hop'd for, in a perverse Generation : But even then, when we cannot come up to This happy State, we may preserve that Outward Quiet, which consists in the reciprocal Discharge of all the Duties of Civility. This tender Care how we displease others, as it procures Their good Will to Us, so it keeps alive Ours to Them : For since it is difficult to have a Warmth for any, in whom we perceive a Coolness towards Us, the same Actions of Ours, which create an Averseness in Them, will by degrees extinguish in Our Minds that Charity, which Ought always to be active in us towards our Christian Brethren. The reconciling of Differences, when they are come to full growth, and the restoring of Peace, where it hath been long broken, are attended with so many Difficulties, that they seldom prove successful. It will be much easier by pleasing each other, to suppress this Evil in its First Rise, to prevent its Birth, and to hinder its Conception. (a) *The beginning of Strife, is as when one letteth out Water ;* which, having once past its Banks, spreads it self

(a) Prov. 17. 14.

to a vast Extent, but might, by a moderate Care at first, have been kept within its due Compass. Now since all those Quarrels, which disturb that mutual Concord that ought to be amongst all Christians, have their First Rise from some Misunderstandings betwixt them ; since these arise from our disobliging each Other by Words or Actions not pleasing ; to prevent these Mischiefs, and to preserve that Brotherly Love, which is the peculiar Duty and Character of Christians, we are oblig'd to endeavour the Pleasing of each Other. Glory to God, Peace on Earth, and Good-will towards Men, are the great Ends of the Gospel : Since therefore by pleasing Men, we may promote the Honour of Our Religion, the Publick Peace, and the Salvation of each other, to please Men, in order to these good Ends, is to acquit our selves faithful Servants of Jesus Christ.

But tho' in these things we ought to please Men, yet we must not rest here : The pleasing of Men must not be the Chief Reason and Ultimate End even of our Good Actions. For he who is govern'd

vern'd by no better a Principle than this ; acts by a very Unsteady; Insufficient, Dangerous, and False Rule.

Those Actions can never be Uniform, which are directed by a Rule capable of Change : So that there must necessarily be a great deal of Uncertainty and Variety in that Man's Actions, who adapts all he doth to the Pleasing of Men. For what Some Men are pleas'd with, will be displeasing to Others ; and here he will be at a loss, how to determine himself, since the Danger of Disappointment is equal to the Hopes of Success. Nay, so inconstant are the Minds of Men, so mutable their Interests, and with them their Inclinations, that the Same Actions do not always please the Same Man : So that were we to govern our Lives according to any one Man's Pleasure, we should never be able by any Art to hit that Mark, which constantly wavers.

But were this Rule of Acting more Fix'd than it is, yet still it would prove Insufficient : For there are several Degrees and Instances of Duty, to which it would not extend. Actions in themselves
 very

very Faulty, and which want many of those Circumstances which are necessary to make them truly Good, may yet by a fair Out-side chance to please Men; so that such a Principle of Acting, would rather Minister to Ostentation, than make us sincerely Vertuous. There are many Actions, which we are strictly bound to, which in some Times and Circumstances may not be pleasing to Those, whose Esteem of us we most value: And such as these we shall very unwillingly venture on, if our utmost Aim in doing well, is to please Men. There are moreover several Acts of Charity and Devotion to be done in Private, and those Men cannot be pleased with, because they are industriously hidden from them; which therefore are in great danger of being omitted by those, who look not beyond the Esteem of Men.

Nor is this only an Inexpedient and Defective, but also a Dangerous and Unsafe Rule. If an Endeavour to please Men, is the main Spring of our Motion towards Good; if their Love and Esteem, their Applause and Approbation, seem to us Blessings of that Importance, that we cannot

not be Easy or Happy without them, and therefore incite us strongly to the Performance of those Good Actions, by which they are sometimes to be attain'd; we are in great danger of being tempted to Evil also, when the Pleasure of Men, of which we are so fond, is no otherways to be procur'd. For He who performs Good Actions only to please Men, doth not choose these, as they are Vertuous, but as they are Pleasing and Agreeable; so that if Evil Actions shall appear to tend equally, or more, to the End he aims at, he will be by this Principle equally or more inclin'd to those. But tho' this wrong Biass on the Soul should not carry it so far as to comply with what is Confessedly and Notoriously Evil, yet it will make us apt to entertain a favourable Opinion of all Actions, which minister to an End we so eagerly pursue: It will make us at first Wish them lawful, and at last by easy Degrees, we shall pass on to Esteem them such.

But after all, the chief and true Reason why we should not make the Praise of Men the Rule of our Actions, is, because it is a False one. It is not that Rule by which

which we ought to Live, because it is not that, by which we shall be finally Judged. God hath not only requir'd, that we should perform such and such prescrib'd Actions, but that we should do them out of a true Sense of our Duty to Him, and entire Regard to his Law. At the last Day, when our few Good Actions shall be set against our numberless Sins, those which were done barely to please Men, shall not come into Account with the Former. Actions done to please Men only, can expect no Reward but from Men: But if the Pleasing of God be the Scope of all our Actions, we have a fair Prospect of a Reward from the Hands of God. Let us therefore in all things act, *(a) not as Men-pleasers, but as the Servants of Christ, doing the Will of God from the Heart, with Good-will doing Service as to the Lord, and not to Men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any Man doth, upon this good Principle, the same he shall receive of the Lord, in the great Day of Retribution.*

(a) Eph. 6. 6, 7, 8.

*The Royal Benefactress: Or, the
great Charity of Educating poor
Children.*

I N A

S E R M O N

Preach'd in the
Parish-Church of *St. Sepulchre*,
June 1. 1710.

B E I N G

Thursday in Whitfun-Week.

At the Anniverfary Meeting of the Chil-
dren Educated in the Charity-Schools,
in and about the Cities of LONDON
and WESTMINSTER.

The Royal Benefactress, &c.

I N A
 S E R M O N, &c.

Exodus II. Ver. ix, x.

And Pharaoh's Daughter said unto Her, Take this Child away, and Nurse it for Me, and I will give Thee thy Wages. And the Woman took the Child, and nursed it. And the Child grew, and She brought Him unto Pharaoh's Daughter and He became Her Son.

THE Inspir'd Books of *Moses* are, as it were, One continued History of God's providential Care of his chosen People: Many and Wonderful are the Instances therein

recorded of the Interposal of the Almighty, in rescuing his Servants from Imminent dangers: But amongst these, None is more remarkable, None was attended with greater Consequences, than the Preservation of *Moses* from that Death, to which He was expos'd in his Infancy; and the Deliverance of Him, whom God hath appointed to be the Deliverer of his People.

Measures had been taken at the Court of *Pharaoh*, for the utter Extirpation of the Children of *Israel*: And in pursuance of these an Edict had issued forth, that (a) *every Son that was born unto them, should be cast into the River*. Under these unhappy Circumstances *Moses* is born, by the Cruelty of his Prince destin'd to immediate Death, but by the Decrees of God reserv'd to be the Glorious Instrument, who was to Execute His All-wise purposes. All the Care, that could be taken by a tender Mother of a lovely Child, was taken by the Mother of *Moses*, for his Preservation: (b) *When she saw Him, that He was a goodly Child, she hid Him three Months*. But it seems the Enemy was as Vigilant for his

(a) Exodus i. 22. (b) Chap. 2 v. 2.

Ruine, as his Parents could be for his Safety; and therefore the Concealment of Him was now no longer practicable.

If He should be found in his Mother's Custody, He must inevitably perish; if He were expos'd abroad, He could but perish; and by some unusual Accident, rather to be Wish'd, than to be Hop'd for, He might possibly escape: To God's Providence therefore She commits Him, and (a) *putting the Child into an Ark, lays it in the Flags by the Rivers brink.* Nor was her signal Trust in God defeated: Her Hopes were more than answer'd; and all things succeeded better, than She in her fondest wishes could desire. By an happy train of Events, *Pharaoh's* Daughter comes at that very time to that very Place; She Spies the Ark, sends one of Her Retinue to fetch it, Opens it, sees the Child Weeping; hath Compassion on Him, discovers it to be One of the *Hebrew* Children, sends for a Nurse of the *Hebrew* Women to Nurse it; who happens to be its own Mother; and to whom, as to a Nurse, she delivers it to be brought up at Her Expence. From

(a) Ver. 3.

Serm. VI.

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this

this entertaining piece of Sacred History, there do naturally arise several Observations, worthy of our Notice, and pertinent to the present Occasion.

And *First*, We may observe, how Particular a Care the divine Providence takes of Little Children. We find here a Child born of Parents under a State of Bondage and Persecution; born to be a Slave, if perchance He should Live; but doom'd to Expire from the very first Moment He should Breath; senten'd to Destruction by that sovereign Power, from which by his Native right He might expect Protection; destitute of all help from Parents, Relations, or Friends; and abandon'd to Numberless Accidents, any One of which might have prov'd fatal. In this desperate State, by the over-ruling Hand of God things are so order'd in his behalf, that no Child born in the Happiest Circumstances could be better provided for: that in the Nursing of Him no tender care might be wanting, He is suckled by his own Mother; and that the Child might not any ways suffer by the Poverty of its Parents, a liberal Maintenance is

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afforded by the Bounty of his charitable Benefactress. Thus did That Infant, who, according to all Humane appearance, was forlorn and helpless, thro' God's assistance, enjoy all those Advantages, which scarcely ever fall to the Lot of Children, born either of Mean, or of Noble Parentage. So peculiar a Providence as this, is not perhaps to be exemplified in many other Instances: But Reason, Scripture, and Experience do all assure Us, that the like Providential Care doth extend it self to Other Children. *The Mercy of God is over All his Works*: From Him they have their Being, and by Him they Subsist: *He sendeth forth his Spirit, and they are created*; He withdraws his Influence, and they die, and return to their Dust: and as All things are upheld only by his Power, so it is rational to conclude, that He Proportions his Assistance to the Wants of his Creatures; and, like a tender Parent, shews the greatest Care towards those of his Offspring, who are most Weakly, and most stand in need of his Help. Now Little Children, by reason of their natural frailty, are liable to Innumerable Casualties,

from which Grown Age is usually exempted; they can neither Foresee Evils, when Approaching; nor Repel them, when at Hand; nor Support themselves under their Pressure: These Natural Defects are therefore supplied by the God of Nature, and *His Strength is made perfect in Their Weakness*. And as the Imbecillity of their Constitution doth render them proper Objects of that Divine Aid, which is so necessary to them for their Support, so their Spotless Innocence doth powerfully bespeak the singular Love and Favour of God. Whatever Title Adult Persons might pretend to God's loving kindness, as they are his Creatures, they may seem with Justice to have forfeited, as they are Sinners: but Young Children, as they have no Merits to give them any rightful Claim to the divine Favour, so neither have they any such flagrant Demerits, as may shut them out from the Benefit of his Protection.

This Benefit therefore we are sure from the Word of God they do enjoy: This watchful Care over their Infancy, the Saints of God, when come to riper Years, have

have thankfully acknowledged; in the Catalogues of Mercies receiv'd thro' the Course of their Lives, Those, which either their Own Memories have suggested to them, or their godly Parents have reminded them of, as conferr'd on them from Heaven, during their Childhood, have always found a place; their Observation of God's care of Other Children hath led them into a Sense, that the Same Care hath been taken of Themselves, when by Themselves it could not be observ'd: On the Experience they have had of the divine Goodness, manifested to them, whilst in a State of Infancy, they have built their hopes of finding the like Support, when reduc'd to the like weak Condition by the Infirmities of Old Age. (a) *Thou art my hope, O Lord God, saith the Psalmist; thou art my trust from my Youth:* (b) *By Thee have I been holden up from the Womb:* (c) *Thou wast my hope when I yet hang'd upon my Mother's Breast: Cast me not off in the Time of Old Age; forsake me not when my strength faileth.*

(a) Psal. 71. (b) Psal. 22. (c) Psal. 71.

But we have a still stronger Testimony of God's peculiar Care of Children, from his appointment of Tutelar Angels to guard and protect them : For that there is such an Appointment, is the general Doctrine of the Church, grounded on that Precept of our blessed Saviour ; (a) *Take heed, that Ye despise not one of these little Ones ; for I say unto You, that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of my Father, which is in Heaven.* That Children are every moment wonderfully preserv'd from many fatal Accidents, by the invisible Power of God, either Immediately interposing, or acting by the Ministry of his holy Angels, Parents have the most Sensible and most Affecting proof from their Own happy Experience : For they must have been careless Observers of divine Providence, who have not taken notice of Many such wonderful deliverances wrought within their Own Families, such as are not to be accounted for by any Natural Causes ; and they must be of very shallow Capacities, who do not from thence infer, that many More Deliverances of the

(a) Matth. 18. 10.

like Kind must have been Wrought, which have escap'd their Notice.

The *Second* Observation, which I shall make from the above-recited History is this; That there is implanted by God in Humane Nature a strong Propension to Acts of Charity and Compassion. The Royal Princess, whose Charity is here recorded, was an Utter Stranger to God's Reveal'd Will: He had not yet *shew'd his Word unto Jacob, nor deliver'd his Statutes and his Judgments unto Israel*: these were to be given by the Hand of this very *Moses*, when come to the Ripeness of Manhood; much less had God manifested Himself to Other Nations, *neither had the Heathen knowledge of his Laws*. But there was no need of a Written Law to instruct Her in That Duty of helping the Distress'd, which was plainly taught Her by the Law of Nature.

As soon as her Eyes were struck with the doleful Sight, as soon as the Cries of the Infant sounded in Her Ears, her Bowels yearn'd within Her, and Her Heart was melted with Compassion. Without reasoning, without deliberating, pusht on by the secret and powerful Impulse of Na-

ture, She affords an immediate Succour ; and Her First Thoughts of what it became Her to do in so lamentable and pressing a Case were as just and rational, as if they had been the Final result of the coolest and most mature Deliberation.

The very first Principle imprinted on the Mind of Sociable Creatures by the Finger of God seems to be this, That they should do no Wrong to any ; the Next, that they should do all the Good possible to those, who want their Assistance. This Duty therefore of helping the Helpless, those who had no other Light to guide their Actions by, but that of Reason, found themselves plainly instructed in by the Reflections, which they made on their Own Inclinations, Sentiments, and Dispositions. This is a Duty, to which they own'd themselves Born, for which they acknowledg'd they were Made ; and without which they could give no rational Account, why their Natures should be so fram'd, as in Fact they found they were. For when they took Notice of what past within their own Breasts, they could not but observe, that when any Object of Compassion was presented

sent to them, they were, without debating about it, immediately struck with Pity, and forcibly carried away with an impatient desire of contributing to the removal of that Misery, which made the Spectators, as well as the Sufferer of it, Uneasie : They found that Sympathy betwixt themselves, and Others of the same Nature with themselves, that they could not look upon Another's Calamity, without being themselves Touch'd, and as it were Infected with it; and that therefore to deny Relief to the Distress'd, was to offer Violence to their own Natures, and to be in the severest Manner cruel to their own Flesh and Blood.

They observ'd farther, That when they reach'd out Help to those, who wanted it, there immediately sprang up in their Minds an inexpressible Joy and Satisfaction; in the actual Doing of good they felt a sensible Pleasure and Delight : And when afterwards they at leisure took a review of their Acts of Charity, they could not but applaud themselves for them, and think the Pleasure they found in that Self-Approbation, a sufficient Reward for what they

they had done ; and yet, at the same Time, as the Wisest of them judg'd, an Earnest of some unknown Greater reward still in reserve. This eager Propension of Mind to assist the Indigent, and to help the Helpless, they lookt upon to be so suitable to the Nature of Man, that this One Virtue carried away from all Others the peculiar Name of Humanity. They thought therefore they could not be deaf to the Importunities of the Necessitous, and harden their Hearts against the Supplications of the Distress'd, without forfeiting the Title of Men, and degenerating into the Rank of Barbarous and Cruel Savages. Upon these Natural Principles did those, who consulted their Unassisted Reason, prove the necessity of being Compassionate and Charitable ; Suitably to these the Best of them acted, and stand to this Day recorded in the Histories of their several Ages and Countries, for eminent Acts of Beneficence and Goodness ; to their Own Immortal Honour, and to the just and indelible Reproach of those, who are less careful to discharge This Duty under the Sense of much nobler Prin-

Principles, and much stronger Obligations.

I don't know whether under this Head it may not be proper to observe farther, that this strong Propension towards Acts of Pity and Compassion, which is implanted in Humane Nature, is, generally speaking, most strong and most operative in Women. That noble Princess, whose generous Pity towards a poor Helpless Infant is here registred by her grateful Beneficiary, must be endued with a more than Ordinary Degree of Tendernefs; because it is hard to assign any Other Principle, which could excite Her to act as She did, and easie to alledge Several Motives, which had they not been over-ru'd by This, might probably have restrain'd Her from so Acting. She was bred up amidst the Luxuries of a Court; and it is not Usual for Persons, who abound in all manner of Plenty, who are inur'd to Ease and Delicacy, and seldom meet with any thing that may Disquiet or Molest them, to be affected with a deep Sense of the Calamities of Others. Those, who have themselves felt the smart of Miseries, are apt
to

to have a Fellow-feeling of the Sufferings of the Miserable ; and those, who have hitherto been Prosperous, but have reason to fear that they may shortly be overtaken by Adversity, may be brib'd by Self-Interest to Afford that Relief, which they themselves should be glad to find in the Day of their Distress. But those, who have enjoy'd a constant flow of Uninterrupted Pleasure, have no Inward Sense of the Bitterness of Pain to quicken their Compassion ; and those, who, by the Affluence of all the good things of Life, seem to be plac'd without the reach of Adversity, may be less Sollicitous to Lend that Aid, which they themselves have no probable Occasion of ever Borrowing. It is the Observation of the Prophet concerning those, *(a) who lie upon Beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves upon their Couches ; who eat the Lambs out of the Flocks, and the Calves out of the midst of the Stall ; who chant to the sound of the Viol, and invent to themselves Instruments of Musick ; who drink Wine in Bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief Ointments ; that they are not grieved for the*

(a) Amos 6. 4.

Affliction of Joseph. And if such an Affectionate concern for the Affliction of *Joseph* is not to be hop'd for, even in those of his own Kindred, whilst in the height of their Gaiety, much less was it to be expected in One, who by Birth, and by the Prejudices of Education, was dispos'd to be an Enemy. The *Israelites* were Scorn'd and Hated by the *Egyptians*; their utter Extinction was resolv'd upon: every Male-Child was by *Pharaoh's* Decree proscrib'd: And She might seem to be no good *Egyptian*, no loyal Subject, no dutiful Daughter, who should Spare, who should Favour, who should Cherish One, that stood condemn'd by the common Vote of her Country, her Prince, and her Father. But the Tenderness of her Sex plead-ed more strongly for her shewing Pity, than all these Considerations could do against it; they might have hardened the Heart of a Son of *Pharaoh*, but they were not of force enough to prevail upon his Daughter.

For very Wise and Good purposes hath God been pleas'd to form this Softness of Temper, this Sweetness of Disposition, this powerful bent towards Acts of Pity
and

and Compassion, in the Very Frame and Constitution of Women : The bringing up of Children from the first Years of their Infancy is Their allotted Province ; in the discharge of This, Many Hardships are to be undergone, many Disquietudes are to be born, which, tho' otherwise troublesome and vexatious enough, yet the tenderness of their Affections makes them pass thorough, not only with Patience and Contentment, but even with Cheerfulness and Delight : It is this Tendernefs, which makes that Sex so Quick to Discern, and so Prompt to Relieve the Wants of Children : to this Tendernefs, under God's Blessing, We all of Us Owe it, that We died not from the Womb, that We have Escap'd Manifold hazards in Our Child-hood, and that when in Our grown Years We have at any time been confin'd to the Bed of Sicknefs, We have still found Comfort In it, and have rose again From it. It is not to be denied, that here and there an Instance may be given of Want of Pity, or perhaps even of extraordinary degrees of Barbarity in Women ; but at the same time it must be Own'd, that

that ſuch Women are look'd upon as Monſters in Nature ; that they are ſuppos'd to have long ſtruggled with, and at laſt to have overcome the innate Softneſs of their Sex ; and that for the moſt part, it is Obſervable, that as Strength of Mind and of Body, Prudence in Council, and Courage in War, are the diſtinguiſhing Characters of Men ; ſo Gentleneſs, Kindneſs, Bowels of Mercies, Tenderneſs of Heart, Acts of Love and Charity, of Pity and Compaſſion, are the peculiar Graces and Ornaments of Women.

Our *Third* Obſervation from the Hiſtory premis'd ſhall be this ; That Generous Souls, the more Kindneſs they have ſhewn to the Indigent, the more ſtrongly they are inclin'd to be ſtill farther Kind to the Same Perſons. It was a great degree of Kindneſs in *Pharaoh's* Daughter to Spare an *Hebrew* Child ; it was a ſtill greater to take Care of it, and to defray the Charge of it's Maintenance ; but her Bounty ſtopt not here : The Child, when grown up, is brought home to Her, *and becomes her Son*. Mean and Narrow Minds are apt to be very ſparing and frugal of their Favours :

vours : When they have bestow'd One Kindness, they Wait for some return, before they go on to confer Another ; it is their Business to traffick for good turns, and therefore like Wise Merchants, they are unwilling to Venture too much upon One bottom : Where they Sow, there they expect to Reap, and think a second Seed-time comes too quick, if it returns before the Harvest. But Persons, who are Truly and Sincerely Charitable, who act upon noble and disinterested Principles, do good for the Sake of doing good ; it is the single design of their Charity, that it may be Useful to Others, and whilst it is so Useful, they Have their Aim : The Epicure Himself doth not find half that Pleasure in his Sensuality, as These do in Acts of Bounty and Beneficence : If a return be made by the Persons oblig'd, they are glad to find that their Favours are bestow'd on the Deserving and Thankful; and if they meet with no recompence for their Benefactions here upon Earth, their prospect is enlarg'd, and they look forwards to those more Glorious Rewards, which are reserv'd for the Charitable at the great Day

Day of Retribution. They are not therefore likely to be *Weary in well-doing*; because whatever be the Dispositions of those, to whom they are bountiful, be the Soil, in which they Sow their Seed, never so Barren and Unkindly, *Yet they know, that in due Season they shall reap, if they faint not.*

Charity, as it beareth the nearest Resemblance to the Image of God; so like Him, it delighteth to Perfect all its Works; nor is a skilful Artist more Uneasie in leaving his Work Unfinish'd, or a tender Parent in seeing his Child defective in any of its Limbs; than a Charitable Person is in desisting from a good Work, Well-design'd, Happily begun, and so far as it is gone, Answerable to his Wishe; before He has put to it his Last Hand, and rendred it Entire and Compleat. The Gospel hath given Us a charming Picture of a Person throughly Charitable in the Parable of the good (a) *Samaritan*: His Offices of Kindness closely follow'd One another in a Continued Train, and there was no stint of his Bounty, till there was no farther Oc-

(a) Luke 10.

caſion for it. *He ſaw, as he journeyed, a poor Traveller, ſtrip'd of his Raiment, wounded, and half Dead: He had Compaſſion on Him, went to Him, bound up his Wounds, pour'd in Oyl and Wine, ſet Him on his own Beaſt, brought Him to an Inn, took care of Him whilſt He ſtaid, and when He departed, gave to the Hoſt both Money in Hand, and an Unlimited Commiſſion for defraying any farther Expence. Take care of Him; and whatſoever thou ſpendeſt more, when I come again, I will repay Thee.*

Another Obſervation, which We may gather from the Hiſtory before Us, is this. That thoſe are rather to be eſteem'd the Parents of Children, who give them good Education, than thoſe, to whom they owe their Birth. *Mofes* was by Birth an *Hebrew*, deſcended of a Son, and of a Daughter of *Levi*: But becauſe He was educated by the Care, and at the expence of *Pharaoh's* Daughter, according to his own account, *He became Her Son*. The Mother indeed of *Mofes*, was not leſs his Mother, tho' She expoſ'd Him, becauſe She was compelled to it by Neceſſity: But had She done this out of a Wicked Principle, She would

would by such an Act of Unnatural Cruelty have forfeited that Title of a Mother, which belong'd to Her, as having conceiv'd, and brought Him forth. Great is the Debt, which Children owe to their Parents, who are under God the Bestowers of Life upon them, and the Authors of their Beings: But Life it self is no other-ways valuable, than as it puts Us into a Capacity of Happiness; if therefore an early Provision be made, that in the Course of it, it may prove Happy, it is then a Blessing, which We cannot be too thankful for; because it is the Foundation of all Other Blessings: But if for want of a Good and Virtuous Education, Men are left destitute of the necessary Means of rendring themselves Happy; if by the Fault of their Parents, Misery be entail'd upon them; then that Life, which carries with it this Encumbrance, is a Curse instead of a Blessing; and the conferring it is to be lookt upon rather as an Injury hardly to be Forgiven, than as a Benefit which deserves our Acknowledgment. What Notions Men have of the Valuableness of Life, merely on account of its own

Intrinsick worth ; how far they are from esteeming either the Gift, or Continuance of it, a Benefit, when it is attended with Misery, is evident from the bitter complaints of *Job*, in the extremity of his Agony ; when (a) *He curst his Day, and said: Let the Day Perish, wherein I was born; and the Night, wherein it was said, there is a Man-Child conceived. Why died I not from the Womb? Why did I not give up the Ghost, when I came out of the Belly? Wherefore is Light given unto Him that is in Misery, and Life unto the bitter in Soul?* Doth One, who inveighs in this manner against Life, look upon it as a thing always Good and Desirable? Would He thank those, who foreseeing it would prove thus Wretched, had forc'd it upon Him? But above all, would He esteem them his Friends and Benefactors, who contriv'd to render his Condition thus Woful and Deplorable? Such Friends, such Benefactors are those Parents, who having brought Children into a World full of Misery and Wickedness, take no farther concern for them, but leave them Void of all Useful Knowledge ; De-

(a) *Job* 3. 3.

stitute and Naked, Neglected and For-
 faken; Unarm'd against Temptations, an
 Easie Prey to that ravenous Lion, who is
 always *going about, seeking whom He may de-
 vour*. Forlorn and hopeless is the State of
 such Children, unless rescued from De-
 struction by some Charitable Hand; Un-
 worthy therefore are those of the Name of
 Parents, Unwarrantable are their Preten-
 sions to the Love and Honour due to Pa-
 rents, in whom the Parental Affection is
 quite extinguish'd; to Them doth this
 Name more properly belong, upon Them
 are the Rights and Privileges of Paren-
 tage deservedly transferr'd, who are mo-
 ved with the Affections of Parents, and
 by whom the Offices of Parents are readi-
 ly and constantly perform'd.

There are Other proper Reflections,
 which do naturally arise from this Instru-
 ctive History. We might from hence Ob-
 serve, That Acts of Compassion and Cha-
 rity add a New Lustre to Persons eminent
 for their Rank and Dignity: That Al-
 mighty God, tho' He could supply the
 wants of the Miserable by his Own Im-
 mediate Hand, Yet chooses to reach forth

his Gifts unto Men by the Ministry of Men: That Charity ought not be limited to those of our Own Country, or of our Own Persuasion, but to be extended even to such as are of a different Nation, or different Religion from Us; That Persons of Mean Birth, and such as are bred up by the Charity of Others, do sometimes arrive at the highest Degrees of Honour, and do become eminently serviceable both to their own Generation, and to Posterity. These Observations might be easily deduc'd from this Story, and to Advantage be enlarg'd upon, were it not time to apply what hath been deliver'd, to that happy Occasion, for which We are now met together in this Solemn and Great Assembly.

It hath been observ'd in the first Place, How particular a Care God's Providence takes of little Children: Of this We have One remarkable Instance in the Child *Moses*, and of this We have as many Present and Living Instances, as there do now stand poor Children before Us. When We cast our Eyes upon this pleasing Spectacle, (a Spectacle delightful in the Sight of Men, of Angels, and of God) when We reflect

flect on the apparent Hazards of Body and Soul, to which Each of these little Ones was by the Circumstances of its Birth left expos'd; when We consider the happy Condition, in which by the Providence of God, and the Charity of God-like Persons, they are Now plac'd; when We carry our thoughts forward to the manifold Blessings, which We plainly foresee will hence redound to Themselves, to their Families, to these Populous Cities, to the whole Kingdom, to the Establish'd Church, Yea, and if We are not mistaken in our just hopes, to distant Countrys, and to succeeding Generations; We cannot but look upon them, as so many little *Moses's*, drawn, as it were, out of the Water, rescu'd from the very brink of Destruction, exemplifying in our Days, to the very Senses of Unbelievers, what the Faithful are perswaded of from the Holy Scriptures concerning God's Providential Care of Little Children.

Now the Natural Inference, which All should make from hence, and which Many, who hear Me, have both already Made, and long since put into Practice, is

This ; That it is Their Duty to concur with the gracious Designs of God, and to look upon those as worthy of Their most tender Care, who are the Darlings of Providence, and the Almighty's most peculiar Favorites. God's Treasures are not so Scanty, God's Power is not so Limited, but that He is able to Subsist All his Creatures, without leaving Some to depend upon the Benevolence of Others ; He could have so order'd the Course of Nature, that Children should not have wanted support from those, who are Grown up ; and He could dispense his Blessings with so equal an Hand, that there should be no Poor to be maintain'd at the Expence of the Rich : He, who at the Prayer of *Moses*, rained down *Manna* upon the *Israelites*, for to eat, and gave them food from *Heaven*, could have fed the Infant *Moses* with Angels Food, and have supported Him with his Own Immediate Hand. But He chose rather to convey his Blessings through Another Channel, and to make *Pharaoh's* Daughter do unto Him the Office of a Mother, that there might be room for the Exercise of Charity ; and that He
 might

might shew his Goodness as well towards Her, who had the Welcome Opportunity of Affording, as towards Him, who Wanted, and who Receiv'd Relief.

What Honour can accrue unto Mortal Men greater than this, of being the Instruments of God in dispensing His Gifts to their Fellow-Creatures ! How Desirous must good Men be of the Opportunity, how Greedy of the Pleasure, how Ambitious of the Glory of working together with God, *in that Labour of Love*, in which his Infinite Goodness doth most delight ! When We reach out unto helpless Children any Blessing, either Temporal or Spiritual, either conducive to their Happiness in This World, or in the Next, We are the Immediate Conveyors, but God is the Original Bestower of every such Gift ; and what God said of *Moses*, in Relation to his Brother *Aaron*, is true of every Charitable Benefactor in reference to the Person reliev'd by Him, *He is unto him instead of God* : Our blessed Saviour said of Himself, whilst He was here upon Earth ; (a) *what things soever the Father doeth,*

(a) John 5. 19.

these also doeth the Son likewise; and as He copied after the pattern set by his Father in all Other respects, so did He more Especially in his Affectionate Tenderneſs towards Little Children. His exceeding Love, his unparallell'd Humility, his mighty Condeſcenſion, as they appear'd viſibly in all the Circumſtances of his Birth, of his Life, and of his Death; ſo were they more eminently Conſpicuous in that paſſionate Concern, which He in his Diſcourſes ſo warmly expreſs'd, and in his Actions ſo apparently ſhew'd towards Young Children. Since therefore it hath appear'd from the Hiſtory of God's Providence towards the Child *Mofes*, that the Care of our Heavenly Father doth in a more peculiar Manner extend it ſelf towards Little Children; ſince it is evident from the Goſpel, that our Saviour's tender concern for them was by his Words, by his Geſtures, by his Deeds, plainly Maniſteſted; Thoſe, who deſire to approve themſelves the Children of God, what their Heavenly Father doeth in regard to theſe little Ones, the ſame will They do likewise; Thoſe, who would ſhew themſelves

ſelves the true Diſciples of Chriſt, will take Care that the ſame Diſpoſitions of Mind, the ſame Love and Compaſſion, the ſame Goodneſs and Condeſcenſion towards Little Children, be Conſpicuous in Them, which *were alſo in Chriſt Jeſus.*

Our ſecond Obſervation was, That God hath implanted in Humane Nature a ſtrong Propenſion to Acts of Pity and Compaſſion. When We, who are the Miniſters of the Goſpel, do, in diſcharge of our high truſt, exhort Chriſtians to the ſevere Doctrines of Humiliation, and Repentance ; of Mortification, and Self-Denial ; of bearing grievous Injuries with Patience, and ſtifling All thoughts of Revenge ; We ſpeak unto our Hearers with ſome diſadvantage ; becauſe though Reaſon and Religion are on our Side, yet Paſſion and Inclination are againſt Us ; but when We call upon them to be Charitable to the Poor, to Relieve the Diſtreſs'd, to Help the Helpleſs, We do not find it ſo extremely difficult to prevail : Becauſe Mens Natural Affections plead the ſame Cauſe as We do, and enforce it with more powerful Rhetorick, than We can pretend

to :

to : We have Nothing farther in such Cafes to ask of our Auditors, than that they would follow the Bent of their Own Inclinations ; that they would not struggle againſt the Force of Nature ; that they would not deny themſelvès that Senſible Pleaſure, which ariſes from doing good ; that they would not quench the Motions of Pity and Tenderneſs, which they feel in their Own Breaſts, and which they are not able to ſubdue without Offering Violence to themſelves, and being cruel to their Own Fleſh, which craves Acts of Mercy from them with greater Earneſtneſs and Importunity, than do thoſe very Suppliants, who call for Relief. Were thoſe, to whom We addreſs our ſelves on theſe preſſing Occaſions, utterly Unacquainted with Divine Revelation ; had they never heard of the Name of Chriſt ; had they never learnt, what Excellent Precepts He hath given, what a Winning Example He hath ſet, what Powerful Motives He hath propos'd, to enforce the Duty of Charity ; Yet there is a Law written in the Tables of their Own Hearts, which is ſufficient to inſtruct them in this Duty, in which
they

they cannot be wanting, whilst they remember that they are Men, altho' they should forget, that they are also Christians. But tho' Nature be of it self a strong Spur to Acts of Beneficence, Yet will it exert it self more vigorously, when animated by a principle of Religion, by an ardent Love of God, and by the certain Hopes of a future recompence. Those Temporal wants of our Brethren, which strongly affect our Senses, will move Pity in the Breast of a Good-natur'd Man, tho' Unregenerate, and void of Grace ; but Faith alone can inspire Us with a just Sense of their Spiritual Wants, and an Earnest desire to relieve them.

When we contemplate the Infinite Love of Christ towards the Souls of Men ; when We seriously consider, that the Salvation of Souls was the Occasion of his Birth, the Business of his Life, and the End of his Death ; that for this End He emptied Himself of the glories of his God-head, *took upon Him the form of a Servant, and became Obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross* ; that to procure This He left the Joys of Heaven, and descended to the
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Nethermost parts of Hell ; that to make way for This, He sent his Messengers Before Him, and to promote this He left his Apostles Behind Him ; that the Mission of the Holy Ghost was in prosecution of this Design, and that this is the Object of his continual Intercession at God's right Hand ; that the Mercies, which God bestow'd on his Ancient People the Jews, were only faint Types of this Greater Deliverance to prefigure it to the Ages Past ; and that the Sacraments, which He hath instituted, are Memorials of this Mercy to All Generations to come ; that All the return which our Saviour expects from Us, for these Wonderful Instances of his Love towards Us, is, that *We also love One Another* ; that Charity is the distinguishing Character of Christ's Disciples ; that it was his Last Dying Command ; that it is the Rule, by which He will try Us at the last Day ; that a more Exceeding Weight of Glory is reserv'd for those, who are the Instruments of bringing Others to Heaven, and that they, *that turn Many to Righteousness, shall shine as the Stars for ever and ever* ; These Considerations, often ponder'd in our Thoughts,

Thoughts, duly attended unto, and suffer'd to sink deeply in our Hearts, will inflame Us with an intense love to the Souls of Men, will make Us Solicitous to find out Methods for promoting their Eternal Happiness, will certainly determine Us with All gladness to embrace those proper Opportunities, which these Charity-Schools afford to every well-dispos'd Christian, of being under Christ a Deliverer of his Brother's Soul. If any therefore, who are call'd by the Name of Christians, do steel their Hearts against All the Dictates of Humanity, and Obligations of the Gospel; if they wilfully resist the Motions both of Nature, and of Grace; if they obstinately refuse, out of their Superfluities, to supply the craving Wants of their Brethren; if they can see a poor abandon'd Child ready to starve for want of the Necessaries of Life, or in danger of perishing everlastingly for the lack of Saving Knowledge, and not reach forth an helping Hand to rescue such an One, the Daughter of *Pharaoh shall rise up in Judgment* against such Inhumane Christians: For She took Compassion on the Child

Moses,

Moses, and behold a Greater than *Moses* is here: For according to our Saviour's Construction, what (a) *is done, or not done unto the least of these his Brethren, is either done, or not done unto Him.*

Under this Second Head, I took Notice, that this Natural Propension towards Acts of Pity and Charity is usually strongest in Women; of which the Text gives Us a remarkable Instance in the Generous Act of *Pharaoh's* Daughter. But we need not look backwards into Ancient History, or go out of our Own Kingdom, for an Example of a ROYAL BENEFACTRESS, Eminent for Her Tender Compassion, and Liberal Bounty towards Poor, Destitute, and Helpless Children. Amongst the Many and Signal Proofs, which our most Gracious Sovereign hath given, of Her real and sincere Kindness for this Church, and of her tender Concern for its Welfare and Prosperity, We have reason to look upon This as None of the least, that All Charitable and Pious Designs, which have been form'd for Advancing its Honour and Interest,

(a) Matth. 25. 40, 45.

both at Home and Abroad, have always been by Her Countenanc'd and Encourag'd. * One of these Nurseries of Religious Education, erected lately near her Palace, and growing up under Her more Immediate Influence, is constantly refresh'd by plentiful Streams in a liberal Manner flowing from Her Royal Bounty: † Another of them She hath been Graciously pleas'd to Incorporate, in order to make a more solid Foundation for its Support and Maintenance: What *Pharaoh's* Daughter said unto the *Hebrew* Woman, to whom She committed the Care of the Child *Moses*, the same our Gracious Queen, by the Tenour of Her Royal Charter, hath said to the Trustees of that Hospital, *Take these Children, and Nurse them for Me.* And tho' She hath not Yet added Her Royal Promise, that She will out of Her Own Treasure defray their Expences, Yet from Her Known Goodness they are secure, that the Nursery, which Her Own Hand hath Planted, shall by the

* The Charity-School at *Kensington.* † The Grey-Coat Hospital in *Tothil-Fields*, of the Royal Foundation of Queen ANNE.

same Hand be Water'd also in due Season. By such Acts of Beneficence and Condescension do Religious Princes, who are the Substitutes and Representatives of Heaven here upon Earth, best resemble the Goodness of the Lord their God, who *dwelling on high, humbleth Himself to behold the very meanest of his Creatures, and raiseth up the Poor out of the Dust, and lifteth the Needy out of the Dunghil.*

Our *Third* Observation was, That Generous Souls, the more Kind they have been to Any, the Kinder they are dispos'd Still to be ; the more they have been Exercis'd in Deeds of Charity, the stronger Propensions do they find in themselves to abound in this Labour of Love still More and More. Of this We have an Historical Instance in the Noble Benefactress of the Text ; and of this We have a nearer and more delightful Proof in the liberal Contributions that Have been, and Are constantly given to these Charitable Schools. In * One of them, which I may with the more Decency single out, both

* The School for Blue-Coats belonging to the New-Church in *Westminster*, Erected A. D. 1688.

because of my more Immediate Relation to it, and because being the First of this Kind it may modestly challenge some sort of Precedency by right of Primogeniture, I find enroll'd in the List of its present Benefactors, many Names which have stood there since its first Foundation; And I have no reason to doubt, but what I know to be true, of the Continual Support, which hath been given to the Eldest of these Sisters, is equally so in reference to the Younger.

With Persons, not by Goodness of Nature strongly dispos'd to Acts of Humanity, not by the Grace of God powerfully stirr'd up to Charitable Deeds, it may be a plausible Argument against expending More on the Same Occasion, that they have already expended very Much; but Those, whose Souls are thoroughly possess'd with an ardent desire of Doing Good, those who have a just and lively Sense of the Indispensable Obligations, which our Holy Religion layeth upon Us, to abound in all Acts of Brotherly Love without Ceasing, and without Weariness, are us'd to argue after a different manner; and

do think it a forcible Motive to their contributing cheerfully and largely towards any good Work, that their Liberality towards it hath on former Occasions been Eminent and Conspicuous. Were the Rewards promis'd to our Charity Stinted and Limited, it would then be more reasonable; that our Charity also should be confin'd within certain Limits, beyond which it should not pass; but be it in its Objects never so Extensive, be it in its Measures never so much Enlarg'd, be it in its Fruits never so Luxuriant, Sure We are, that in a still fuller Measure than We mete withal, it shall be measur'd unto Us again: *Good Measure, pressed down, and Shaken together, and running Over, shall be given into our Bosom.* As these Charity-Schools have from their first Erection Thriven and Encreas'd by those Supplies, which have been constantly and liberally afforded to them, as they have from Low Beginnings been gradually advanc'd to their present Height; so would the Pious Contributors thereto take an Estimate of the State which their Own Fortunes were Then in, when they first reacht forth their Bounty, and compare

pare it with their Present Circumstances, I doubt not but they would, to their comfort, find, that their Own Wealth hath grown together with these Charitable Funds; that they have Encreas'd the Poor's Stock without any Decrease of their Own; nay farther, that their Own Heap is become Larger by those Supplies, which they have given out of it for the Support and Maintenance of these growing Benefactions. What they have thus lent unto the Lord hath already been repaid them with Interest, in Private, and in Publick Blessings; and they have found their Charity abundantly recompens'd in those great Mercies which God hath even in this World bestow'd upon Them, upon their Families, upon our Church and Nation: which Yet, great as they are, shall not be accounted by God as a Full Payment, but are only Earnests and Pledges of a still more Ample recompence at the great Day of Retribution.

Our *Last* Observation was, That Children owe more to those from whom they have their Education, than they do to those from whom they derive their Birth.

It is a Melancholy Reflection, that Any should be born within the Pale of the Christian Church, and Yet be Strangers to the saving Truths of the Gospel : Nevertheless it is not to be dissembled, that there are some, who live in thick *Egyptian* Darkness, even in the midst of *Goshen*. It is therefore wisely provided, that Societies should be form'd as well for Propagating Christian Knowledge amongst the Ignorant at Home, as amongst Infidels Abroad. By this wholesome Institution, that Religious Education, which Many Children did either through the Poverty, or through the Neglect of their Natural Parents, to their great Damage want, is through the Liberality of well-dispos'd Christians, who are their Better, their Spiritual Parents, to their great Comfort supplied. Many a Poor *Moses*, who is expos'd to the wide World, and left Forlorn and Helpless, for a Prey to the Destroyer, is happily rescued from Perdition by the Providential Interposal of Persons, who finding Him in this Miserable State, and mov'd with Pity of his wretched Case, condescend *to lift Him out of the Mire, and take Care that He*

be

be put into the Hands of his Mother the Church, by Her to be Nurs'd, *to Suck, and be satisfied with the Breasts of Her Consolations; to be born upon Her Sides, and to be dandled on Her Knees,* and by Her instructed, not in the Wisdom of the *Egyptians*, but in a much more Valuable part of Learning, the saving Knowledge of Christ.

By this Charity so well Design'd, so happily Executed, and so widely Spread, that Invitation, which the Prophet *Isaiab* makes in the Name of Christ, and publishes to all the World, is brought home to Thousands, to above Ten Thousands of poor Children within this Kingdom: (a) *Ho every One that thirsteth, Come Ye to the Waters, and He that hath no Money: Come Ye, Buy and Eat; Yea come, Buy without Money, and without Price.* By the Liberality of the Wealthy, abounding in Plenty, and Rich in good Works, the Holy Scriptures, those Fountains of everlasting Life, are open'd to the Poor; to their Bounty these poor Babes owe *that sincere Milk of the Word*, which is freely and without Price dispens'd to them, *that they may grow thereby;* through

(a) *Maiah* 55. 1.

their Beneficence the Spiritually *Blind see, the Lame walk, the Lepers are cleans'd, Devils are cast out, the Dead in Sin are rais'd, and to the Poor the Gospel is preach'd.* And Now do not Those, who are thus Careful to supply the Bodily and the Spiritual Wants of these poor destitute Children, and to give them such a Liberal and Christian Education, as may put them into a way of living Comfortably in this World, and of Arriving at Eternal Bliss in the Next, highly deserve the Apellation; Are they not justly entituled to the Honour, not only of Patrons and Benefactors, but even of Parents and Fathers! Will not the Indigent Wretches, who by their Paternal Care are brought up *in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord,* be powerful Intercessors for Them at the Throne of Grace? And if *the Curses of the Poor,* which in the Bitterness of their Souls they pour out against Those who are deaf to their Complaints, *shall be heard of Him that made them,* will not the Prayers of these poor Foster Children, which they daily offer up unto God from the Bottom of their Hearts, in behalf of those, whom He hath made his

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Instruments in supplying their Wants, be graciously accepted by Him ?

Of the Unwearied Industry of these Patrons, these Guardians, these Parents of Youth in Solliciting Charities for their Adopted Children, and their Frugal Management in dispensing what they have Gather'd ; of their strict Caution, in chusing the most proper Objects without Private Views or Partial Regards ; of their Conscientious endeavour to approve Themselves in the Sight of God, by doing such Things as are Just and Honest ; and their Commendable Willingness to approve Themselves in the Sight of Men also, by laying open a distinct Account of their Receipts and Expences to publick View and Scrutiny ; of their wise Oeconomy and exact Discipline in regulating their large Families in such comely Order and Method, that Devotions and Instructions do in their turns succeed each Other in a constant and agreeable Vicissitude ; of their pious Care that the Children should frequently be Catechiz'd in Publick, so that Crowds of Hearers may together with them be instructed in the Doctrines,

Wor-

Worship, and Discipline of our Church, which, that they may be duly Reverenc'd, want only to be rightly Understood ; of their strict Care, that the Children of both Sexes should be plac'd under the Custody and Inspection of such Masters and Mistresses, who may Teach them Piety and Vertue as well by their Examples, as by their Instructions ; of their frequent Exhortations to these Teachers, that they would Answer the great Trust repos'd in Them by a Conscientious discharge of their Respective Duties ; of their Seasonable Admonitions to the Parents of the Children, that they would not by Domestic Examples of Vice spoil the Influence of those Good Precepts, which had been instill'd into their Minds at School : Of these Things, I say, I am the more willing to make this Short Mention, because I am neither Afraid, that They will be thought at present Undeserving of these Praises, nor Apprehensive, that by their Remissness for the Time to come, *We, that We say not, They should be asham'd in this same Confident boasting.*

To

To the Testimony of Those, who have resorted to the Publick Exercises of these poor Children, or who have view'd the comely Order of their Processions, or who have been this Day Eye-Witnesses of their Decent and Religious Behaviour in the House of God, I appeal, whether they have not on these Occasions been struck with Delight and Admiration; whether they have not Acknowledg'd, that *what they have seen with their Eyes did much exceed the Fame, that they had Heard*: Whether they have not from the Bottom of their Hearts, Wish'd Success to the Managers of this Charity, saying, *The Lord prosper You. We wish You good luck in the Name of the Lord.*

Of this Happy Success there would be a still fairer Prospect; That general Reformation of Manners, which is so much Talkt of by All Pretenders to Piety, so heartily Wish'd by all Sincere Christians, so mightily Dreaded by the Enemies of God and Godliness, would more speedily be brought about; if whilst Private Men are thus Industrious to prevent the farther growth of Vice by an Early Instruction
of

of Those, who are Yet Untainted with it, in the *Principles of Religion*, Publick Magistrates would at the same Time be equally Zealous in extirpating Profaneness and Immorality, where they have already taken deep Root, by a Steady, Regular, and Impartial Execution of the Laws. Those who are brought up in the Belief of God, and of a Future State, will be restrain'd from Sin by a Sense of Duty to their Maker and Saviour, or by Fear of those Punishments, which are threatned to the Wicked : But Those, who deny the Existence of a God, and the Immortality of their Own Souls ; Those who have no Notions of Good or Evil, but what strike forcibly upon their Senses, must be Wrought upon by Other Motives : They live only for the Present, and Nothing but what is Present can touch them ; They live Entirely by Sense, and Nothing but what is Sensible can affect them : No Appeals to the Consciences of such Men will be heard ; because they are past Feeling : No Arguing with them upon the Principles of Religion will avail, because These are Derided and Exploded by them :
 They

They govern themselves by no Higher a Principle, than Brutes do, and Ought therefore to be kept in order by the same sort of Discipline: *A Whip for the Ass, a Bridle for the Horse, and a Rod for the Fool's Back,* are Corrections Each proportion'd to the Capacities of the Sufferer. This Chastisement the Magistrate Owes both to the Profligate, that they may, if possible, be reclaim'd; and to the Innocent, that they may not be Infected; This Suppression of Irreligion and Vice, by *executing Wrath upon Evil-doers,* the Voice of the Whole Nation doth Now seem to call for; This our Religious Prince hath often recommended from the Throne; This God requires at the Hands of those, to whom He hath given the Sword of Justice, and from whom He expects, *that they bear it not in Vain.*

To Magistrates it appertains to approve themselves *Parents of their People,* by correcting those Sons, that are Stubborn and Rebellious; to Those, who are the Trustees for managing these publick Charities, belongs that Milder Office of Parents, which consists in Nourishing, in
Main-

Maintaining, in Instructing their Children :

And whilst They shall proceed to carry on this Good Work with the same Godly Zeal, the same Unwearied Diligence, the same Unspotted Integrity, the same Prudent Management, the same Disinterested Intentions, the same Perfect Concord and Unanimity, the same Holy Emulation unmixt with Envy, there is no reason to doubt, but they will meet with the Same Blessings from the Poor, the Same Encouragement from the Rich, the Same Applauses of all Good Men, the Same Satisfaction in their Own Consciences, and the Same Benediction from Heaven.

A SER-

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd at the

PARISH-CHURCH

O F

St. *Dunstan's* in the *West*,

On *Sunday, Dec. 23^d*, 1711.

SERMON

BY

THE REV. FREDERICK DENNIS

OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY,
NEW-YORK.

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TO THE
Gentlemen of the Vestry,
AND OTHER
The Inhabitants of the Parish
OF
St. DUNSTAN in the WEST.

GENTLEMEN,

HAD it been Decent for Me, after
the many and great Favours I had
receiv'd from You, to deny Any
Request, which You thought it pro-
per to make, This Sermon, which was no more
Intended for the Press, than it is Fit for it,
had never been made Publick. But since You
were not pleas'd to admit of any Excuse for
My not Printing, I may with the greater Con-
fidence hope to be Excus'd by Others for Print-
ing so Imperfect a Discourse. Your Affection
to the Preacher, and the Occasion on which it
was preach'd, gave it some Advantage in the
Serm. VII. Q Hear-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Hearing, which must be lost with the Cool and Impartial Reader. But This will give Me no Uneasiness, whilst I have reason to Hope, that What in the Delivery You seem'd to be affected with, may, when recollected, make a more lasting Impression, for the benefit of Your Souls.

I pray God to Recompense to You with the Blessings of This World, and of the Next, those Kind Regards You have shewn to,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most Affectionate Friend,

and Humble Servant,

GEORGE SMALRIDGE.

A

SERMON, &c.

I TIM. V. 22.

*--- Neither be partaker of other
Mens Sins.---*

IN my last Discourse I open'd unto you the Nature, and prov'd the Necessity of Restitution. I then took notice, that it extended to All sorts of Wrongs; and that where-ever Any Injuries of Any kind were Done, there a Reparation suitable to the Injuries was necessary: But because Most Persons, when they hear the Duty of Restitution press'd, are apt to restrain it to Such Wrongs as Men Do or Suffer in their Temporal Concerns; because These are the Injuries which are most loudly Complain'd of, and for which Satisfaction is

Q²

most

most importunately demanded ; whilst Other Wrongs, of a much more mischievous Tendency, are Done without Remorse, and often Suffer'd too without Regret ; because Humane Laws have provided for the Reparation of Such Injuries as affect Men's Properties, whilst no Provision is by them made against Wrongs done to the Souls of Men ; because We, who are entrusted with the Care of Mens Souls, are most nearly concern'd to Avert or to Remedy those Evils to which They are liable in their Spiritual Capacities ; because Such Injuries as These are most apt to be Overlookt, and yet at the same time most proper to be Attended to ; because several Persons, who out of Conscience, or rather out of Honour, would Scorn to do those Lesser Injuries, do without Scruple allow themselves in the practice of these Greater Wrongs ; because Those, whose plentiful Condition in this World places them above the Temptation of enriching themselves by defrauding others of their Worldly Goods, are generally most apt to do the greatest prejudice to the Souls of Men ; for these Reasons,

sons, I think it may be proper to consider distinctly the Several Ways of doing Wrong to the Souls of Men ; that Those, whose Consciences accuse them of Any of these Wrongs, may apply to themselves what hath been Before deliver'd concerning the indispensable Necessity of Restitution. Now We do then Wrong to the Souls of Men, when We are in any regard *Partakers of their Sins* ; and We are then *Partakers of their Sins*, when We use any Means to induce them to Sin ; or when We do not Use those Means which are in our power, and which We are in duty bound to Use, for Preserving or Reclaiming them from Sin. But that We may not be lost in Generals ; that what I have to offer upon this Subject may lie more level to All Capacities, and be brought nearer home to the Consciences of Men, I shall descend yet Lower to Particulars ; and point out if not All, yet the Principal and most Usual, ways of Participating in other Mens Sins.

First, We may be partakers of other Mens Sins by poisoning the Souls of Men with Erroneous and Wicked Principles.

By Erroneous Principles, I do not mean such as are any ways contrary to Truth, but only such as are contrary to Those Truths, the Knowledge and Belief of which are made the Conditions of our Salvation. Now such Destructive Errors either concern Doctrines of Faith, or Rules of Practice; for in order to our Salvation, God hath propos'd several Truths, to which We are requir'd to give our Assent; and hath enjoyn'd several Laws, by which our Actions ought to be regulated: Those therefore who by their Doctrines endeavour either to Subvert such saving Truths, or to Relax the force of such Binding Laws, contribute all they can to the hindrance of Men's Salvation. Some seem to be of Opinion, that it is wholly Indifferent what Men Believe, provided their Actions be agreeable to the Laws of God; that Men at the last day shall not be judg'd by their Opinions, but by their Lives; that no Enquiry will be then made, whether they were Right or Wrong in their Principles, but only, whether they were Regular, or Irregular in their Practices: But though it is Perhaps true, that greater
Stress

Stress is laid upon our Actions than upon our Sentiments ; though it is Certainly true, that No Men shall be fav'd for the Orthodoxy of their Opinions, whose Lives are contrary to the Precepts of our Holy Religion ; yet, since the Gospel consists as well of Doctrines, which We are requir'd to Believe, as of Commands, which We are bound to Obey ; since the Veracity of God is as much impeach'd by our not assenting to the Truth of what He affirms, as His Authority is affronted by our not complying with what He Enjoyns ; since Faith and Obedience are made the Joynt terms of our Salvation ; since We are in the Gospel Commanded to Believe such and such Truths, and consequently, however We may distinguish betwixt Matters of Faith and Matters of Duty, Faith it self is as much a Christian Duty, as any Other, being equally the Object of a Positive Command ; since our Understandings ought to be as much in Subjection to God as our Wills ; We may as justly be shut out from Heaven for the Perverseness of our Opinions, as for the Sinfulness of our Lives ; and therefore Those Persons

may as deservedly be charg'd with doing hurt to Mens Souls, and of *being partakers in their Sins*, who teach those Erroneous Doctrines, which are intended to corrupt their Faith, as Those, who teach Wicked and Loose Doctrines, more immediately tending to the Corruption of Manners.

How Heinous the Guilt of such Seducers is, We may learn from the Grievousness of that Punishment, which the Scriptures have declar'd to be their Doom. *There shall be false Teachers among you, saith St. Peter, who shall bring in Damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord, that bought them; and bring upon themselves swift Destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious Ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of --- Whose Judgment now of a long time lingreth not, and their Damnation slumbreth not.* 2 Pet. 2. 1, 2, 3. The Heresies brought in are declar'd to be Damnable, hazarding the Salvation of those who Embrace them; and it is but just, that Those, who are so diligent to Destroy others, should be over-taken by a *swift Destruction*; that Those, who are so Vigilant to spread Damning Heresies, should
find

find that their own *Damnation slumbreth not.*

The Inspir'd Penmen of Holy Writ, of whom it cannot be doubted, but that they spoke and wrote in the Spirit of Meekness, are remarkably Severe, whenever they have occasion to touch upon this Subject; there is a peculiar Sharpness of Language, and Acrimony of Style, observable in their Writings, when they animadvert upon Seducers: They, who upon all other occasions breath nothing, but Peace, Love, Gentleness, Goodness, Meekness, are yet very Bitter in their Invectives, and not at all sparing in their Censures, when they caution their Disciples against being misled by such Pestilent Deceivers.

St. *Paul* in his Epistle to the *Romans* upon the mention of Some, who had either themselves falsely Affirm'd, or falsely accus'd the Apostle of Affirming, *that Evil might be done for a good End*, (a Doctrine not peculiar to the Romanists of that Age) doubts not peremptorily to pronounce of such Men, that *their Damnation is just*. The Same St. *Paul*, when *Elymas* the Sorcerer sought to turn away the Deputy from the
 Faith,

Faith, address'd Himself to him in such Words, as express great Warmth of Zeal, and Heat of Indignation; and yet He is declar'd to have been *fill'd with the Holy Ghost, when setting his Eyes upon Him, He said: O full of all Subtilty, and all Mischief, thou Child of the Devil, thou Enemy of All Righteousness; wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?* Acts 13. 9, 10. The Same Apostle is not afraid to Pronounce an Anathema, and to add the greater Weight to it, to Reiterate it against even *an Angel from Heaven*, if He should go about to corrupt the Purity of the Gospel. *There be some, saith He, that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though We, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which We have preached unto you, let Him be Accursed. As We said before, so say I now again, If any one preach any other Gospel unto you, than that ye have receiv'd, let Him be accursed,* Gal. 1. 7, 8, 9. Every Epistle of St. Paul abounds with such severe Reproofs, as I have here given you a Specimen of, against Seducers: Reproofs, which carry with them such an Edge of Satyr, that did not the Heinousness

ness of the Sin justify the Sharpness of the Reproof, the Apostle would seem to have overlookt that Precept, which He gives to Others, That they should *put away from them all Bitterness, and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil-speaking.*

The Blessed Jesus Himself, who bids us to *learn of Him, because He is meek, and lowly of Heart*; who came into the World not to Curse, but to Bless; and who accordingly enter'd upon his Prophetical Office by preaching Beatitudes, doth, notwithstanding, with great Plainness and Freedom of Speech, with a more than ordinary Vehemence of Spirit, and Sharpness of Language, denounce repeated Woes against those Scribes and Pharisees, who *made the Commandment of God of none effect* through their false Glosses; who by their pernicious Doctrines *shut up the Kingdom of Heaven, neither going in themselves, nor suffering them that would enter to go in*; who *compass'd Sea and Land to make Proselytes, and when they were made, made them twofold more the Children of Hell than themselves*: These He again and again styles *Hypocrites, Blind Guides, Serpents, a Generation of*

of

of *Vipers*; and of These He declares, That *they shall not escape the Damnation of Hell.*

I am sensible how ill it becomes the Ministers of the Gospel to be Over-liberal in pronouncing against Any sort of Men the dreadful Sentence of Damnation; As the very Sound of it carries with it Amazement and Terrour, so We ought never to utter it without Fear and Trembling: As it becomes none but Madmen to throw about *Firebrands, Arrows and Death*, so is it proper for None but wild Enthusiasts to thunder out Hell and Damnation; By being too free in such Censures We render them Familiar and Cheap, and bring them into Contempt; and I know of no Privilege We have to Curse People more than Others; or, why We should not be thought to Curse, if We should declare Men Accurs'd of God, out of Levity, or Passion: But whilst We guide our selves by the Infallible Rule of God's Word; whilst We pass no other Sentence than God Himself hath Pass'd; whilst We apply this Sentence not to Persons but Things; whilst We warn Men of their Sin, and Danger, not with a Design to Upbraid or Insult them,

but

but with an honest Intention of Rescuing them, We may, without breach of Christian Charity, without Transgressing the Bounds of Moderation Pronounce, nay, We cannot without Uncharitableness, without betraying our Trust, But pronounce those Menaces, which have gone forth from the Throne of the Almighty against *False Teachers*.

In these Divine Menaces those Men are most deeply concern'd, who make it their Study and Business to infect Unsettled Minds with such Pestilent Principles as at Once overthrow all Religion and Morality : who venture boldly to Affirm, and expect that the boldness of their Assertions should be taken for a sufficient Proof, that the Notions of Religion were at first started by Crafty and Designing Men in order to Keep the Ignorant and Credulous in Awe ; that the World was made by Chance, that all Things in it happen by Chance, and that it is to no purpose for any One to live by Rule ; that after Death there is Nothing, and that Death it self is to be lookt upon as Nothing : that the Hopes of Heaven have no other Founda-
tion

tion than the Pride of some Ambitious Zealots, who promise themselves Crowns and Sceptres there ; and that the Fears of Hell are fit only for those Slavish Souls to entertain, who having been scar'd with the Stories of Spirits and Fiends, whilst they were Children, have never been able to recover their Wits since ; In short, that Good and Evil are Arbitrary Distinctions ; that they differ not in the Things themselves, but in the Sentiments of those who speak of them ; that what is esteem'd Good in Some Places, or at Some Times, or by Some Persons, is in Other Places, or at Other Times, or by Other Persons reputed Indifferent, or perhaps Evil ; and that it would be foolish to confine Our selves to one sort of Actions, which Some Few Persons have agreed to call Good, since Others, as Wise as they, find no such Inherent Goodness in them ; Or to refrain from Another sort of Actions, which they, who have now lost the Relish which they Once had of them, or who perhaps have a Mind to engross them to themselves, have thought to fright Others from, by giving them the Name of Sinful and Damnable.

That

That such Principles as these have been not only whisper'd in Private, but talkt Openly in Publick places of Resort; that Such pernicious Doctrines have been Embrac'd, Profess'd, and Propagated amongst Us; that they have been every where spread abroad without reserve, consign'd to Writing, and deliver'd down in Books, for the Poisoning of Succeeding Ages as well as of the Present, is the Grief of all Good Men, and the Triumph of Libertines: That the Teaching, Scattering, and Abetting of such Atheistical Principles hath a direct Tendency to the Destruction of Souls, is as certain, as that We have Souls capable of Eternal Happiness, and liable to Eternal Perdition.

But although the Menaces denounc'd against Seducers do principally concern Such as set up for gaining Profelytes to Atheism, Yet do they also reach all Teachers of False and Wicked Principles, of what Kind soever. Whatever Doctrine slackens the Obligation of God's Laws, whether it misrepresents the Laws themselves by representing Good Actions as not at all Good, or not so Necessary, as
they

they really are; or by representing Evil Actions, as not at all Sinful, or less Sinful, as to their Degree, than they truly are; Or whether it weakens the Motives to Obedience, by representing the Glories of Heaven, as not Attainable, or not worth our Attaining, or not so Great as the Scriptures declare them to be; or by representing the Torments of Hell as Imaginary, or as less Grievous, or as less Durable, than the Holy Spirit hath in the Gospel taught Us they are; Such Doctrine, wherever it is receiv'd, hath a fatal Efficacy towards the Corruption of Manners; and All who teach such pernicious Doctrines, do the Devil's proper Work in destroying Mens Souls; and are to be rankt amongst the *Partakers of other Mens Sins*, as having not only a Share, but the most Principal Share in the Guilt of those Sins, into which they lead Others by their Ungodly and Wicked Principles.

A *Second Way of Partaking in other Mens Sins* is by giving them Evil Counsels. Under Evil Counsels I comprehend All those Methods, which Men make use of to persuade Others to Sin, without endeavouring

ing to represent the sinful Action they persuade them to, as Innocent: For Those, who go about to corrupt Others by making that appear to be Indifferent, which God hath pronounced to be Sinful, properly fall under the former Class of *Evil Teachers*: But when the Sinfulness of an Action is Own'd, or at least not Denied; when we persuade Men to do what in their Opinion is Unlawful, without endeavouring to Alter their Opinion about it; when We dissemble the Sinfulness of an Action and display the Pleasure that Attends it, or the Profit that will Accrue from it: when by Promises, or Threats; by Command, or by Entreaty; by Force, or by Insinuation, We prevail with Men to do what their Consciences disapprove, We are then guilty of *Partaking in their Sins*, and of destroying their Souls by *our Evil Counsels*. It was by this Method that Sin first came into the World; Evil Counsel was the first Engine, which was employ'd by the Tempter. It was acknowledg'd on all Hands, that God had said, *Thou shalt not eat of the Tree that is in the midst of the Garden*; but the Serpent, (by shewing the

Woman that the *Tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the Eyes, and a tree to be desir'd to make one Wise*) beguil'd the Woman, and *she did eat*; and the same Bait, which she had been caught with, she us'd with the same Success for the engaging her Husband: So that by the Suggestion of these two Evil Counsellors, Guilt and Punishment, Sin and Death were deriv'd upon the whole Race of Mankind.

And as Sin was first brought into the World by Evil Counsel, so hath it ever since thriven well by the same Means. Some Persons are by the benefit of a Vertuous and Religious Education Unacquainted with Sin; There are several Kinds of Vices, which they are wholly Strangers to; and to these Persons Evil Advisers are Pernicious by Suggesting to them the Commission of such Sins, as would otherwise never have come into their Thoughts. Some there are of an Easie, Soft, and Pliable Temper; willing to Please every One, and careful to give no Offence; and to Such as these, Evil Counsels are Fatal, because those Sinful Actions, which of themselves they have no Inclinations

tions to, or which perhaps they are Averse from, they had yet rather give Way to, than incur the Displeasure of those, whom by want of Compliance they might Disoblige. Some there are, who are naturally Timorous and Diffident; Willing they are to Taste the Pleasures of Sin, but they have not Courage enough to venture upon it: And to these Evil Counsels are Destructive, as they Embolden them to the doing of That by Instigation and Encouragement, which of Themselves they durst not attempt. Some would be willing to Sin, if they could tell how to do it with Convenience and Privacy; and Evil Counsellors finish the Ruine of these Men, by furnishing them with proper Opportunities of Sinning. Pleasure hath its Charms, which are not easie to be resisted by the Young; and Profit hath its Attractives, whereby it prevails upon the Old: So that the Former will be led away by the Evil Counsels of those who represent the Ways of Sin to be ways of Pleasantness; and the Latter will be seduc'd by the Advices of Such, whose Maxim it is, that Godliness should always give place to Gain. Now

if Wicked Counfels are on fo many Accounts Dangerous; if they have fo many Ways of depraving Mens Manners; if the Unexperienc'd Sinner is instructed by them, the Good-natur'd Mifled, the Time-rous Hardned: If Men of all Ages, all Complexions, all Tempers, are apt to be Perverted by them, then may thofe, who employ them to thefe Sinful Purpofes, be juftly charg'd with being Coadjutors to Satan in compaffing the Destruction of Souls, and Co partners with Him in thofe Sins which other Men commit through their Inftigation.

How Heinous, how Exorbitant, how Intolerable this Guilt of drawing Others into Sin by Evil Counfel is in God's fight, We may judge by the Severity of that Law, which He was pleas'd to ordain againft thofe, who allur'd their Brethren from the Service of God to Idolatrous Worfhip. *If thy Brother, the Son of thy Mother, or thy Son, or thy Daughter, or the Wife of thy Bosom, or thy Friend, which is as thine own Soul, entice thee secretly, faying, Let Us go, and ferve other Gods, Thou fhalt not confent unto him, or hearken unto him; neither*
fhall

Shall thine Eye pity Him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal Him. But thou shalt surely Kill Him; thine Hand shall be first upon Him to put Him to Death; and afterwards the Hands of all the People: And thou shalt stone Him with Stones that He die; because He hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God. Deut. 13. 6, 8, 9, 10.

The Enticement of Others to Idolatry was, it seems, so abominable a Sin, that He who was guilty of it, lost all Title to Pity and Compassion; It loosened at once all the Ties of Blood, Relation, and Friendship: How close and intimate soever the Union was betwixt the Enticer and the Person, on whom such an Attempt was made; though they were of the Same Blood; though they were but One Flesh; Yea, though they were but One Soul; upon the suggestion of Such Evil Counsel, that Union was immediately dissolved; the Parent must bear Testimony against his Child, the Husband against his Wife, the Friend against Him, who was as his Own Soul; because None of these Relations could make the Party so Dear, as the Wicked Counsel He gave, rendered Him

Odious : It was hard enough for Persons so nearly related to Inform against their Relations ; but this was not sufficient, unless they were also his Executioners. It may not be pretended, that it is as great a Crime to allure Persons to Other Sins, as to Idolatry : but since Mens Souls may as effectually be destroy'd by the habitual practice of any Heinous Sin, as by Idolatry it self ; since all Deadly Sin hath in it something of the Nature of Idolatry, as it draws Us from the Love of God to the Love of the Creature ; Those who by Evil Counsels allure unwary Persons to the Commission of any Enormous Sin, are to be lookt upon as Seducers ; and though the Persons misled by them have no Commission to Revenge the Wrong done to their Souls upon such Pernicious Counsellors, Yet without Repentance it will certainly be recompens'd upon them by Him, *to whom Vengeance belongeth*, and who will be true to His Word in repaying it.

A *Third Way* of being *Partakers in Other Mens Sins*, is by giving them Evil Example. Men Speak to each Other by their Actions as well as by their Words ; there is
a Kind

a Kind of Language in what We Do in the Sight of Each Other, as well as in what We Speak in the Hearing of Each Other : As it is in the Power of Wicked Men to tempt Others to Sin, and to be Partakers of the Sin of Others, by Pernicious Counsels, so also is it in their Power, and too often in their Will, to pollute Others by the Infection of a Bad Example. And this Infection is like to Spread the farther, and to prove the more Fatal, because the Generality of Men are apt to be govern'd not so much by Rule, or by Counsel, as by Authority and Example. Many Persons act as if they had no Reason, no Judgment, no Conscience of their Own, but were altogether guided and sway'd by the Actions of Other Men : What they see Others do, that they do as it were Mechanically : All their Motions depend upon the Motions of those by whom they are Influenc'd : they seem to be Animated by Another's Soul ; and what they Observe That Person to do, whom they have made their Guide and Leader, That they by a Secret and scarcely Resistible Force find themselves disposed to follow. There

is the same Agreement and Correspondency between Their Actions and the Actions of those whom they Imitate, as was in the Prophet *Ezekiel's* Vision, betwixt the Movements of the Wheels, and the Living Creatures; *When the Living Creatures went, the Wheels went by them, and when the Living Creatures were lift up from the Earth, the Wheels were lift up. —When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood: for the Spirit of the Living Creatures was in the Wheels.* Thus Forcibly, I say, are many Men led by the Examples of Others; They trouble not themselves to enquire, whether what they do is Lawful, or Unlawful; It is sufficient to them that they are not Singular, but do the same Thing which Others do, as well as They. Men learn to Live, and Act, as much as they do to Speak or Write by Imitation, and whatever Defects there are in the Original, the Same and More will be sure to appear in the Copy.

Now if Humane Nature is such a perfect Mimick; if Most are apt to be Sway'd rather by Example than by Rule; if Example hath in it such a Contagious Influence,

It

It is plain, that All who set Ill Examples are Answerable not only for their Own Personal Sins, but also for those Sins, which Others commit by their Example.

Actions in themselves Indifferent become Sins, when by giving Scandal they lead Others to commit Sin: Hence it is, that the Apostles do so often, and so largely insist upon the strict Obligation which All Christians are under, to abridge their Christian Liberty in the Use of Things otherwise Lawful, for fear of Offending, or Scandalizing their Brethren: *Take heed, saith St. Paul, lest by any Means this Liberty of Yours become a Stumbling-Block to them that are Weak. For if Any Man see Thee, which hast Knowledge, sit at Meat in the Idol's Temple, shall not the Conscience of Him that is Weak, be emboldned to Eat those Things which are Offer'd to Idols? And through thy Knowledge shall the Weak Brother Perish, for whom Christ died? But when Ye Sin so against the Brethren, and wound their Weak Conscience, Ye Sin against Christ.* 1 Cor. 8. 9, 10, 11, 12. Now if Those, who do Things in Themselves Innocent, are said to lay a Stumbling-Block in the Way of those,

those, who through Weakness may take an Occasion from thence to do things Forbidden ; if They are accus'd of *Destroying their Brethren, for whom Christ died, of Sinning against their Brethren, of Wounding their Consciences, of Sinning against Christ.*— How much more deservedly may This Accusation be brought against Those, who lay Stumbling-Blocks in the Ways of Others, by doing Actions Notoriously and Confessedly Sinful ? Actions, not only in Appearance, but in Reality Evil ; Actions, that will appear Evil not only to Some, but to All, who observe them ; Actions that would in themselves be Damnable, though they gave no Scandal, and are worthy of an Heavier Judgment, because they give great Scandal, and betray Others into Sin and Damnation.

A *Fourth Way of Partaking of Other Mens Sins*, is, by with-holding from them that Necessary Instruction, which by the Relation We bear to them, We are Oblig'd to give them.

God, when He publish'd his Laws to the People of *Israel*, charg'd them not only to take Heed to themselves and to Keep
their

their *Own Souls* diligently, but also to Teach them their Sons, and their *Sons Sons*. And in the Gospel, We are taught, that it is the Indispensable Duty of Parents to *bring up their Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*. Those Parents therefore who Rob their Children of this Necessary Instruction, which is Entail'd upon them by the Law of God, and of which they cannot be Disinherited without the greatest Injury to their Souls, will be Responsible for those Sins of their Children, which they commit for want of Such Instruction. It hath always justly been accounted as an Instance of the Greatest Barbarity for Parents to Deny their Children that Food which is Necessary for the Nourishment and Support of their Bodies. *Can a Woman forget her Sucking-Child, that she should not have Compassion on the Son of her Womb? Even the Sea-Monsters draw out their Breasts, they give Suck to their Young Ones: The Daughter of my People is become Cruel; the Tongue of the Sucking-Child cleaveth unto the Roof of the Mouth for Thirst; the Young Children lack Bread, and no Man breaketh it to them.* Now, is the Want of Bodily Food
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thus Lamentable ? is the Neglect of Supplying it thus Inhumane ? Must those Parents be Destitute of all Bowels, who are Deaf to the Cries of their Children, famishing for lack of their Bodily Sustenance ? And is the Want of Spiritual Food an Evil less Calamitous ; or the With-holding of it a Cruelty less Odious ? *If any provide not for his Own, and especially for those of His Own House, He, in the Judgment of St. Paul, hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel.* And if Christians are Oblig'd to Supply the Temporal Wants of their Domesticks under the Pain of Forfeiting their Title to Christianity, then Ought those, who take no Care to Relieve their Spiritual Wants, to look upon Themselves as even worse than those, who in the Opinion of the Apostle, *are worse than Infidels.*

This Censure ought to be seriously consider'd both by Parents, and by those who are in the place of Parents, and who have *bound themselves by Solemn Vows in the presence of God and his Church to Instruct those for whom they are Sureties, in All those things, which a Christian ought to Know and to Believe to his Souls Health ; and to take care that they*
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be brought up to lead a Godly and a Christian Life. Every Such Person doth by the very Nature of the Engagement into which He enters say unto God what *Judah* said unto *Israel* his Father, *I will be Surety for the Child; of my Hand shalt thou require Him; if I bring him not unto thee, and set Him before thee, then let Me bear the blame for Ever.* That they may not bear this blame, that they may not incur the Displeasure of their Heavenly Father, it is their Duty to use their best Endeavours, as *Judah* did, that No Mischief do befall Them, for whom they became Sureties; this is a Debt, which they have bound upon their Consciences by the Strongest Ties, and which if they do not discharge, they must expect to be impleaded at God's Tribunal by those Angels, who are peculiarly concern'd for these *Little Ones*.

It might look Partial, if in enumerating the several Ways of *partaking in other Mens Sins*, and in specifying that particular Way of Communicating in the Sins of Others by with-holding from them that necessary Instruction, which they of right challenge from Us, I should take no Notice of the
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Strict Obligation which the Ministers of the Gospel are under to Feed their respective Flocks, and of their great Guilt, if they are Unfaithful in the Discharge of their Ministerial Duties. What God declar'd to the Prophet *Ezekiel*, is Applicable to All, who by any Ties are bound to watch over the Souls of Others. *Son of Man, I have made thee a Watchman unto the House of Israel; therefore hear the Word at my Mouth, and give them warning from Me. When I say unto the Wicked, thou shalt surely die, and thou givest Him not Warning, nor speakest to warn the Wicked from his Wicked Way, to save his Life, the same Wicked Man shall die in his Iniquity: but his Blood will I require at thine Hand. Again, when a Righteous Man doth turn from his Righteousness, and commit Iniquity, He shall die; because thou hast not given Him Warning, He shall die in his Sin----- but his Blood will I require at thine Hand.* Ezek. 3. 17, 18, &c.

That This may neither be Your Case, Nor Mine; that Neither You may suffer for want of Taking, nor I for want of Giving Necessary Warning, I do now, my Dearly beloved Brethren, most earnestly be-

beseech You to call to Remembrance all those Diffuasives from Impiety and Sin, all those Exhortations to Holiness and Virtue, which I have through the Course of my Ministry, with much Weakness and Infirmary, but with an Honest Mind, and an Heartly Concern for Your Eternal Welfare made unto You. I beg of You for My Sake, for Your Sakes, for the Sake of Jesus Christ, in whose Name, and by whose Authority I have spoken unto You, that having by Your Own free choice set Me to be Your Watchman, You would hearken to this the last Voice of the Trumpet, which I shall Sound under that Character; You would take This the Last Warning, which I am to give You in that Relation and Capacity--- The Word, which I have heard at God's Mouth, You have often heard at Mine; and I do now once more declare it unto You; Namely, that if Sinners do not turn from their Evil Ways, they shall surely Die in their Iniquities, the Sword of God's Vengeance shall come upon them, and their Blood shall be upon their Head; but that if even

Now

Now they return from their Sins, and Hence-forwards do that which is Lawful and Right, they shall surely Live, they shall not Die. Let this Plain, this Repeated, this Final Declaration of One, who sincerely Loves and Regards You, and who hath had all the Testimonies He could Wish, more than He could Expect, of Affection and Esteem from You, sink deep into Your Hearts, and have the desir'd Influence upon Your Lives : to the Many and Signal Proofs You have shewn of Your Good Will towards Me, add the most Valuable, the most Acceptable, the most Proper Pledge of Your Love to Me, that of permitting Me to be an Instrument under God of Your Everlasting Salvation.

Oh, how Happy would it be both for You and for Me, if when I come to render an Account of my Ministry to Christ my Lord and Master, I could do it in the Same Words, in which He gave unto His Father an Account of the Discharge of His Mediatorial Office ! *I have glorified thee on the Earth ; I have finished the Work, which*
thou

thou gavest Me to do. I have manifested thy Name unto the Men which thou gavest me out of the World—— I have given unto Them the Words, which thou gavest unto Me, and they have received them.----- All Mine are Thine; those that thou gavest Me have I Kept, and None of them is lost. — May God in his Infinite Mercy Pardon my Defects in Preaching His Word, and Yours in Hearing it! May the Seed, which hath been Sown, and that, which shall be Sown, take deep Root Downwards, and bring forth abundant Fruit Upwards! May those, who shall Follow Me, be as faithful and able Stewards of the Mysteries of God, as those, who have gone Before Me! May the same Kind Reception and Encouragement, which my Ministry hath found among You, be transferr'd together with the Duty and Burden of it, to Him, who shall Succeed Me! May the Same Unanimity amongst Your Selves, the Same Love of one Another, the Same Affection to Your Prince and Country, the Same Reverence for our Excellent Church and its Orthodox Ministers, for which

You have been hitherto Celebrated, be
still Preserv'd, be still Conspicuous amongst
You!

And, Now, Brethren, I commend You to
God, and to the Word of His Grace, which is
able to build you up, and to give You an Inhe-
ritance among all them which are Sanctified.
— Of which Inheritance, &c.

A SER-

A
SERMON

Preach'd at the

ASSIZES

HELD AT

KINGSTON

Upon *THAMES*;

On *Thursday*, March 20, 17¹¹/₁₂.

By the HONOURABLE

Mr. Justice POWEL.

A

MEMORIAL

OF

THE

WAR

OF 1812

AND

THE

RECORD

OF THE

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T O

The Honourable Mr. Justice P O W E L.

The Worshipful J O H N M I T C H E L, *Esq*;

High-Sheriff of the County of *Surrey*.

The Gentlemen of the Grand-Jury of the
said County.

<p>George Vernon Thomas Lant William Draper Thomas Heath George Atwood John Lade Henry Byne Thomas Gratwick William Genew William Perkins Urban Hall Samuel Kenish Joseph Wandell Samuel Rush William Gardiner John Lampard</p>	} Esquires.	<p>Philip Dacres Edmund Reading Samuel Wincop John Trigg John Jackson William Wicks Thomas Sieavens Joseph Gibbons Thomas Normondy Robert Smith Charles King William Page Richard Atkinson</p>	} Gentlemen.
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The Hon^{ble} *Heneage Finch*, *Esq*; } Knights of
 Sir *Francis Vincent*, Bar. } the Shire.

And to the rest of the Gentlemen of *Surrey*,
 who appear'd at the Assizes at *Kingston*.

THERE are as many Examples of the
 principal Doctrine advanc'd in the follow-
 ing Discourse, as there are Persons, to
 whom it is Inscrib'd. Your Solemn Attendance on

The Epistle Dedicatory.

the Publick Worship of GOD in the Church, before You enter'd upon the Administration of Justice in the Court ; The Religious Gravity, with which the Charge was given from the Bench, and the Conscientious Faithfulness, with which it was executed by the Jury ; The Mutual Offices of Courtesy, Friendship, Affection, and Esteem, which pass'd between the Sheriff, and the Gentlemen who appear'd at the Assizes in great Numbers, to do Him Honour, and their Country Service ; The Candour with which this Sermon was heard, and the Civilities which were paid to the Preacher of it, not out of any Personal Regards to One, who was in a great Measure a Stranger, but in Honour of his Sacred Function ; are so many Proofs of the Influences of Religion, and of Your acknowledging Your selves to be under higher Obligations, than the Laws of the Land.

It was a great Recommendation of this Sermon to the Gentlemen of Surrey, that it was preach'd at the Desire of their Sheriff ; and it may hope for the more favourable Reception from the World, that it is publish'd at the Unanimous Request of so many Honourable Persons. I am

Your most Humble, and

Most Obedient Servant,

GEORGE SMALRIDGE.

A
S E R M O N, &c.

I T I M. I. 9.

-----The Law is not made for a Righteous Man, but for the Lawless and Disobedient, for Ungodly and for Sinners, for Unholy and Profane-----

THE Design of St. *Paul* in this Place, is to remove those False Notions which some had entertain'd of the Law, and in their room to establish the Right. For it seems, that Some affected to be (a) *Teachers of the Law*, who were perfect Strangers to it, *understanding neither what they said, nor whereof they affirm'd*. And, as those generally are

the Warmest Assertors of a Cause, who are least acquainted with the Merits of it, so these Bigots for the Law made out in Zeal, what they wanted in Knowledge: They talk'd much, and disputed eagerly for the Honour of the Law, but knew nothing all the while of the Nature and Design of it. To stop the Mouths of such Ignorant Gain-sayers, and to silence their *vain Jangling*, our Apostle vouchsafes to instruct anew these pretended Teachers: He points out to them their fundamental Mistake, and gives them a true State of the Nature and Intent of the Law: He grants, that the Law had its due Use; but complains, that they much Abused it; (a) *We know the Law is good, if a Man use it lawfully.* He acknowledges it was very proper for the Ends for which it was at first Instituted, but shews, that they applied it to Ends for which it was never designed, and which therefore could never be attained by it. They took the Law for an Adequate Rule of Action, which, if they observ'd, they hop'd to be adjudg'd Righteous; whereas it was Only intended

(a) Ver. 8.

as a Guard against Exorbitant Crimes, and arm'd with Penalties to be inflicted upon Notorious Transgressors.

It is true, that Righteousness, in the very Notion of it, includes relation to a Law, as consisting in a strict observance of it; so that where there is no Law, there can no more be Righteousness, than there can be Transgression. The Law, therefore, in the Text, must be taken in a restrain'd Sense, and not interpreted of that Law of God which is given to Mankind as a Perpetual and Inviolable Rule of Action, which we Usually call the Moral Law, but of that Peculiar Scheme of Laws, which was directed by *Moses* to the *Jews*, and which exacted some Special Duties, and prohibited some Particular Crimes, by the Sanction of Temporal Rewards and Punishments. The Moral Law was made for the Righteous, and was the Rule and Measure of Righteousness; but this National Law was made not so much to direct Good Men in their Duty, as to punish the Wicked for their Transgressions. The Righteous had a *Law written in their Hearts*, and by this Law they Willingly, and without

out Constraint, order'd all their Actions; so that there was no need of any Other Law to bind them: But All Men were not of so Ingenuous and Governable a Temper, as to hearken to the Inward and Gentle Dictates of right Reason; Some were of a Servile and Base Spirit, not to be kept in due Bounds without a more strict Hand and severe Discipline; and therefore, there was need of Coercive Laws to restrain the Licentiousness of such as these. In this Sense, I think, *St. Paul* is to be understood, when he saith, That

*The Law is not made for a Righteous Man,
but for the Lawless and Disobedient, for
Ungodly and for Sinners, for Unholy and
Profane.*

What is here said of the Law of *Moses*, the National Law of the *Jews* (against whose Prejudices *St. Paul* was in this Place concern'd to argue) I shall beg Leave to apply to National Laws in General; since what is asserted of the Mosaic Body of Laws, which had God Himself for their Author, is not only Equally, but much More true of all Humane Laws. I shall therefore take the Occasion, which seems fair-

fairly given me from the Words of the Text, to shew,

First, That Humane Laws are not made for the Righteous.

Secondly, That they are made for the Lawless and Disobedient.

When I affirm, that Humane Laws are not made for the Righteous, I would not be thought to mean, that the Righteous or Godly are exempted from the Obedience due to Humane Laws, or that Humane Laws, when made by Good Authority, and no ways repugnant to the Laws of God, are not a Rule to which the Righteous Ought to conform their Actions. They are so far from being loose from these Ties, that None are more strongly bound, than They, as being taught to obey, *not Only for Wrath, but also for Conscience-sake*. The Righteous then, as well as Wicked, are within the direction of Humane Laws; they would not be Righteous, Unless they obey'd them; but they are not therefore Righteous, Because they obey them. The Laws of Men make up Part of that Rule, the observance of which

which is necessary to denominate Men Righteous ; but they are not the Adequate Rule and Intire Measure of Righteousness. Humane Laws may serve to direct good Men in Some Branches of their Duty ; but Men would be wanting in the Main Parts of their Duty, unless govern'd by an higher Principle, than Humane Laws. My Design, therefore, is not to prove any Incapacity in Humane Laws to oblige the Righteous, upon supposal of a Superior Law, but to shew the Insufficiency of Humane Laws to make Men Righteous, when consider'd in themselves, and without regard to an Higher Law.

Righteousness consists in a strict observance of All those Duties, to which We are in Any respects oblig'd ; in doing All those things which We can by any means discover our selves bound to do ; and in abstaining from All those Actions, which We can any way learn to be disagreeable to Beings endu'd with those Faculties, which We find in our selves, and consider'd in those Circumstances and Relations, in which We are plac'd. That Our Actions, therefore, may be in Every regard

gard such, as they Ought to be, the Rule by which they are Order'd, must be Intire and Perfect; and Sufficient Motives must be offer'd, why We should steadily comply with that Rule: The Laws, by which We are directed, must take in the whole Compass of Our Duty, and they must also have Authority sufficient to oblige Us to the Performance of it. For if the Rule be Imperfect, Our Duty, which rises no higher, will be Defective too; and be the Rule in it self never so Exact, it can have no Influence on Our Actions, till We are convinc'd, that We are bound to govern our selves by it.

Now Humane Laws are Insufficient to make Men Righteous, upon both these Accounts.

First, Because they do not point out All those Actions, which We must perform, if We would be esteem'd Righteous.

Secondly, Because, though they did direct Us in our whole Duty, they would not have Authority sufficient to Oblige Us to the performance of it.

First, Humane Laws do not point out All those Actions, which We must perform,

form, if We would be esteem'd Righteous.

Righteousness, as hath been said, takes in the Whole Extent of our Duty, arising from any Relations We stand in to God, to Ourselves, or to Our Neighbours. Our Duty to God, which is the Foundation of the rest, We are not to learn from Humane Laws (which would prove very Ill Guides to Us in this Matter) but from His Own Will, as discoverable by the right Use of our Reason, or Manifested to Us by Express Revelation. What Service of Ours will be acceptable to God, what He will be pleas'd to reward, We can know only from God Himself, or from those, to whom God hath made known His good Pleasure; which Communication We have no Reason to think the Singular Prerogative of those, who amongst Men have the Sovereign Power of making Laws. Humane Laws may Enforce those Duties which Natural or Reveal'd Religion teaches, but are no farther fitted to direct Us in Knowing them, than as they are themselves directed by a better Rule: They may pretend to Declare and to Interpret the
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the Law of God, but by ſuch Declarations, We learn only what the Makers of theſe Laws Think to be God's Will ; or, perhaps, barely, what they would have Us think, not what We Ought to think, and what the Will of God undoubtedly Is : For after ſuch Interpretations, there is ſtill room for a reaſonable Man to ſuſpend his Opinion, and to enquire farther ; and, according to the Iſſue of his Enquiry, to Judge and Determine. Now, a Rule that wants thus to be tried, cannot it ſelf be a Standard : When it hath been examin'd by that which is own'd for ſuch, it may ſerve for Uſe ; but then, what is Meaſur'd by it is Exact, not becauſe fitted to that Rule, but becauſe it will bear an higher Teſt. The Laws of Men May be, and in many Caſes Are, as different, as their Languages ; ſo that were We to learn Our Obligations to God from them, Mens Duties would change with the Climate, and the Meaſures of Religious and Moral Actions would be as Variable as thoſe, which in different Countries ſerve for Civil Uſes. In ſhort, it is in Vain to expect from Humane Laws, a faithful Direction in the
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Duties of Religion, whilst Men are Fallible, and God is Unchangeable.

Nor must we hope for better Help from them, in discerning what We Owe to Our selves : To know this, 'tis absolutely necessary that We first Know Our selves aright ; That We take a View of the Excellencies and Defects of our Nature, as also of our Own Personal Abilities or Infirmities ; That we consider in what Rank We stand to Beings Above or Below Us ; and what that Station is, which We are to Maintain and Adorn : That We be thoroughly acquainted with Our Tempers and Inclinations, and that We know the Strength and Bent of our Passions. Now such Knowledge as this, however necessary for the right Government of our selves, is not to be had from our Books of Law. We are not taught there, what We Owe to Our selves, but to the Publick : Laws may provide against doing Injury to Others ; but a Man may be as mischievous to Himself as he pleases, without any Breach of the Law.

It becomes the Wisdom of Humane Laws, to take due Care, that Our Unruly Pas-

Passions of Anger, Envy and Malice, do not break out to the Prejudice of our Neighbour; but these Laws make no Provision against the Tumult rais'd in our Own Breasts; the Ferment Within is not allay'd by any Restraint from Without, but proves rather the more Violent for want of Vent. Some of the Grosser Acts of Uncleannefs, and Excesses of Intemperance, may fall within the Reach of Humane Laws, because they tend to Confusion and Disorder, to Invasion of establish'd Rights, Breach of Publick Peace, and the Ruine of Society: But a polluted Imagination hath still its free Scope; and He who is quiet and peaceable in his Intemperance, may sin on with Impunity.

So again, Sumptuary Laws are with good Effect made against Excess in Apparel; but never any of these extended so far, as to correct the Pride of the Heart, or to punish it, though express'd by the Overt-Acts of an haughty Countenance, a scornful Gesture, and an arrogant Tongue. Nay, the Laws are so far from tending to subdue Pride, that unless guarded against, they are apt in Some Distances to Pro-

mote it ; for should All Persons put as great a Value upon themselves as the Laws do, they might be led *to think of themselves more highly, than they Ought to think*. It is necessary to the Preservation of Order, and for Maintaining the Reverence due to Authority, that those, who are in a more Eminent Degree invested with it, should be distinguish'd from Others by Titles of Honour, Splendor of Habit, Solemnity of Attendance, and Other Usual Ceremonies of Pomp and Grandeur. But should Magistrates, who for Weighty and Important Reasons are honour'd with these Peculiar Privileges, take Occasion from hence to form in their Minds extravagant Notions of their Own Real Worth and Excellency ; should they, instead of making use of these Prudential Establishments for the Ease and Benefit of Mankind, be prompted to Despise and Look down upon Others, as Creatures of a Lower Rank, and much beneath their Level and Regard, they would exceed the due Bounds of Humility ; and would justly merit that Scorn, with which God in Justice, and Men in Revenge, never fail to punish the Proud.

And

And as Humane Laws, where there is want of Caution, may minister to Pride, so may they also occasionally contribute to an Immoderate Desire of Riches : For since Mens Appetite after these always bears Proportion to the Opinion they have of their Value, He that measures their Worth by the Esteem they are in, in the Eye of the Law, may be apt to rate them somewhat higher than a Wise or Good Man ought. Nor will the Pleasures of this World lose any Thing in Our Esteem, if We take Our Measures of them from Humane Laws ; for Laws establish'd upon Temporal Rewards and Punishments, are apt to create in Us an undue Esteem for those Good things of this World, which would not be propos'd as proper Encouragements of our Obedience, unless look'd upon as highly Valuable ; and an Immoderate Opinion of those Evils, which would not be threatned against the Disobedient, unless look'd upon as Grievous and Intolerable. So far therefore are Humane Laws from directing Us in all the Duties We owe to Our selves, that unless We are under the Conduct of a Better Principle,

We are in no small Danger of being frequently misguided by them.

But, although they are not so well adapted to inform Us in our Duty to God, and to our Own Souls, yet We may expect at least a full Direction from them in what We Owe to our Neighbours ; for it being the principal Intent of these Laws, to secure to every One his Right, it may reasonably be presumed, that all Social Duties are by them sufficiently provided for. And yet, upon a short and transient View, it will appear, that they are very defective even in This : For although the Good of Society be as much concern'd in Mens contributing jointly to the Happiness of each Other, as in their abstaining from mutual Wrong, yet Humane Laws seem to be rather contriv'd for repressing Injuries, than for promoting Good Offices. The Law takes care, that I should not deprive another of what is His ; but it doth not therefore Oblige Me to Impart to Him, what is my Own : I shall be punish'd if I Unjustly Oppress my Brother ; but I am not therefore bound Charitably to Relieve Him. It is true indeed, that even this

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Relief is in some Cases, by the Piety of our Municipal Laws, provided for : But a Legal Charity is, God knows, very Narrow, takes in but few Objects, expresses it self only One Way : and loses all Pre- tence to Merit, when, being exacted from Us, it is no longer Charity, but a Tax. Slander and Detraction, False-Witness and Defamation, are prohibited by the Law of the Land : But this lays no Obligation on Me to support the Injur'd Credit of my Neighbour, to defend his Reputation against prevailing Prejudices, and the Clamours of a Party ; and to Venture my Own good Name, by stepping in to the Succour of His. There is no greater Pest to Society than Ingratitude ; this hinders the free Intercourse of Good Offices, and is as fatal to the Body Politic, as stopping the Circulation of the Blood would be to the Body Natural ; and yet Humane Laws do not pretend to enforce upon Us an Equal Return for Benefits receiv'd ; nor does there lie in our Courts of Justice, or even of Equity, an Action of Ingratitude. To support the Oppress'd, to instruct the Ignorant, to reverence Good Men, and

reform the Bad ; to be bountiful to Some, and courteous to All ; to be ſerviceable to the Age We live in, and to conſult the Good of Poſterity, are Duties on which the Welfare of Society doth Absolutely depend ; and yet a Man may be wanting in Any, or All of theſe, without fearing any Cenſure from the Laws of Men.

It would be very eaſy to draw up a much larger Catalogue of Duties, which a Reaſonable Man cannot but Own himſelf ſtrictly bound to, which yet neither the Common nor Statute-Law exact from Him. Some Actions fall not within the Notice and Cognizance of Men, and therefore it would be in Vain for Men to give Rules about them. Some belong to an Higher Court, and are not within the Verge of Humane Authority. Some are to be left Free, becauſe they would ceaſe to be laudable, if done upon Compulſion. Some Duties are Antecedent to Humane Laws, and ſome Repugnant to them. Some We ſhould be oblig'd to, were there No ſuch Thing as Government ; and ſome We may be bound to in Oppoſition to Humane Eſtabliſhments. Some, as to the
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Substance and Matter of them, are enjoin'd by the Law, but then the Circumstances and Manner of Performance, on which their Value chiefly depends, is left Free and Unrestrain'd. Upon which, and many Other Accounts, it sufficiently appears, that Humane Laws are a very Imperfect and Defective Rule of Humane Actions.

But were Humane Laws admitted to be a Full and Adequate Rule of Action; did they take in all the Instances and all the Degrees of Duty, so that We might rely upon them as a Safe and Infallible Guide; yet they would be insufficient to make Men Righteous, because of Themselves they would not have Authority enough to Oblige Men to the Performance of those Actions, which they might prescribe.

All Authority is founded either in the Right which those who command have to Require Our Obedience, or the Power which they have to Extort it. For those, who pretend to put a Restraint upon Our Liberty, must either alledge good Reasons, why We Ought to act as they direct; or must work upon Our Fears, by shew-

ing the Mischief which will attend Our Non-compliance. Sense of Duty may prevail upon an Ingenuous Spirit to Obey those, who have a fair Title to command; though they might be disobey'd with Impunity; and fear of Punishment will work upon the Weak, to pay that Deference to the Stronger in point of Prudence, which they might refuse to pay with Innocence. Now if Humane Laws challenge Our Obedience upon the former Claim, as being made by those, who have a Right to give Rules to Us, this Right must be made out by some Laws Antecedent to them; for the bare Challenge of a Right, without any other Evidence of its being due, will never be admitted for a good Proof of it.

If it be told me, that Protection and Obedience are reciprocal Duties, that since I receive the Benefits of Government, it is reasonable I should conform my self to the Rules of it, this Way of arguing supposes me convinc'd beforehand, that to act thus Gratefully is highly agreeable to the Reason of Mankind; that to do Otherwise is repugnant to Reason; that is, in other Words, that to do One
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is Morally Good, and to do the Other is Morally Evil ; which would not be, unless there was Some Rule or Law, which thus distinguish'd 'em.

If it should be urg'd, that I have Virtually or Expressly given my consent to be govern'd by such and such Laws ; that my Ancestors acting for Me have precluded me from my natural Liberty, or that I have Voluntarily resign'd it by my Own free Act and Deed ; not to dispute at present the Authority of such Proxy, 'tis plain, that the whole Strefs of this Claim is built upon a false Foundation, unless it can be made out, that what we Promise that we Ought to Perform ; which is a Maxim, not to be first learnt from Humane Laws, but from Morality, or Révelation.

The Ill Consequences of Disobedience, and the Mischiefs which would arise from Confusion and Anarchy, may be display'd at large, and set forth in their proper Colours, to engage the Subject to a quiet and submissive Conduct : But if He hath not before learnt to distinguish between Good and Evil, then Order or Disorder, Peace or War, the Publick Good or the Publick

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Ruine, are only different Sounds; and there is no Reason in the Nature of Things, why any Man should prefer One to the Other, or promote One rather than the Other.

A Perswasion that those, who govern Us, have a tender Regard to Our Interests, and will better promote them, than We could do Our selves, is a very good Reason, why We should quietly follow Their Direction: But unless those, who are above the Restraint of Humane Laws, are Influenc'd by some Higher Principles, We have no sufficient Grounds to Suppose the Magistrate at all concern'd to consult or promote the Good of any One but Himself, or to propose to Himself any End, but his Own Pleasure. Whatever Other Reasons may be offer'd why We Ought, as of Right, to Obey Humane Laws, will be found to presuppose Us under some Obligations to a superior Law: And, upon a thorough Enquiry, We shall be fully convinc'd, that the Higher Powers have not only no Better, but no Other Plea to Our Obedience, as a Debt We cannot in Justice deny them, but only this One (which is a
 very

very Good One) that they are Ordain'd of God.

But whether Humane Laws have of Themselves a Right to Require our Obedience or not, yet if the Sanctions annex'd to them are sufficient to Enforce our Compliance, their Authority will, it is confessed, stand Firm and Unshaken. For although Nice Men may distinguish betwixt a Right to Require Obedience, and Power to Enforce it; although We may be taught in the Schools to make a Difference betwixt the Law and the Penalty, so as to acknowledge an Obligation to keep the Law, though there were no Danger of incurring any Punishment upon Non-Observance, yet, perhaps, in Practice, the Only Reason, why We keep any Law, is the Apprehension of Some Evil, which would attend Our Disobedience. We are taught indeed by (a) *St. Paul*, to be subject not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience-sake: But He, who obeys out of Conscience, is as much influenc'd by Fear of Punishment, as He who is subject for Wrath: The only Difference is, that the

(a) Rom. 13. 5.

One fears the Punishments threatned by Men, the Other is afraid of the Damnation denounc'd by God. If therefore the Punishments threatned by Men to the Transgressors of their Laws, are sufficient to engage our Fears, whether of Right they Ought or not, it is certain, that in Fact they Will be Obey'd.

But, that the Penalties, which are annex'd to the Breach of Humane Laws, are too weak a Restraint to hinder Men from transgressing them, will appear from this Consideration, That where a strong Appetite of Pleasure, or Prospect of Gain, invites Us to any Action, the Evils, which are threatned on the Other Side to deter Us from it, cannot be of Weight Enough to determine Our Choice to the Forbearance, unless represented both as Unavoidable, so that there is no Escape from them; and also as Intolerable, so that the Pleasures propos'd cannot counterbalance them. For, be the Evils denounc'd never so grievous, yet, if they may be Averted, We shall Venture on the forbidden Action, in hopes of Impunity; or if they be never so Certain, yet if they can be tolerably well

well Endur'd, the Pleasure which We aim at may be thought worth the Purchase, though bought with some Pain. Whence it comes to pass, that the Penalties threaten'd by Humane Laws cannot be always Effectual to restrain Men from the Violation of them, because they are such as Many may hope to Escape, and such as Some may be willing to Bear.

Guilt and Punishment, how necessary soever a Connexion they may have in the Reason of Things, do not always go close together: One follows the Other, but sometimes so Lamely, that the Sinner may have got into the Other World, before Vengeance Overtakes Him. For the Laws, though they are severe in their Threats, yet are frequently harmless enough in the Execution. They cannot execute themselves; and unless those who are Entrusted in the Administration espouse their Quarrel, they may be trampled on without avenging themselves upon the Aggressor. The Sword of Justice is sometimes permitted to rest in quiet; and when it is drawn and brandish'd in the Face of a Sinner, yet still Force may ward off the Blow,

Blow, or Slight may decline it. The Methods of Evasion are well Studied, and much Practis'd: And it is said to be no Inconsiderable Part of the Knowledge of the Law, to know how far it may be broken, without Hazard to the Offender. Secrecy in Sinning, where the Sinner can be content to sin Alone, is a secure Provision against any Danger from Humane Laws: And if some have been prevail'd with to bear Evidence to their Own Guilt, this has been Owing not to any Perfection in Humane Laws, but to the Fear of a Judgment to come, and the Over-ruling Terrors of a Wounded Conscience. But even those Crimes, that do not escape all Discovery, may yet go Unpunish'd for Want of Sufficient Evidence: Sufficient not only to satisfy an Unprejudic'd Man, but to silence all Cavils; for a Full and Satisfactory Proof doth not always amount to a Legal Conviction.

There are few Causes so Desperate, as not to be able to purchase an Advocate; few of so ill a Complexion, but by Colours handsomly laid on, their Deformity may in a good Measure be disguis'd. Where
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a flat Denial can take no Place, there may be room left for a well-contriv'd Apology : Faults that cannot be clearly Wiped off, may be much Extenuated ; where the Fact is Own'd, the Quality of it may still admit of a Debate : Inadvertency, Ignorance of the Law, Honesty of Intention, may be pleaded in Bar of too rigid a Sentence ; a Witness that bears too hard upon a Criminal, who can neither be frighted into Silence, nor hir'd to downright Perjury, may yet be prevail'd on to Palliate or Dissemble the Truth ; or if His Honesty be too stanch for this, yet still He is capable of being Managed : A dextrous Enquiry may fetch out Such an Answer, as better serves the Examiner's Purpose, than a true One would do : And the same Plainness and Simplicity of Manners, which places a well-meaning Man above Corruption, may lay Him the more open to have His Testimony thus practis'd upon. If none of these Artifices can screen the Criminal from Justice, yet Partiality and Favour, or a mistaken Notion of Compassion may acquit Him : Or if He be a Sinner of Quality and Interest, though the

Crimes

Crimes of Such an One are of the Worst Consequence, because of the Scandal of the Example ; yet Licence to Offend, with Exemption from Punishment, is a Privilege not rashly to be invaded.

Now, had We no other Argument of the Weakness of Humane Laws, this One Consideration would enough prove their Insufficiency, that Those, whose Temptations to Offend are Greatest, and whose Vices spread Farthest, are under the least Restraint and Awe from the Laws of Men. For Punishments amongst Men are generally applied rather to Persons, than Things ; and that the Lowest Sort of Men are most often Sufferers, is not perhaps more owing to the exceeding Greatness of their Villanies, than to the Meanness of the Villains.

All these, and many more Subterfuges (more than it is fit honest Men should be acquainted with) have crafty Sinners to escape the Rigour of the Law : And, although these should be thought Wild and Imaginary Suppositions of Things that never yet happen'd ; though We were taught by constant Experience, that our
Courts

Courts of Judicature were perfect Strangers to all Artifice in Pleadings, Falshood in Testimonies, Partiality in Verdicts, Iniquity in Sentences ; yet this would only shew what a powerful Influence Religion had, not what Security We might expect from Our Laws, if the Fear of God were quite extinguish'd in the Hearts of Men. The Principles of Religion are pre-suppos'd in the Proceffes of Our Courts ; and to the Influence of these We must ascribe the Regular Administration of Justice, where-ever it is found : The Fears of another World, and the Reverence paid to Oaths, which is built upon those Fears, are the Only Things that can insure to Us Veracity in Witnesses, Impartiality in Jurors, Integrity in Judges. If these Fears were once remov'd, the Punishments of this World, though they could not possibly be escap'd, yet would lose much of their Terror : Death it self, which is the Utmost that Men can inflict, would be less dreadful than it is, and often would be fled to as a Refuge, if there were no lurking Suspicions of a Judgment to follow : Sense of Guilt, and Remorse of

Conscience, are the most bitter Ingredients of all Punishments : *The Sting of Death is Sin* ; where there is no Consciouſness of This, the Innocent Person meets Death with Chearfulness ; and where the Sense of this is worn out by an habitual Course of Sinning, the Obstinate Malefactor goes off the Stage with an unconcern'd Stupidity. Now if the Terrors of Another World are necessary to embitter the Punishments of This ; if the Penalties of Humane Laws are not so Grievous, but that Men will Venture upon them, though Certain to suffer ; or if there be probable Hopes of Escaping the Punishment, when they do Offend ; if the Sanctions annex'd to them will not enforce their Observance, and they have no Other Authority in themselves whereby to Oblige ; if not only their Authority be Precarious, but their Direction Imperfect ; if they do not extend to All Duties, nor reach to All Men, nothing needs to be added farther, to shew their Insufficiency to make Men Righteous.

But although they are not sufficient to This Purpose, yet they are highly Expedient

dient to Another ; although they cannot of Themselves make Men perfectly Righteous, yet, in Subordination to an Higher Law, they are of great Use to restrain Men from being profligately Wicked ; though they are not made for the Righteous as an Adequate Rule of Action, yet as a Curb and Check upon Sin,

They are made for the Lawless and Disobedient, for Ungodly and for Sinners, for Unholy and Profane.

Had the Laws of God their due Influence over the Minds of Men ; were they heartily Believ'd, and sincerely Practis'd, there would be Little or No Occasion for the Laws of Men : But since there are *Lawless and Disobedient*, who refuse to be govern'd by the Divine Laws, *Ungodly and Profane*, who peremptorily reject their Authority, it is convenient there should be some Curb to restrain the Licentiousness of These.

The Evils of Another World, how great soever in themselves, yet because plac'd at a Distance, make not always the same lively Impressions on the Hearts of Men, as lesser Punishments brought nearer

Home : In order therefore to deter Men from Vice, it is of Use, that those who do not look far enough to be affected with Dangers that are more Remote, should have their Fears wrought upon by such Penalties, as being at Hand act more strongly, than do greater Torments in Reverſion. Some are ſo far funk in Senſuality, that they can form to themſelves no Notions of any Good or Evil, but what affects their Senſes : They never look Backwards or Forwards, ſo as to feel any Remorſe for what is Paſt, or to foreſee any Ill Conſequences that are to Come. St. *Paul* deſcribes theſe Men, as having their (a) *Underſtandings darkned, being alienated from the Life of God, through the Ignorance that is in them, becauſe of the Hardneſs of their Heart ; Who being paſt feeling, give themſelves over unto Lasciviousneſs, working all Uncleanneſs with Greedineſs.* All Addreſſes made to the Reaſon of ſuch Men will be in Vain, becauſe their *Underſtandings are darkned* : All Diſcourſe to them upon the Principles of Religion, will be Foreign and Inſignificant, becauſe they

(a) Eph. 4. 18, 19.

are *Alienated from the Life of God*: All Attempts on their Affections will fail, because their *Hearts being hardned*, are incapable of any Impressions: Nor will any Appeals to their Consciences be heard, because they are *past feeling*. The only Way which is left to come at the Souls of such Men, is by a Strong Application to their Senses; these are still Awake and Vigorous, and upon these, by wholesome Punishments, We may still hope to make some good Impression.

Those, who pretend that the Distinctions of Virtue and Vice are Arbitrary, and founded not in the Nature of the Thing, but in the Opinions of Men, are yet Agreed, that the Differences betwixt Pleasure and Pain are not Imaginary, but Real: If Honest and Dishonest are only Different Sounds, yet they will easily allow, that Corporal Ease, and Corporal Punishment, are Different Things: They Ought therefore to be convinc'd by their Own Principles; to learn the Difference of Right and Wrong, Duty and Sin, from the different Effects which they produce; And since they are not able to distinguish Vir-

tue and Vice by their several Roots, which lie too deep for them to look into, they should be taught to distinguish them by the Fruits they bear, the Bodily Pleasure or Pain which Humane Laws have annex to them; by the feeling of which, they may literally have their *Very Senses exercis'd to discern both Good and Evil*. The Psalmist hath Intimated to Us, that it is possible for Men to be (a) *as the Horse and the Mule, which have no Understanding*; and He hath directed Us to an Expedient how Even these may be manag'd: *Their Mouth must be held in with Bit and Bridle*; they must be under the Restraint of severe Laws, *lest they come Near unto Thee* to assault Thee.

It is well for Those, who deny the Existence of a God, and the Immortality of their Own Souls, that they are not quite so despicable Creatures in the Judgment of Other Men as they are in their Own; for if Others had the same degrading Notions of them, as they have of Themselves, I can see no reason why a mischievous Atheist, who disturbs the Peace, and disquiets the Lives, and thirsts after the

(a) Psal. 32. 10.

Blood of Men, should find better Quarter than any Other Beasts of Prey : If the Reverence paid to Our Common Humanity secures such an One from Private Vengeance ; so that though *His Hand be against every Man, every Man's Hand is not lifted up against Him* : Yet certainly it concerns Magistrates, who are *the Ministers of God, Avengers to execute Wrath upon Evil-doers, not to bear the Sword in Vain.*

Men of these loose Principles, are apt to plead much for the Sufficiency of Humane Laws : They think Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, well enough distinguish'd by these, without any Recourse to a Superior Law-giver : The Terrors of Another World may be of Use, they tell Us, to fright the Credulous and Superstitious, but Wise and Knowing Men, Such as they are, want not to be kept in Awe, by the Proposal of any Foreign Dangers : It is reasonable, therefore, that an Experiment of this pretended Perfection of Humane Laws be first made upon Atheists themselves ; that those who acknowledge no Other Laws, should feel the utmost Weight of These ; that We may be able to

judge of their Force and Influence, by the good Effects they have on the Lives and Practices of such Men. A Steady and Impartial Execution of Good and Wholsome Laws, is the best and most convincing Answer to those Objections, which Profane and Ungodly Men, with great Confidence, and little Reason, pretend to raise against the Administrations of Providence: (a) *because Sentence against an Evil Work is not executed speedily, therefore the Heart of the Sons of Men is fully set in them to do Evil.* Now this is a very perverse Abuse of the Mercies of God, and worthy of Atheists, to make that Indulgence, which is design'd to reclaim them, and which would have this Effect upon Ingenuous Minds, an Argument for their Obstinate Impenitence: There can be no greater Instance of Disingenuity and Folly, than thus to *despise the Riches of Divine Goodness, and Forbearance, and Long-suffering, not considering that the Goodness of God should lead them to Repentance.* But This, which is the Worst Argument in the World for going on to do Evil, becomes No Argument at all, when,

(a) Eccl. 8. 11.

by the Vigilance of Magistrates, *Sentence is executed speedily against Every Evil Work*; when Punishment followeth closely upon Sin, and its Wages are Immediately paid, as soon as the Work is done.

It is a common Objection against the World's being govern'd by a Wise and Just Ruler, That (a) *No Man knoweth either Love or Hatred, by all that is before them; that all Things come alike to all, there is One Event to the Righteous, and to the Wicked; to the Clean, and to the Unclean; to him that Sacrificeth, and to him that Sacrificeth not; that as is the Good, so is the Sinner; and He that sweareth, as He that feareth an Oath.* Now, though many Solid and Satisfactory Answers may be given to this Objection, yet the best Reply that can be made to those who start it, is That which good Magistrates do give, by so dispensing Rewards and Punishments, that *all Things* may Not come alike to all, but that *the Clean* may be distinguish'd from *the Unclean*; the Religious from the Irreligious, *the Good* from *the Sinner*; the Perjur'd Person from him that regardeth an Oath; and so Every One

(a) Eccl. 9. 1, 2.

may know *Love or Hatred*, even by what is before them; what, according to the Merits or Demerits of their Actions, Each Man sees and feels.

Nor can Atheistical Persons have any just Pretensions to Favour, any Pleas to Immunity from the Rigour of the Law: For, whatever Others may pretend for their Non-compliance with the Commands of Men, because repugnant to some Other Principles, of which they are fully perswaded; yet certainly an Atheist hath no Tenderness of Conscience, on which He can found a Claim to the Benefit of Toleration. How Narrow soever We make the Bounds of Civil Power, tho' We confine it wholly to the Care of our Wordly Interests, and exclude the Magistrate from any Concernment for the Honour of God, and the Salvation of Mens Souls; yet still the Suppressing of Irreligious Principles will fall within his Province, because they slacken the Bonds of Government, undermine the Foundations of Society, and are destructive, not only of Mens Salvation, but also of their Civil Interests.

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But were there no Prospect of any Good to be wrought on Wicked and Ungodly Men Themselves by the Discipline of Laws, yet Punishment is not Useless, if it serves to keep Others within the Lines of Duty ; where a tainted Member is incurable, Excision may be necessary to prevent the Infection from spreading farther ; for those Mercies are cruel which spare the Guilty, till none be left Innocent. Several Criminals have made Amends for the Scandal of their Lives, by the Useful Example of their Infamous Deaths ; a Suffering Malefactor wants no Use of Words to Inform the Understanding, or to move the Passions of the most unthinking Spectator.

And as Humane Laws are of this excellent Use to prevent the Spreading of Vice, where there are no Hopes of a Cure ; so in Cases less desperate, they may prove proper Remedies to correct its Poison, and abate its Malignity. Temporal Punishments are a sensible Argument of the Evil of Sin ; and though no One shall reap the Rewards of Piety, who abstains from Sin purely for fear of These ; yet they often give the first Occasion to consider

sider the Nature and Danger of it, and so lead the Way to Reformation upon Better Principles. He who observes, that the Customs and Laws of Men agree to crown Some Actions with Honour and Rewards, and to annex to Others Shame and Punishment, may be inclin'd to pursue this Thought farther, and to enquire, whether there be any Ground in the Nature of Things for such Discrimination; whether these are only Arbitrary Distinctions, or Necessary Deductions from allow'd Principles; whether the Actions thus Rewarded and Punished are Good and Evil, because Commanded or Forbidden by Men; or whether they are not Enjoin'd and Prohibited by Humane Laws, because presuppos'd Good and Evil: Whether, if the Scene was chang'd, and those Actions made Penal, which are now Rewarded; and on the Other Side, those which are now Punish'd made Rewardable, this would not be to cross upon the Nature of Things, and to introduce Disorder and Confusion. He who hath Occasion given Him by the Punishments allotted to Crimes by Humane Laws, thus deliberately to examine
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the Original of Good and Evil, will perhaps trace it at last to the Fountain-Head, and find that the first Link of this Chain is fix'd to the Throne of God.

True it is, that Temporal Punishments, whilst consider'd barely as Such, can never make a Man Sincerely Penitent ; since to Do Evil, and to be griev'd because We Suffer for it, are quite different Things from that *godly Sorrow which bringeth forth Repentance* : But, when these Punishments come to be more Narrowly look'd into ; when the Sinner hath Leisure to Reflect, and is by Suffering put into a fit Temper for Consideration, He may be able, in the Punishments inflicted on Him by Men, to discern the Hand of God : Then His Calamities will appear to Him in Another View, as the terrible Effects of God's Displeasure ; evident Signs of a Judgment to come, and a sure Earnest of those Wages, which Sinners shall receive in the Day of Retribution. Such Reasonings as these have frequently taken up the Last Thoughts, and melted the Hearts of Dying Criminals ; and Charity prompts Us to think, that there are several Souls now in Paradise,

dise, who had never shar'd in the Merits of Christ's Death, had not Faith in His Blood, and Repentance from evil Works, been first wrought in them, upon Occasion of their Own Sufferings. Since therefore, Humane Laws lay a Restraint on those Men, who acknowledge no Other : Since the Pains threatned to Sin by these Laws are oftentimes a Counter-Balance to the Pleasures which allure to it : Since Present and Sensible Evils work more strongly on the Generality of Men, than do Future and Spiritual : Since the Discipline of Laws doth prevent the Growth of Vice, and hinder it from becoming Epidemical : Since Temporal Punishments do fright Some from Offending, and are subservient to the Working of Repentance in Others ; though Humane Laws are not, for the Reasons which have been alledged, sufficient of themselves to make Men Righteous, yet, under the Conduct of Religion, they may be expedient to hinder Men from being Profligately wicked.

From what hath been said, both of the Defects, and of the Expediency of Humane Laws, we may be able to form a due

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Notion of them ; so as neither with the *Hobbist*, to think them the Sovereign Rule of Right and Wrong ; nor with some wild Sectaries, to look upon them as Usurpations upon the Kingdom of Christ. Their Imperfection shews Us how absolutely necessary Religion is for the Support of Government ; and the Usefulness of them plainly demonstrates, how great a Blessing Good Government is. It is necessary, that the Laws of God and Men should mutually support each other ; that Religion should make up the natural and unavoidable Defects of all Humane Laws, and that Humane Laws should Enforce and Second the Precepts of Religion. No Attempts can be made upon Either of these, but must tend to the Ruine of Both : All Doctrines that favour Irreligion, sap the Foundations of Government : And all that aim at the Overthrow of Government, take away one main Support of Virtue and Religion.

Hence may We be able to judge how much Morality is indebted to the *Socinians*, who pretend to be great Promoters of it, and yet rob it of all Assistance from the
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Civil Magistrate. They tell Us, that Courts of Judicature, in which wicked Men are condemn'd to Corporal Punishments, have no Place under the Gospel : That He who passes Sentence of Death on a Malefactor, is Himself a Murderer : That Christ only can punish equally, and therefore that Christ is the Only Judge : That God hath promis'd Forgiveness to all who at Any time repent ; and that therefore None ought to be cut off by Capital Punishments, because these shorten the Time allotted by God to work out Repentance : That all Christians are bound to forgive each other, and that therefore no Magistrate can, without forfeiting his Title to Christianity, punish any One : That to say, a Magistrate, as Such, may Condemn what He is bound to Forgive as a Christian, is as absurd, as it would be to affirm, that a Man of Honour who is provok'd, Ought to forgive the Injury as a Christian, but may require the Satisfaction of a Gentleman. Why these Doctrines are not now-a-days spread in our Own Language with the same Industry, as some other peculiar Opinions of these great Reasoners are : Why those,

those, who Daringly and Openly spread those Doctrines, which are injurious to the Honour of their Lord and Saviour, are more cautious in Venting these Tenets, which derogate from the Authority of Magistrates, it is not difficult to guess; and how far Such Principles may entitle the Maintainers of them to the Favour and Countenance of those, who are concern'd to Vindicate the Honour of Magistracy, will deserve Their Consideration. In the mean time, We cannot but think it possible, that those Men should mistake the Sense of some very plain Texts of Scripture, who deny all coercive Power to Magistrates, when *St. Peter* assures Us, that *they are sent by God for the Punishment of Evil-doers*; and *St. Paul*, *That they are the Ministers of God, and Revengers to execute Wrath upon them that do Evil.*

Now, if Magistrates are the Ministers of God, it is Our Duty to reverence them as Such, and it is Their Duty to act up to the Height of that Character. Their Obligation to Govern well, needs not be represented in more Words, and cannot be

urg'd in more forcible Terms, than those of *Jehoshaphat* to his Judges ; (a) *Take heed what Ye do: for Ye Judge not for Man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the Judgment. Wherefore now, let the Fear of the Lord be upon You, take heed, and do it: for there is no Iniquity with the Lord Our God; There is no Iniquity with the Lord God, and therefore there Ought to be none with those, who represent Him, and of Whom He hath said, that they are Gods. And on the Other Side, the Obligation of Subjects cannot be built upon any Principles so binding, as those upon which it is laid by the Apostle, Whosoever resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation.*

Let Us therefore be careful to pay all that Reverence to Humane Laws, which is due to them ; and let Us at the same time be Equally careful not to pay them such Deference, as may any Ways derogate from the greater Regard We Owe to the Laws of God : Let Us look upon Humane Laws as One Part of that Rule,

(a) 2 Chron. 19. 6.

to which We Ought to conform Our Actions ; but let Us not esteem them the Adequate Rule and Perfect Measure of Righteousness : Let Us submit to Every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's Sake, and to Every Ordinance of God for its Own Sake : Let Us consider what a deplorable Condition Mankind would be in without Laws, without Magistrates, without Government ; but let Us at the same time consider, how much more deplorable their Condition would be, if they were to live without the Gospel, without Religion, without God, in the World : Let Us not so Misinterpret any Places of Scripture, as to thrust the Civil Magistrate out of his Lawful Rights ; but on the Other Side, let Us be cautious how We ascribe any such Perfections to Humane Laws, as tend to the dethroning God : Let Us not allow Our selves in any Wilful Transgression of Their Laws, who are appointed the Ministers of God to execute Wrath upon them that do Evil ; but let Us remember that We are accountable for all Our Thoughts, Words, and Actions, to an

Higher Judge ; Let Us reverence the Authority of God delegated to Men ; but let Us much more Adore it in God the Fountain : Let Us revere Power ; but let Us much rather dread Omnipotence : Let Us fear *those who have Power to kill the Body* ; but let Us much more *fear Him, who is able to destroy both Body and Soul in Hell* : Let Us be Afraid to do Evil, in regard to the Magistrate, because *He beareth not the Sword in Vain* ; but let Us much more be afraid to do Evil, out of Awe to God ; *for the Lord Our God is a consuming Fire, even a jealous God.*

We shall in All Points of Our Duty behave Our selves as Good Subjects, and as Good Christians ; We shall pay that Reverence We Owe to the Laws of Men, and to the Gospel of Christ ; if We take care, in the First place, to approve Our selves to God, and Then to provide Things honest in the Sight of Men : If We aim at that Perfect Righteousness for which *the Law is not made*, as well as Avoid those Exorbitant Crimes *for which the Law is made* : If in short, We, out of Conscience

science to God, comply with the Righteous Laws of Men, but in the mean Time make that Law alone the Rule of Our Lives, which will be the Rule by which We shall be judg'd at the General Assize ; *when the Lord Jesus shall be reveal'd from Heaven with His mighty Angels in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ.*

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd at the
Royal Chapel at St. *James's*,

O N

Wednesday, January 16th. 17¹¹₁₂.

B E I N G

The Day appointed by Her MAJESTY
for a General Fast for Imploring the
Blessing of Almighty God upon the
Treaty of PEACE, &c.

A

SERMON, &c.

I S A I. 58. 3.

Wherefore have We Fasted, say they, and Thou seest not? Wherefore have We Afflicted our Soul, and Thou takest no Knowledge?

TH E S E Words, which were before read unto Us in the First Lesson of this Morning's Service, contain in them an Objection brought by Ungodly and Profane Men against the Duty of Fasting: A Duty, to which All are Indefinitely oblig'd at Some Times and upon Some Occasions by the Express Command of God; and to which We at This time are especially

Serm. IX. de-

determin'd by that Authority, which, next under God's, is most Sacred and Obligatory. But in vain is this Duty enjoin'd by the Laws of God and Man, whilst there lurk in Mens Hearts any false Perswasions of its Insignificancy and Unprofitableness: In order therefore to remove such Prejudices, I shall endeavour to give a Satisfactory Answer to the Objectors against Fasting; that having evinc'd the Usefulness of this Duty in General, I may with the greater Force press the Religious Observance of This Day's Solemn Fast, for those Godly Purposes for which it is appointed; and more especially for imploring the Divine Blessing on the present Negotiations for Peace.

The Unprofitableness of Fasting, if it could be as Strongly prov'd, as it is Boldly asserted, would be too weighty an Objection to admit of a Clear Answer. For it may seem Unreasonable, that Men should *afflict their Souls* to no purpose; and it is repugnant to the Goodness of the Divine Being to exact that of Us as a Duty, which is both *Vanity and Vexation of Spirit*. Now that Fasting is Unprofitable, the Objectors

jectors thus pretend to prove ; The Blessings, which We by our Fasts would procure, are not Granted ; the Judgments which We would deprecate, are not Remov'd ; Or to speak more particularly, in reference to our present Circumstances, that Happy and Secure Peace, which We have so often fasted and prayed for, is not Obtained ; that Tedious and Expensive War, under which We have so long Groaned, is not Yet Ended ; and therefore it is in vain for Us to fast any longer. Now in this Objection there are Several things supposed, of which if Any One fail, this Argument against Fasting is not Conclusive ; and if All should upon examination be found False, it must then appear very Frivolous.

For to make this a good Argument against Fasting, it must be supposed,

1st, That because God hath not Yet regarded our Fasts, therefore He will not.

2dly, That because God doth not regard Some Kinds of Fasts, therefore He regardeth None.

3dly, That because God doth not grant the Particular Requests of Such as Fast, there-

therefore He doth not regard their Fast-
ing.

All these things must be suppos'd True to make this a Good Objection against Fasting ; but the contrary of Each is True, and therefore it is a very Bad One. For

- I. Those Fasts which God hath disre-
garded Hitherto, He may regard for
the Time to come ; so that it is no
Argument against Fasting, that God
hath not Yet regarded our Fasts.
- II. Though God disregards some Sorts
of Fasts, He may regard Other
Sorts ; so that his Disregard of One
Kind is no Plea for our Neglect of
Fasts of Another Kind.
- III. Though God doth not grant the
Particular Requests of such as Fast,
He may yet regard their Fasts ; so that
the Denial of the Blessings which We
ask is no Argument for our Neglect
of Fasting.

These Propositions I shall endeavour to
make good ; and shall, as I go along, ap-
ply what shall be said upon each Head to
the Occasion of this Day's Solemn Humi-
liation.

I. Then

I. Then it is to be prov'd, That

Those Fasts which God hath disregarded Hitherto, He may regard for the Time to come ; so that it is no Argument against Fasting, that God hath not Yet regarded our Fasts.

God hath promised that those *who sow in Tears shall reap in Joy* ; but this gives Us no reason to expect, that the Seed sown shall immediately spring forth into Fruit, but We must be content to Wait for the time of Harvest. Were Fasting of that Intrinsick Value in it self, that it did for its Own Sake merit God's Favour, We might then upon our paying down the Price, of right challenge the benefit of the Purchase ; Or had God any where promis'd that upon our performance of this Duty, He would immediately pour down his Blessings upon Us, then our Fasts would have, though not in themselves, Yet by Virtue of such Promise, a right to his Immediate Regard : But since a Present Blessing upon our Fasts is neither Originally due from God's Justice, nor becomes due to Us from his Veracity, the Delay of his Mercies can be no Argument of a
pe-

peremptory Denial ; and though our First Attempt upon Heaven prove Successless, We have no reason presently to Despond.

The main End of our Fasting is to give an Edge to our Devotions, to qualifie Us for the Better performance of them, and to render them more Acceptable to God : As long therefore as Supplications and Prayers continue to be a Duty, so long will it be of Use to add Fasting to our most Solemn Prayers ; and as God's not Answering our Requests Instantly is no just ground for our Fainting in Prayers, so neither will it be a good reason for our leaving off to Fast. Now although Christ hath forbid Us to use Vain Repetitions, when We pray, Yet He hath taught Us, that to reiterate the Same Requests will not be in Vain ; and though We may not hope to be heard for our *Much Speaking*, yet We are assured, that We shall be heard for our Frequent Asking.

The relenting of the Unjust Judge stands recorded in Scripture as a plain Instance of the Irresistible force of Importunity ; and notwithstanding it were Blasphemy

phemy to think that God Acts upon the Same Motives as an Unjust Judge, Yet our Saviour hath taught Us to conclude, that our Perseverance in Prayer shall with respect to God have the Same Effect. It must be Acknowledg'd, that the Reasons, why Importunity prevails with Men, do not hold, when they are applied to God. Men may not attend to our First Addresses, or may not be able immediately to answer them: They may make themselves Sport with our Wants, and therefore be slow to supply them: They may defer their Favours out of a Vain Ostentation of Power, and Value themselves upon the Dependance of their Supplicants; What they do not grant at First out of the generosity of their Nature, they may grant at Last out of mere Impatience; They may not be able to bear the troublesome Clamours of an Importunate Suitor, and may comply with his Desires, not out of the Benignity of their Mind, but purely for love of Ease. But God is not Deaf to our first Requests, that We should be forc'd to Renew them; nor Limited in his Power, that He should not be Able immediately to answer

swer them : He takes no pleasure in the Misery of his Creatures, that He should defer their Relief ; nor do our Acknowledgments add any thing to Him, that He should Glory in our Dependance : He is not a Fond Being, whose Bowels are to be melted by compassionate Complaints ; nor a Frail Being, that He should be tir'd into Compliance by mere force of Affiduous and Importunate Application. Why then, may Objectors say, Should our Repeated Fasts and Prayers be more prevalent with God, than our Former ? What Reasons can be assign'd, why God whose Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, are always the Same, should not always be Equally ready to grant the Same Requests ? Now, although it is sufficient for Us Christians to be taught by Christ that Importunity in Prayer is prevalent with God, without troubling our selves to enquire into the Causes of its Prevalence, Yet if We do with Holy Reverence search into the Reasons of God's thus dealing with Men, it is not very difficult to assign, if not the True, yet very Just grounds for this procedure. For although the Frequency of
Pray-

Prayer and Fasting may be of no Efficacy to dispose God to be more gracious, Yet it may be of great Use to dispose Us to be more proper Objects of his Grace; though it can make no change in God, so that He should become more propitious, Yet may it work that change in Us, which is Necessary to render Us more worthy of his Mercies. For our Supplications and Fasts have in themselves no Immediate Effect upon God, by working any Impression upon Him that is Immutable: and therefore can have no Greater Efficacy by being Often repeated; but they are upon this account effectual, because they create in Us those Heavenly Dispositions of Mind, which are requisite to prepare Us for God's Blessings; and consequently the more Frequent they are, the more they may work in Us that Devout and Submissive temper of Soul; and for that reason be the more Effectual. Since therefore there are good Reasons, why God out of Mercy should for some time discover no Regard to those Fasts, which He will be sure out of the Same Mercy at last to Accept, God's disregard of our Former Fasts, if it should

be allow'd to be true, will be no good Argument, why We should leave off to Fast.

And this is a sufficient Encouragement to Us to be Earnest and Vehement, Zealous and Fervent, Importunate and Unwearied in our Supplications to God at this time for the Inestimable Blessing of an Honourable, Secure, and Lasting Peace. This is a Blessing worth our Frequent Asking, our Diligent Seeking, our long Waiting for at the Throne of Grace. This Blessing the Divine Providence hath now for many Years with-held from Us, that, by our Experience of the want of it, We might have a juster Sense of its true Value, than We are wont to have of the greatest and choicest Gifts of God, whilst We enjoy them without the least Disturbance and Interruption. The longer We Wait for a Deliverance, the larger Field We have to exercise our Patience in; the more pressing Our Afflictions are, the more fervent Our Prayers for a Release from them are wont to be; the Delay of our Hopes teaches Us to mortify our Desires, and to submit our Wills to the Good-Pleasure of God; to be Secure of those

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Blessings which have been often askt, and are still kept back from Us, to build on Promises against Experience, are signal Testimonies of an intire Confidence, and Unshaken Trust in the Divine Goodness.

These are the Graces, which God's Holy Spirit worketh in his Servants, when He delays the grant of those Blessings, which are reserv'd in store for them; and Those who make this Use of his deferring so inestimable a Blessing as that of a Secure Peace, have no reason to complain, because they will receive it at last with an ample Accumulation of Interest. After We have long groan'd under the heavy Weight of an Expensive War, after We have sufficiently smarted under the Rod of God's fore Judgments, We shall be more sensibly struck with a sudden breaking forth of Mercy, and shall set an Higher Price upon that Blessing, which We have for Many Years, as it were, wrestled for with God by Frequent Fastings, Repeated Acts of Humiliation, and an Unwearied course of Self-denial.

God hath in the Course of this War wrought for Us Many and Wonderful Suc-

cesses; Our Festivals have kept almost an equal Pace with our Fasts; and We have scarce oftner Pray'd, than We have Thankt God for Victory. But our Joy upon these Occasions hath been imbitter'd with Sorrow, whilst our Conquests have been bought at the Expence of much Blood, and the Tears of Widows and Orphans have mingled with our Triumphant Acclamations. ¶ Success in War can no Other-ways be esteem'd a Blessing by good Christians, than as either in the Ordinary Course of things it hath a Natural Tendency to procure Peace, or as being sent from God in Answer to the devout Supplications of his Servants, it may by them be lookt upon as a Pledge and Earnest of that Quiet and Tranquillity which are the principal Object of their most Passionate Wishes, and most Earnest Prayers. The Mercies therefore which We have hitherto receiv'd are not so Valuable in Themselves, as for the Hopes We may thence entertain of still greater Mercies in Reserve, and for the Encouragement they give Us to address our selves to God in the words of the Prophet.

(a) *Lord,*

(a) *Lord, thou wilt ordain Peace for Us: for thou also hast wrought all our Works among Us.*

When We consider the Many and Grievous Calamities, with which Wars, even when most Prosperous and Successful, are unavoidably attended, We must be stript of all Humanity, if We are not touch'd with a Compassionate Sense of such affecting Miseries; if We do not all that is in our power to remove them; if We do not earnestly invoke the Goodness and Power of an All-Merciful and Almighty God to give Us an Happy and Speedy Deliverance from them. What anxious Sentiments had the Prophet *Jeremy* of the Terrors of War, when foreseeing by Divine Revelation the Approaches of it, He broke out into such pathetick Expressions, as Shew that the very Vision thereof at a Distance was to his Peaceable and Righteous Soul an Insupportable Torment? (b) *My Bowels, my Bowels, I am pained at my very Heart; my Heart maketh a Noise in Me, I cannot hold my Peace, because thou hast heard, O my Soul, the Sound of the Trumpet, the Alarm of War. How long shall I see the*

(a) *Isai. 26. 12.* (b) *Jer. 4. 19.*

Standard, and hear the Sound of the Trumpet?
 But the Mischiefs of a Bloody and Destructive War will fill the Hearts of all true Christians with still greater Concern and Disquietude, when they look upon them in Another and more Frightful View, and with Horror and Grief reflect on those Manifold and Enormous Sins, which, though in Thought and Speculation they may be separable from War, in Reality and Fact do seldom fail to attend it; so that they must be void of all Zeal for God's Honour, of all Love to the Souls of Men, of all Bowels and Christian Compassion, if they do not with Cries and Tears, with Supplications and Prayers, with Fastings and Humiliations, with all the Methods of appeasing God's Wrath, and imploring his Mercy, intercede with Him, *who breaketh the Arrows of the Bow, the Shield, and the Sword, and the Battle,* that He would put a Check to the Fury of War; that a Stop may withal be put to those Sins which are of its Train, in their Number Various, in their Kind Flagrant, and in their Issue, God Knows, too often Unrepented of. All who have this Sense
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of War, (and all must have this Sense of it, who consider it as Christians) will be Earnest Supplicants at the Throne of Grace, and will beg the Blessed *Jesus*, the Prince of Peace, to give an Energy to their Imperfect Prayers by his most powerful Intercession, that *Peace* may be restor'd upon Earth, and Good Will towards Men, and that God's Gracious Promises may at last be verified to his Church; that Christians (a) *may beat their Swords into Plow-Shares, and their Spears into Pruning-hooks; that Nation may not lift up Sword against Nation, neither may they learn War any more.*

But least our present Fast should be as Unsuccessful to this End as our former, it will be proper to proceed to the Consideration of our Second Head, *viz.* That

II. Though God disregards Some Sorts of Fasts, He may regard Other Sorts; so that his disregard of One Kind is no Plea for our Neglect of Fasts of Another and a Better Kind.

Fasting is not Absolutely, and in its Own Nature good, but Relatively, and as it ministers to Other Virtues; It is not

(a) *Isai. 2. 4.*

properly an Essential part of Religion, but rather an Auxiliary and Instrumental Duty; it derives all its Goodness from the End to which it serves, and is no Otherways pleasing to God, or a Mean of obtaining his Blessings, than as it flows from a Principle of Piety, and ministers to the Purposes of Religion. When our Fasting serves to mortifie the Flesh, and to subdue the Lusts thereof; when it expresses our deep Sorrow for our past Sins, and our lively Sense of God's Impending Wrath; when it disposes the Soul for more Spiritual Acts of Devotion, and dispells those Mists, which hinder our prospect into things above; when We abstain on such solemn Occasions from things Lawful, out of Indignation that We have often gratified our selves in things Unlawful; and Use Fasting as an Act of Revenge for our former Excesses and Luxuries: when We fast not to please Men, nor to promote any mean wordly Interest, but purely to honour God, and to procure his Favour, We may hope that such Acts of Mortification and Self-denial, will be acceptable in God's sight, that such Fasts will be favourably regarded.

But

But neither will a good End alone sanctifie our Fasts, unless the Manner of our Performance doth answer the Purity of our Intentions. There are several Other Christian Graces, which must attend our Fasts, that they may be well-pleasing to God, and there is no One foul Sin that must be found in their Retinue, lest they be polluted thereby and become Abominable. The End of our Fasts is, as hath been said, to please God, and to render Him propitious; and that He may be pleas'd with them, and reconcil'd to Us by them, they Ought to be such as He himself hath chosen. For there are Fasts, which God owns to be of his Own choice; and there are Others, the choice of which He utterly disclaims: Those, which He himself hath chosen, have a fair Title to his Favour; those, which We obtrude upon Him, have no pretence to his Acceptance. Nor can We be at a loss how to distinguish these; for God Himself hath in this Chapter given Us the Marks of Each; their Characters, which You have heard in this Morning's Lesson, are very plainly describ'd, and very distinct from Each Other:

ther: For though Both may have the same Outward appearance, though Both may agree in *making the Voice to be heard on high, in bowing down the Head,* and in the Exterior Drefs of *Sackcloth and Ashes,* Yet they are easily discern'd by the different Qualities and Dispositions, which do severally attend them. *Strife and Debate,* Voluptuousness and *Exaction,* Discord and Oppression are to be found with the One; Repentance and Mercy, Justice and Equity, Brotherly-kindness and Charity never fail to attend the Other. For an Answer therefore to the Objection of the Text, We need go no farther than to the preceding and following Verses of the Context. God himself hath been pleas'd to give a full Reply to the bold Expostulations of Wicked Men; He hath distinguish'd between the several Sorts of Fasts: He hath declar'd which He Hath, and which He hath Not chosen: which Men falsely call a Fast, and which will truly be *an Acceptable Day to the Lord;* which He will Despise, and which He will Regard; they are different in the Principles they flow from, in the Ends they are design'd for,

for, in the Manner of their Observance, and in the Effects, which they have upon Mens Lives and Conversations; and therefore they shall be distinguish'd in their Success, and in the Regard which God shall shew to them: One hath no Title to the Promises made to the Other; so that the Unprofitableness of the Former can be no Prejudice against the Use of the Latter.

That therefore our Present Fast may be more prevalent with God for averting his Judgments, and imploring his Blessings, than our Former Fasts have been; that the Sword, which hath been so long Unsheath'd, may at last be put into the Scabbard; and Peace, which hath for too many Years been banish'd from the Christian World, may be speedily re-establish'd; that through our Prayers and Supplications a Blessing may be deriv'd from Heaven on the Counsels of those, to whose Integrity and Wisdom the Important Care of making a Just and Honourable, a Secure and Lasting Peace is on our part committed; and that God may be entreated to pour such a Measure of *his Urim and Thummim* into the Breast of *his holy One*, as
 may

may enable Him to discharge his Trust with that Civil Prudence and Christian Simplicity, which become One invested with the Character of an Ambassadour for his Saviour, as well as for his Prince ; that this Day's Solemn Humiliation may incline God, *in whose Hands are the Hearts of Princes, and who turneth them whithersoever He will,* to inspire them All with such a Regard to Justice and Equity, such a Love to Peace and Concord, that the *Wolf*, forgetting his Fierceness; *may dwell quietly with the Lamb*, the Spoiled may be delivered out of the Hand of the Oppressour, the Injur'd restor'd to their just Rights, and secur'd from future Invasion, *so that there may be no farther Hurt nor Destruction in all God's Holy Mountain*; that this our Peace-Offering (I say) may be an *Odour of a sweet Smell, a Sacrifice acceptable, and well-pleasing*; it highly concerns Us to be strictly careful, that it be free from All those Spots and Blemishes, with which our former Oblations have peradventure been sullied.

If then our past Humiliations have been Feign'd and Hypocritical ; if We have fasted not upon Spiritual and Religious, but

upon Worldly and Political Views ; if We have appear'd in these Sacred Assemblies rather to make our Court to our Prince, than to render our Devotions to God ; if our Deportment in his Immediate Presence, even on these Days of Solemn Penance and Humiliation, hath been Careless and Negligent, Wanton and Irreverent ; if our Vows of Repentance and Amendment have, when made, been Formal and Un sincere, or, as soon as they were made, have been presently Forgotten and Violated ; if our Goodness hath been *as the Morning Cloud, and as the early Dew hath passed away* ; such Fasts as these, are so far from Atoning God's Wrath and drawing down his Blessing, that they want themselves to be aton'd for ; are proper to be Number'd, Confess'd, and Bewail'd amongst our Other Sins ; and ought to fill Us with Shame and Confusion, with Sorrow and Remorse, in this Day of Weeping (and Wailing, and making our Peace with God by) Fasting and Prayer. The Incense, which We now Offer, must be Pure and Unpolluted, if We desire that it should ascend to the Mercy-Seat, and
 Avail

Avail Us for the Obtaining so Valuable a Blessing, as that of Peace, from *the God of Peace, the Giver of every good and perfect Gift*: And since Wars are the just Judgments of an avenging God for the Sins of Men, We must sincerely repent of our Sins, and amend our Lives, before We can have any firm ground whereon to build Rational Hopes of their Removal.

There is indeed Greater or Less Probability of an Happy Issue to a long and tedious War according to the Righteousness or Iniquity of the Cause, for which it was commenc'd, and the different Measures, with which it hath been prosecuted. When Princes or States invade their Neighbours out of Avarice, and a boundless desire of increasing their own Wealth and Grandeur; or out of an Insatiable Thirst after Power, and a false Notion of purchasing to themselves Honour and Glory by the Oppression of Others; when they are so Ambitious of Fame, as to desire that their Names may be transmitted to Posterity, and spoken of through all future Ages, not for the great Good, but for the great Mischief they have done in
 their

their Own time ; when the Ravages and Desolations, which they cause in the World, are such, as will be recorded in History, just as Famines and Pestilences, Deluges and Conflagrations never fail to be, because of the Destruction and Devastation which they bring upon Mankind ; when they have no Regard to Right or Wrong in the Making of War, or when in the Pursuit of it no Principles of Religion, no Measures of common Humanity are observ'd ; it may seem repugnant to the Attributes of God to crown so Unrighteous a Cause with an happy Event, and to give a decisive Sentence in its Favour. But on the Other side, when Good and Religious Princes are forc'd to take up Arms for their Own, their Subjects, or their Confederates just Rights ; when they enter into a War, not with an Ambitious Design of Extending their Own Empire, but with a generous and laudable purpose of reducing an Exorbitant Power within its proper Bounds ; when their only Aim is to rescue the Injur'd from the Oppressor, and *to do Right to them that suffer Wrong* ; when they wage War, not for its Own sake,

sake, but in Order to procure by it the Blessings of a Joyful and Secure Tranquillity; when the Cause, in which they are engag'd, is Just and Righteous, and the Methods, whereby they promote it, are Fair and Honourable; when the Ends, which they propose, are confessedly good, and they are willing and desirous to lay down their Arms, however Victorious, as soon as those Ends are attain'd; when they are weary of Conquering, because their Conquests cannot be gain'd without the effusion of Christian Blood; when their Ears are always open to the Overtures of Peace, and they passionately Desire it, even when they do not Want it: A War thus Begun, thus Carried on, and thus ready upon good Terms to be Superseded, seems to have an Equitable Title to a prosperous Issue from the Justice and Goodness of God: But Nevertheless such is the Malignity of Vice, such the Odiousness of Sin, in the Eyes of a Pure and Holy God, that the Righteousness of the best Cause may be over-balanc'd by the Iniquities of those, who Espouse it: So that, whilst We are Incurable and Impenitent,

tent, God may in Vengeance continue to chastise Us with the Judgment of War, and expect that We should by Repentance make our Peace with Him, before He gives Us Peace with those that are about Us. That therefore this our National Fast may effectually avert God's Wrath, it must be attended with a National Reformation ; and in This We shall certainly find our Interest, either by obtaining the Blessings We pray for, or Blessings greater than those We ask. For to proceed to the Third and Last thing propos'd,

III. Though God doth not grant the particular Requests of such as Fast, He may Yet regard their Fasts ; so that the denial of the Blessings We implore, when We Fast, is no Argument for the Omission of Fasting.

We are apt to set too great a Value on Temporal Blessings, to have too low and disproportionable an Esteem of Spiritual ; Those, because they strongly affect our Senses, We judge Solid and Substantial ; These, because they escape the reach of Sense, We too often look upon to be Notional and Imaginary. And this Judgment

of ours, though extremely wrong, is in some Measure to be Excus'd ; For Sense is our Guide from our Infancy, and in time comes to plead Prescription for Directing and Governing Us ; We have been long accustom'd to judge of Good and Evil by This Standard, and it is not easie to bring them to another and a surer Test : Were We pure Spirits, We might have a just Relish of Spiritual Good ; but whilst We are cloathed with these Bodies, We must not hope to divest our selves of the Prejudices of Flesh and Blood. This looks like somewhat of an Excuse for our Own wrong Sentiments concerning the Proportion which Temporal Blessings bear to Spiritual, but can never justify Us for attributing the same to God : *His Thoughts are not as Our Thoughts* ; Good and Evil are not the same in His View, as they are in Ours ; and it were the Extremity of Folly to think, that because the good things of This World seem to weigh down those of Another in our Mistaken Apprehensions, they are of the same Moment, when God weighs them in the Balance of the Sanctuary. And Yet, when We complain that

God

God regards not our Fasts, because He grants not those Temporal Blessings for which We Fast, We must suppose either that God judges of them as We judge, and esteems every thing to be Good for Us, which We apprehend to be so; or, that though He Knows that to be Inconvenient, which We falsely think Convenient for Us; Yet in compliance to our Desires, He should grant it; To suppose the Former is to question the Wisdom of God, to suspect the Latter is to impeach his Goodness. (a) *If Men, being Evil, know how to give good Gifts unto their Children, how much more shall our Father, which is in Heaven, give good things to those that ask him?* Good, not only to them which ask Good, but to such also, who out of Ignorance ask that which in the Consequences of it might prove Evil; Good, different from what they wish, but at the same time much Above their Wishes.

We always Naturally desire the greatest Good, though We do not always know what that Good is: When therefore We ask a Less, and God vouchsafes a Greater,

(a) Matth. 7. 11.

when We pray for Temporal Blessings, and receive from God Spiritual, our Prayers cannot properly be said to be denied, since though Our exprefs Requests are not granted, the Implicit Desires of our Hearts are fulfilled.

Fasting is in its Nature Proper, and in its Use design'd to weaken our Affections for things below ; but when the Removal of a Temporal Judgment, or the Obtaining a Temporal Blessing is the Sole Aim and Ultimate End of our Fasting, this Encreases and Strengthens those wrong Appetites, which our Fasts are design'd to correct and subdue. We shall be apt to think that there is no Evil beyond that which We so earnestly Deprecate, no Good above that which We pray for with the Utmost bent of our Souls. Temporal Judgments are in Themselves Terrible, but they are much more so, as they are the Effects of God's Displeasure, and Evident Signs of a Judgment to come : Temporal Blessings are of themselves desirable ; but their Value is much enhans'd, as they are the fruits of God's Love, and Earnests of his future Mercies ; Our Mea-
fures

tures therefore of Each ought not to be taken barely from the Evil or Good they carry with them at present, but much rather from the Misery or Happiness, of which they are the Signs and Fore-runners : And if our Fasts should avail with God for the Pardon of our Sins, if they should be Subservient to the removal of his Displeasure, and to the entitling Us to his Mercy at the Last Day, We should have no reason to complain, though the particular Blessings We pray for are not granted, though the Temporal Judgments which We Deprecate, are not remov'd.

If any Temporal Blessing whatsoever were proper to be pray'd for absolutely and without reserve, Peace might seem to have the fairest claim to this Privilege : for of all Worldly Blessings this is the most Valuable and Extensive ; What Health is to the Body Natural, the same is Peace to the Political Body ; It gives it Vigour and Strength, Ease and Delight, and makes it capable of relishing All Other Enjoyments. I should enter upon a Field too Wide, and too much Beaten, if I should go about to display all the Advantages of Peace ; they

are too Many to be Numbred, and too Well-known to want being Describ'd. It may suffice to observe, that the Gospel-Dispensation is in Scripture represented to Us as a State of undisturb'd Quiet and Tranquillity ; and that even the Regions of Bliss are there set forth as the Habitations of Peace. But how Beneficial soever Peace may appear to be, and how much soever it may deserve to be the Object of our most passionate Wishes, Yet We should be wanting in the Necessary Duty of Resignation to the Will of God, if We should pray even for Peace it self peremptorily, and without Restriction. (a) *Not what I will, but what thou wilt*, was the Prayer of Christ, when He desir'd the bitter Cup might pass from Him ; and the same will be the Prayer of every good Christian, when He asks for the removal of any Temporal Judgment, or for the grant of any Temporal Mercy.

The Wise Man hath observ'd, That (b) *to every thing there is a Season, and a Time to every Purpose under the Heaven ; a Time of War, and a Time of Peace* : And it is not for the Sons of Men assuredly to know the

(a) Mark 14. 36. (b) Eccl. 3. 1, 8.

Times or the Seasons, which God hath put in his own Power. Be the Schemes of Peace never so well form'd, be the Prospect of Solid and Durable Advantages redounding therefrom never so Promising, be the Foundations of it never so deeply and firmly laid, Yet whether in the last Issue it shall prove a Blessing to a Nation or not, it is the Prerogative of God alone to know ; and to his Good-Pleasure therefore, whether He will bestow it or not, We ought to leave the Determination.

[We may as well pretend to obtain the Good which We want without God's Assistance, as to know what is good for Us without his Direction ; for as None but an Infinite Power can supply Us with all that is Good, so None but an Infinite Wisdom can always discern what that Good is. Of Present Good and Evil We are able to judge rightly enough ; We plainly feel whether at this Instant We are Easie or Uneasie, Happy or Miserable : But to judge right of a Blessing pray'd for, and yet at a Distance, We must be able to know things Future, and to discover Effects, whose very Causes are as Yet buried in Obscurity ;

rity ; We must know what Other things
 will Attend or Follow the Event We wish ;
 what it will prove in its Last Issue and
 Consequence ; whether, though Singly
 and Apart it may be good for Us, Yet it
 may not, when it comes, be mixt with such
 Allays of Evil, or necessarily draw after
 it such a Train of Mischief as may render
 it a Curse instead of a Blessing. But these
 things fall not within our Cognizance ;
 what is to come is hidden from our Eyes ;
 and whilst We want the Omniscience of
 God We cannot be as God, Infallibly
 knowing Good and Evil. It will therefore
 be our Interest as well as our Duty to re-
 sign all our Hopes and Wishees to the wise
 disposal of an All-seeing Providence ; and
 whilst We pray for those Temporal Bless-
 ings, which We, according to the best of
 our Judgment apprehend to be Expedient
 for Us ; We should be prepared not only
 with Patience to Bear, but to receive with
 Thankfulness a Repulse, if God should
 see them to be Inexpedient.

There is no Loyal Subject, no True Pa-
 triot, no Good Christian so passionately
 fond of Peace, but that if He had any rea-
 son

son to suspect, that it would endanger his Prince, his Country, or his Religion, He would dread it as an Evil more intolerable than even that of a Lingring and Consuming War. When therefore *We pray for the Peace of Jerusalem*, it is because *We Love it*, and because *We seek its good*; and if Peace be not granted, because God seeth it is not Good for Us, We have, though not what We immediately pray for, Yet what We Ultimately seek.

Beautiful upon our Coasts, would be *the Feet of Him that should bring glad Tidings*, that should publish the joyful Tidings of an Happy Peace; and these Tidings would be still the more welcome, if at the same time We should hear, what, through the Intervention of the Protestant Powers, We may hope to hear, that *Liberty was proclaim'd to the Captives, the Opening of the Prison to them that are bound for Conscience-sake*; that our Reformed Brethren, who suffer for the Cause of Christ, and who, like Christ their Lord, suffer among the Vilest Malefactors, were releas'd from their Chains. Were an Universal Peace once re-establish'd, We might then

then hope to see our Breaches repair'd, our Commerce restor'd, our Strength recruited, and those Houses of God, which the Piety of the Nation hath decreed shall be built to his Name, rise with greater Dispatch and Security, when (a) *We had Rest on every side, so that there was neither Adversary, nor Evil Occurrent.*

But whether We are ripe for these Mercies, or not ; whether the Temporal Blessings We this Day pray for be Vouchsafed Us, or not, it is in our power to make this Fast profitable to Us by a Sincere Repentance, by an immediate Conversion to God, and a constant Perseverance in the Paths of Holiness. (b) *For the Work of Righteousness shall be Peace,* (if not with our Enemies, Yet, which is of infinitely greater concern to Us, with our God) *and the Effect of Righteousness, Quietness and Assurance for ever.*

(a) 1 Kings 5. 4. (b) Isai. 32. 17.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before

The Right Honourable the

L O R D - M A Y O R,

T H E

A L D E R M E N, S H E R I F F S, and
G O V E R N O U R S of the several
Hospitals of the City of *London*;

I N

St. B R I D G E T ' S Church,

O N

Easter-Tuesday, April 7th. 1713.

A

SERMON, &c.

LUKE XIV. ver. 14.

And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just.

THESE Words were uttered by our Blessed Saviour, whilst He was a Guest at the Table (a) of one of the Chief Pharisees. From what He had observed concerning the Behaviour of Those who were Bidden, and of Him who was the Entertainer, He took an Occasion to give proper Advice to such who shou'd be Invited, and to such as shou'd Invite to these Festival Entertain-

(a) Ver. 1.

Serm. X.

ments.

ments. In the Guests He took notice of an affected desire of Pre-eminence, and to these He recommends a Modest Humility: In the Entertainer He seems to have discover'd a Selfish Design of making his Court, and serving his Own Interest under a false colour of Friendship and Hospitality; and to Him therefore He prescribes a Generous and Disinterested Bounty. He shews both to the Guests and to the Entertainer, their great Mistake in the pursuit of those several Ends, which they propos'd to Themselves; and proves to them, that by those very Means which they took to compass their Ends, they were Defeated of the Designs they had form'd; and that the best way to attain what they aim'd at, wou'd be to use directly contrary Methods. Honour was the Aim of the Guests, and Interest was the Scope of the Inviter; but the Former by an irregular pursuit of Honour met with Disgrace; and the Latter by a wrong Calculation of the Advantage which He propos'd, did the greatest Prejudice to His own True Interest.

(a) *He*

(a) *He put forth a Parable to those which were bidden, when He marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, When thou art bidden of any Man to a Wedding, sit not down in the highest room: lest a more honourable Man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him, come and say to thee, Give this Man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room, that when He that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend go up higher: Then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at Meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth Himself, shall be abased; and he that humbleth Himself, shall be exalted.* The Proud and Vain-glorious Man pursues an empty Shadow, which, for that very reason because He pursues it, it is certain he shall never be able to Overtake: but the Modest and Humble Person hath the only true secret of gaining Honour, which is sure to follow Those, who take the most care to run away from it.

Our Saviour having thus Instructed the Guests in the Doctrine of Humility, as the

(a) Ver. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

most proper Method of arriving at true Glory, doth in the next place address Himself to Him who bade Him, in this Manner. (a) *When thou makest a Dinner or a Supper, call not thy Friends, nor thy Brethren, neither thy Kinsmen, nor thy rich Neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a Feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just.* Where Interest is the principal Aim of a Man's Actions, there, if He will be true to Himself, He ought to pursue the Greatest and most Lasting Interest: Since therefore the Inviter aim'd at a Recompence for his Entertainment, He was mistaken in the choice of his Guests; and out of a foolish desire of a small Advantage in Hand, excluded himself from the hopes of a much greater Reward in Reversion.

Now as the Humility, which our Saviour prescribes in the former Case, is not to be confin'd to our Modest and Decent Behaviour, when We are invited to a

(a) Ver. 12, 13, 14.

Feast ; but is to be extended to all other Occasions of exercifing this Vertue, which is not here taught Us as a piece of Good-Breeding, but as a Neceffary Christian Grace ; fo in like manner the Difinterest-ednefs, which our Saviour here enjoyns, is not to be restrain'd to the particular Cafe of Festival Entertainments, but muft reach to all Other Offices of Humanity, Loving-Kindnefs, and Beneficence towards Each Other. So that the Doctrin here taught by our Saviour, when ab- ftracted from that particular Occafion up- on which it was deliver'd, and applied to Other Cafes of the like nature with it, and to which it is by parity of Reason equally applicable, doth plainly amount to this ; That We fhould not confine our Offices of Courtefie, Friendship, or Cha- rity to thofe only from whom We may ex- pect a return of the like good Offices ; That we fhould be Bountiful, Generous, and Merciful to thofe from whom We do not look for a Repayment either in Kind or Value ; that We fhould not after a Mer- cenary and Selfifh manner fo conduct our Bounty, as it may beft turn to account in

the advancement of our Temporal Interest, but that We shou'd so order and manage it, as may best conduce to promote the Eternal Welfare of our Souls.

For, when We are here commanded to be Beneficial to those, from whom no Recompence is to be expected, We are not by that Command excluded from All Hopes of any Sort of Reward. Hope is the first Spring of All our Actions ; and there can be no sufficient Reason assign'd, why We should prefer any One Action to Another, but because We have greater hopes of Advantage from the One than from the Other. And our gracious Lord and Master is so far from extinguishing this Natural Principle in Us, that when He advises Him who makes a Feast to call the Poor, the Maimed, the Lame, and the Blind, and grounds that Advice on their Inability to recompense Him, He immediately subjoyns ; *Thou shalt be recompens'd at the Resurrection of the Just.* An Eternal Reward from the Hand of God, for the good We do unto Men, is made the Motive to this Duty ; and therefore, whatever some Speculative Men may have advanc'd

vanc'd to the contrary, it can be no fault in Us to be influenc'd by the Hopes of Such Reward.

And as We are not excluded from the Expectation and Desire of a Reward for our Charitable Deeds, so neither are We forbidden, whenever We do good to our Brethren, to expect a Requital from Them. Were We never to shew any Acts of Kindness towards Those, from whom We had probable Hopes of a Return, Men of Thankful and Generous Dispositions, who seem to have the best Title to our Favour, would be utterly excluded from it, and Those would be the most proper Objects of our Beneficence, whom We had found Ungrateful, or who were most likely to prove Such. This Advice of our Saviour was never interpreted in so rigorous a Sense, as that it should be thought absolutely Unlawful for Christians to invite their Friends, their Relations, or their Rich Neighbours to their Table; All that is intended thereby, is, that neither our Hospitality, nor our Beneficence of any other Kind be restrain'd to Those, who can recompense Us, but that it take in

Others also, from whom We can expect no Recompence. Our receiving Good from Others may by God's providence be the Fruit and Consequence of our doing Good to Others, but it Ought not to be the chief End, and principle Motive of our Beneficence and Charity.

And that for these Three Reasons ;

- I. Because this is an End not sure to be obtain'd by those who Propose it.
- II. Because the Proposing to our selves this End will deprive Us of a greater Satisfaction here.
- III. Because it will also deprive Us of a greater Recompence hereafter.

Ist. The hopes of a Recompence from Men for the Acts of Beneficence We shew towards them, ought not to be our chief Aim in doing Good ; because this is an End not sure to be obtain'd by Us.

Some Men may be willing to think, that because they find in Themselves a natural Inclination to do all the Good they can, there must needs be the same Propensity in the Breasts of Others. A Favour Seasonably bestow'd, possesseth their
Soul

Soul with Gladness, warms them into thoughts of Gratitude, and makes them Uneasie in themselves till they can repay it ; and hence they are apt fondly to Imagine, that Others are made of the same soft and melting Temper as Themselves, and that no Heart is so hard, as to be proof against repeated Acts of Kindness. Now such thoughts as these are Arguments of very good Nature, but of very small Acquaintance with the World ; for it is much to be fear'd, that That Man hath done but little Good in his Generation, whose Own Experience hath not often confuted these Speculations. For Many there are, whose Thoughts and Desires are intirely wrapt up within Themselves ; they find so much Scope, and so full Employment for their Affections at Home, that they never suffer them to rove Abroad ; their Charity as it Begins, so it Ends there too : they are sensible enough of the Pleasures and Pains, which immediately affect Themselves, but they think it an Unaccountable Paradox, that One Man should feel Another Man's Happiness, or smart with Another's Pain. Now

to Men of this selfish Temper, Favours are always welcome, and there is no Danger of overloading them ; but that Exquisite Pleasure, which some pretend to find in Doing Good, is a thing of which these Men have no Relish, and therefore they are not hasty to make a Return.

But should our Acts of Kindness be always plac'd upon the most Thankful, and most Deserving ; should the Persons gratified by Us be always both Willing and Able to make Us a suitable Return, Yet after all, He who is truly and sincerely Kind even to such Persons as these, may not meet with a Requital equal to his Kindness : For None can make a just Recompence for Favours receiv'd, but such as know their full Value. Now this is to be taken from the Intent of Him, who bestows it, and cannot always be discern'd by the party Obliged. Here then an Honest, Sincere, and truly Generous Person, will lie under a great disadvantage ; For it is His Character rather to Be Good and Beneficent, than to Appear so : He feels Sentiments of Love towards his Brethren, beyond what He is either Willing or Able
to

to exprefs; He chufes rather to Smother his Kind Affections, than to Proclaim them; and whilst He is fo little careful to difplay the due worth of His Favours, it is no wonder, if He fhould find an Unproportionable Reward from thofe who can make no true Eftimate of their Value.

And as Thofe who do Good unto Others cannot be fure of Any Recompence from thofe to whom they do Good, and can be ftill lefs fure of a Recompence Equal to the Good they do, fo they can be leaft of all certain of a Recompence for good Offices done barely upon that Proſpect. For Men are always upon their Guard againft any Kindnefs beftow'd on them, which carries with it an appearance of Deſign; where they had voluntarily intended an Act of Favour or Charity, they are apt to withdraw their Hand, if they find it is lookt for: And for the fame Reaſon, where they deſign a Recompence for Benefits receiv'd, they are lefs Solicitous to make it, when it is Exacted. For although Gratitude be a Debt which We are bound in Juſtice to diſcharge; yet a Creditor, who is too Importunate, doth for

that very Reason often fail of receiving what is his Due. But on the other side, He who gratifies Another without the prospect of a Return hath for that very Reason, the fairest Title to a Recompence: For whilst He aims not at a Requital, He doth that upon Other and Better Motives, which is most likely to procure it. His only Aim is to please God, who hath commanded Him to do good unto Men without any regard to a Recompence from Them: And God, who hath the Disposal of Mens Hearts, is pleas'd to Recompense the purity of his Intention, by inclining them to do Him all the Offices of Love and Gratitude.

Now, if We cannot be sure of Any Return from Men for the good Offices We do them, if We can be less sure of an Equal Return, and least of all of a Recompence which We Aim at, it will be very improper to make this the principal Motive of our doing Good unto our Brethren, because this End is sometimes Impossible, often Difficult, never Certain to be Obtain'd. But that which makes the doing Good on this Motive still more

Un-

Unreasonable, is our Second Consideration ;

Idly, That the Proposing to our selves this End will deprive Us of a greater Satisfaction here.

There is implanted in Us a Natural desire of Excelling, or at least of Equalling each Other : To be Above Others is our first and most eager Wish ; and if We cannot reach that, our next Desire is to be at least upon the Level. Now He who hath by Acts of Beneficence oblig'd another, is so far upon the Upper Ground ; for whatever Other Relation He may stand in as to his Fortune, Birth, or Condition, yet as Benefactor, He is still Superior to that Person, whom by his Benefits He hath oblig'd. And this is an Advantage which a Noble and Generous Mind will not part with for any Mean and Sordid Interest ; for that Man must have but little Sense of true Honour, who would not choose rather to be a Creditor than a Debtor ; a Patron than a Client ; a Lender than a Borrower ; or, to speak in the Language of our Parable, an Entertainer than a Guest. The Communi-
cating

cating good Things argues Sufficiency and Plenty, whilst the Receiving of good Things is a mark rather of Impotence and Want. We have the Authority of Truth it self for the Certainty of this Maxim, *that it is more blessed to Give than to Receive.*

No One can more highly oblige a truly Generous Person, than by affording Him an Opportunity of doing Good ; and Hence it is that to One thus dispos'd the having Been Kind is a stronger Motive to be farther Kind to the same Person, than the having Receiv'd Kindness from Him would be. It is a Gross Mistake of some Men to think, that our Wants only and Imperfections do naturally induce Us to be Beneficent to each Other ; for although We had no Wants of our Own to be supplied, yet We should be Uneasie, unless We could vent our Abundance. We are not more eager to sound the Notions and Sentiments of Others than We are to communicate our Own ; We do not find more pleasure in Learning, than We do in Teaching useful Truths : Nor doth He on whom a seasonable Charity is bestow'd feel his Soul filled with so much Joy and

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Satisfaction, as possess the Mind of Him who bestows it. Now this Joy will be more Genuine and Intire, when We are sure, that our good Deeds flow from a Sound Principle ; when our Consciences bear Us Witness, that no Self-Interest mixes it self with our Designs of being useful to Mankind ; that there is a secret Spring of Benevolence within Us, which wants not to be set on work by the hopes of any Temporal Advantage ; and that We can be content to be Beneficial to those who want our Help, without any other Applause, than that of our Own Consciences. No One who doeth Good to those only from whom He expects to receive Good, can ever be fully Satisfied of his Own Sincerity ; He can never surely know, whether Charity or Self-Love influences his good Deeds ; and the Grateful Acknowledgments of Others will afford Him but little Satisfaction, whilst He wants those Applauses, which He should receive from Himself within his Own Breast. But the Pleasures which arise from this purity of Intention, and Conscioufness of doing Good merely for the Sake
of

of doing Good, suppose a Greatness of Spirit and Nobleness of Mind beyond the usual pitch of Humane Nature ; the most proper Argument to prevail on Men strongly devoted to their own Interest is to convince them, that what We persuade them to, is for their Own proper Benefit, what We dissuade them from is to their Own Personal Disadvantage ; Now even these Men, if they will be true to their Own Principles, will not think the Receiving Good from Men, the principal End they ought to Aim at in their doing Good, because

1. Thirdly, The Proposing to Themselves this End will deprive them of a greater Recompence hereafter.

2. Our Saviour, in his Gospel, hath represented the prospect of a Recompence from Men, for Actions done to gain their Affection and Esteem, and the View of a Recompence from God for the same Actions, as Inconsistent with, and Repugnant to each Other. Which of these two Rewards We will receive, He hath left to our Option ; but He who proposes to Himself the Former, doth by such Proposal dis-

disclaim the Latter. Those who found a Trumpet before the giving of Alms, that they may have Glory of Men ; those who Pray in the corners of Streets that they may be seen of Men ; those, who when they Fast, disfigure their Faces, that they may appear unto Men to Fast, these verily have their Reward ; they gain the Applause which they sought ; and because they Sought it, are excluded from all Hopes of a Reward from their Father which is in Heaven. The direction of our good Works to a good End is the only Principle, which, according to our Saviour's Doctrine, distinguisheth the Charity of Saints from the Gifts of Sinners. (a) *For, if ye love them, which love you, what thank have ye ? for Sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them, which do good to you, what thank have ye ? for Sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them, of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye ? for Sinners also lend to Sinners to receive as much again. But love ye your Enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again ; and your Reward shall be great. The Publi-*

(a) Luke 6. v. 32, 33, 34, 35.

ean and the Disciple, the Heathen and the Christian may agree in the Material Acts of Charity, but that which Formally makes this a Christian Grace is the Spring from which it flows ; and the Recompence at which it Aims.

Thus plainly hath Christ reveal'd unto Us the measures according to which God will proceed, at the great Day of Retribution, in dispensing his Rewards ; and it is easie to discover the great Wisdom and Goodness as well as the Justice of God in this Dispensation. For it is agreeable to the Divine Wisdom and Goodness to establish a Duty of such Universal Concern to Mankind, as is the doing Good to Others, upon a Firm and Sure Principle ; Such an One as might engage All Men, to do All the Good possible, at All Times, to All Persons whatsoever : But the prospect of a Return from those to whom We do Good would have been too Narrow and Weak a foundation to have supported such a Constant, Impartial, Universal Beneficence, as is absolutely necessary for the Well-being of Mankind.

We

Were there no stronger Motives to Charity, than the slender hopes of a Repompence from Men, those who have the Greatest Power to do Good, would have Least Obligation: for the more Able they are to relieve the Wants of Others, the Less do they themselves want to Receive from Others; and therefore they would be less careful to Supply the Necessities of the Indigent, since their Own Sufficiency is such, as needs no Mutual Supply. And as Those who are most Able would upon these Motives be least Bound to do Good, so, if this Principle obtain'd, those who most want the Assistance of Others, would have least Reason to expect it: For if no Good were to be done but in hopes of a Return from the Party to whom it is done, those must expect to Receive no Benefits, whose Indigence is such, that they can Repay None.

Charity displays it self in several Acts for which there would be no room, if it were always govern'd by this Narrow Principle: One Man might be kind to Another out of Interest, and Hopes of a proportionable Return; but no One would be

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concern'd to lay out Himself for the good of his Country, of his Church, of Mankind ; because these are Services, for which in This World He can expect no Equal Recompence.

There are, moreover, many Offices of Charity, which are best perform'd in Secret ; Many pious Christians are as Assiduous in procuring their Brother's Good, as is his Guardian-Angel ; and they take care to be equally Invisible ; the Streams of their Bounty flow under ground ; the Hungry and Thirsty are refresh'd by them, but Know not the Spring from which they issue ; but such Charitable Benefactions as these must necessarily fail, were Men influenc'd only by the mean hopes of Temporal Advantage, and had not He who seeth these things in Secret, promis'd to reward them Openly.

But were the prospect of a Present Recompence sufficient to make Men Charitable in their Own Generation, and Useful to the Age wherein they live, yet upon this bottom no Provision would be made for Posterity : for no One is in Capacity of a Requital from those, who are
not

not to Enter Into this World, till He is Gone Out of it ; so that the Interest of Succeeding Ages would by the Present be intirely neglected. But Mankind hath great reason to rejoice, that neither the Hopes nor Charity of good Men have been confin'd within the narrow Bounds of their Own Age ; but that some have thought it their Duty to Sow, *even where they cou'd not Reap* ; and to convey down those Blessings to future Times, the fruits of which Others shall enjoy as long as the Sun and Moon endure, but for which they can Themselves expect no Recompence, but from that Righteous Judge, whose Reward is with Him to give Every Man according to his Work.

Those who have been the Pious and Munificent Founders of Publick Hospitals, for the Reception and Maintenance of poor and indigent Persons, have in a Literal Sense follow'd the Advice given in this Parable by our Saviour : the Poor, the Maimed, the Lame, and the Blind are their constant Guests, are Daily fed at their Table, and entertain'd at their Expence. These have taken the most effe-

etual care to bid those, who cannot bid them again, nor make them Any Sort of Recompence, no, not so much as by their good Wishes and Prayers. These therefore above Others will be Blessed; These, as We have good reason to believe, are already Blessed in a great Measure; and for these We are assur'd there is still reserv'd an ampler Recompence at the Resurrection of the Just.

And as Those, whose Abilities of doing Good are Greatest, have no reason to contract their Bounty, since God hath provided a Reward equal to the most diffusive Acts of their Beneficence; so Those, whose Power falls short of their Wills, have sufficient Encouragement to exert their utmost Endeavours; since although Charitable Deeds only can hope for a Reward from Men, and that but in proportion to their Real Value; yet Charitable Purposes also, and such Measures of doing Good as were sincerely Intended, but through Inability could not be Actually perform'd, will be crown'd with a Recompence from God; who hath promis'd to accept according to that a Man hath,
and

and not according to that He hath not.

For the Reasons which have been given, and for many Others which might be alleg'd, it is manifest, that the Publick good of Mankind is best provided for by the Proposal of a Future Reward to Benefactors ; and that the Hopes of receiving Good from those, whom We at any time gratifie, would produce but a very Narrow, Defective, and Stinted Charity : for the truth of which We might safely Appeal to the Judgment of those who are most wedded to their own Interest ; since however they may be willing never to Bestow a Kindness, but where they have the prospect of an Equivalent, they would be very unwilling never to Hope for Good, but at the hands of Such, whom they had Antecedently oblig'd.

If from what hath been Deliver'd it appears to be Agreeable to the Wisdom and Goodness of God, to provide such a Recompence for Acts of Charity, Bounty, and Loving-Kindness, as might answer those great Purposes, which could not be serv'd by a bare exchange of good Offices,

it will also be agreeable to his Justice to deny this Recompence to such who are Influenc'd by any other Principle, than the Hopes of it : For no One can have any pretence to a Recompence from God for any Actions, but what are done, because of His Command, for His Sake, and to His Glory. But Good Deeds perform'd barely in View of what We may receive from Men are so far from tending to the Glory of God, that there can scarce be a greater Dishonour to his Name, than to prefer those frail and momentary Rewards, which our Fellow-Creatures can bestow, to that Eternal Weight of Glory which our Almighty Creator hath prepar'd for those who are willing to wait upon Him for a final Recompence.

God hath indeed made our Eternal and our Temporal Interest in most Cases very Consistent ; but although God may in his abundant Mercy Join both, yet We cannot without breach of his Holy Commandment equally Intend both ; We must *First Seek the Kingdom of God*, and then We may hope that the Blessings of this Life shall also be added unto Us. By the
Laws

Laws of Nature, and of the Gospel, those who Love their Brethren, have a just Title to their Reciprocal Affection; but then, by the Rules of the same Divine Law, it is made an Essential Property of Christian Charity, that it should not *Seek its Own*. Our Saviour hath taught Us, that *No Man can serve two Masters*; if Each acts by an independent Power, their Commands may interfere: And although they should be Subordinate One to the Other, and both should enjoin the Same Duty, Yet He who doth that thing in compliance with an Inferior Power, which He is not prevail'd upon to do by the Authority of the Superior, is guilty of more Contempt to such Higher Power, than if He did it not at all. He who thus observes what is acceptable to Both, to God and to Man, merely in regard to the Latter, cannot perhaps be accus'd of Loving the One, and Hating the Other; but He is certainly Guilty of *Holding to the One, and despising the Other*; and therefore He must not hope for a Reward from God for that Service, which He performs purely to gain the Wages of Mammon.

Now if the Propofal of a Recompence from Men for our Charitable Deeds, cuts Us off from All Hopes of an Eternal Recompence for them at the Hands of God; if One bears no Proportion to the Other; if He who promifes Himfelf the Former, is often defeated of That, and always fure to be excluded from the Latter; if, on the other Side, He who doeth good unto Men in Hopes of a Recompence from God, hath juft Grounds to expect the Bleffings of this Life, and is Sure to be crown'd with the Joys and Glories of the Next; Nothing farther needs to be added to enforce the Duty of the Text, or to fhew the Reasonablenefs of Doing good unto thofe who cannot Recompence Us, becaufe for fo doing We fhall be Recompens'd at the Refurrection of the Juft.

The Promise of fuch a future Recompence at the Laft Day, is the moft Inge-
nuous, the moft Prevalent, the only Right
Motive to a Liberal, Constant, and Dif-
interefted Exercife of All Sorts and All
Meafures of Christian Charity; and there-
fore amongst the many Pious and Wife
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Institutions of our Reform'd Ancestors, for promoting and encouraging publick Charities, None was with greater Prudence contriv'd, none hath been bless'd with happier Success, than their Godly Appointment, that these Anniversary Meetings of the Magistrates of this City, and the Governours of its Hospitals, for carrying on the good Work committed to their Care and Patronage, should be held on those Solemn Days of Festivity, which the Church had before set apart for the Memorial of our Saviour's Resurrection.

For they wisely foresaw, that when the Minds of Men were establish'd in a firm Belief of *Christ's being risen from the Dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept*; whilst their Thoughts were yet warm with a certain Prospect of their Own Resurrection; whilst the Voice of the last Trumpet, summoning them to awake out of the Sleep of Death, to appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, and there to receive Sentence of Eternal Misery or Bliss, according to their having been Uncharitable or Charitable to their Brethren, was by the Ministry of God's Word still

founding in their Ears, they would then be best prepar'd with Gladness of Soul to Receive, with Warmth of Affection to Embrace, with all Cheerfulness of Compliance to Obey these Annual Exhortations to Charity.

For it is Observable, that the finall Recompence promis'd by our Saviour to Acts of Beneficence done to those who cannot recompense Us, is not only deferr'd to a Future State, but farther reserv'd till the *Resurrection of the Just.*

It is an Opinion in this Age generally receiv'd, that the Souls of departed Saints are Immediately after their Separation from the Body, convey'd by the Holy Angels into the highest Heavens, and Forthwith admitted into the glorious Presence of GOD, and there possess'd of the same Happiness and Glory, which they shall enjoy to all Eternity. But it is more consonant to the Word of GOD, and to the primitive Doctrine of the Catholick Church, to believe, that the Happiness of Souls, whilst sequestred from their Bodies, is in the Degree of it less perfect Before, than it shall be After the Resurrection; that it consists

sists rather in a total Release from Sin and Misery, in a joyful Retrospect upon their past Labours and Holiness of their Lives, and a certain Prospect of their future Bliss, than in a full Participation of their Ultimate Reward ; That, as the Pious and Faithful are in Scripture, even whilst they are in this World, said *to rejoice with Joy Unspeakable*, as often as they fix their Eyes upon that ample Recompence which they hope Then to receive, when Christ shall come in Glory ; so the Delight, which the Assurance of this Reward will afford them, when it is by Death brought Nearer, when they see it more Clearly, when there are no Fears of falling short of it, no Doubts of Obtaining it, when they have an Earnest and Pledge of it in that Tranquillity, of which they are already possess'd, shall be still more Ravishing and Unconceivable ; but that even This State, Joyful and Happy as it is, in Comparison to the utmost Felicity of which We are capable in this Life, is as much Inferior to that Consummate Bliss, which Glorified Saints shall enjoy after the Resurrection, as the Expectation of a distant Good

Good is to the present Enjoyment thereof, as Hope is to Actual Possession.

We have not in the whole Gospel a Fuller and Clearer Account of the Process of the Last Day, than that which is given Us by our Saviour in the 25th Chapter of St. *Matthew*. Now according to the Representation there made, Christ our Lord and Judge shall not on that solemn Day Ratify a Sentence, which he had Before past on Each Man Severally, but shall then first Pronounce Sentence upon All Nations gathered before Him. The Charitable shall be then invited to *Come; and Inherit the Kingdom, Prepared* indeed for them long before, but not till that time Possessed by them. They are there represented as mightily surprized, that the Judge should reward them for Actions, of which they were not at all conscious; they are not able to conceive how they had fed Him, whom they had never seen Hungry, or given Drink to Him, whom they had never seen Thirsty; how they had Cloathed Him, whom they never found Naked; or Visited Him, whom they had never remembered to be Sick or
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in Prison ; they do not appear to be as yet acquainted with his wonderful Goodness and Condescension in esteeming what was *done unto the least of his Brethren, as done unto Himself*. But now, How shall we account for this Surprize, if the Righteous had Long since receiv'd their Full Recompence for these very Acts of Charity ? Why do they at the Day of Judgment, after the General Resurrection, stand before the Throne of Christ's Glory ; Why are their Good Works then displayed ; Why is their Reward then allotted, if they are on that Day admitted into the participation of no Other Glory, than that with which they were Before glorified ? Do not then those Persons expose the Doctrine of an Universal Resurrection and Judgment, to Unnecessary and Unanswerable Exceptions, who teach that Men shall immediately after Death receive a Full Recompence for all the Actions they have done in the Body, and that long afterwards they shall be formally judged, in order to receive that very Recompence ? Is it not a Doctrine more consistent in it Self, as well as more agreeable to the whole

whole Tenour of Holy Writ to believe, that there is a great deal of difference betwixt the Measures of Joy, which those who die in the Lord shall taste of Before, and After the Resurrection; that a great part of their Happiness, in their Intermediate State, shall consist in the sure Hopes of a much more perfect Happiness still in Reversion; that after the Resurrection, there shall be an Accession to the Blessedness of the Righteous, not only by their being then glorified in Body, as well as in Spirit, but also by an Increase of that Bliss, which their Souls did before enjoy in a Lower Degree, and more Scanty Proportion; and that they shall then be admitted to a closer and nearer View of God, and to a more intimate Union with Him, who is the Source of all Happiness? To this great Day of Retribution our Saviour refers Us, for reaping the Fruits of what we here Sow in the most Hungry and Barren Soil: He doth not only pronounce in General, that those who invite the Poor, the Maimed, the Lame, and the Blind, and such as cannot recompense them, shall be Blessed; but He assigns the

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punctual Time of Repayment, when he promises them that they shall be recompens'd at the Resurrection of the Just.

The Application of what hath been delivered to the Occasion, for which We are here solemnly assembled, is Obvious and Easy : For by the Report which is now to be read, it will appear, that Those who have been sustained by Your Charity the Preceding Year, and who depend upon it for their Future Sustenance, are Persons, from whom You can expect no Recompence : And when it hath been read, I shall detain you no longer, than briefly to observe, that for that Reason You are encouraged to be Liberal towards them, that You may thereby be intitled to a Recompence at the Resurrection of the Just.

Here the Report was read.

The Orphans and Fatherless do with that Humility, which becomes their Low Estate, and with that Earnestness, which is warranted by their pressing Wants, apply to You for Protection and Relief. On God's Providence, and on Your Bounty,
all

all their Present Support, and all their Future Hopes entirely depend: Such is the Imbecillity of their Age; such the Mean-ness of their Condition, that from Them it will be in vain to expect any Requital for Your Charity. They are unhappily bereft of Those Fathers, who if Alive, might, peradventure, in some Measure, by their Bodily Labour, or their Manual Arts, or their Popular Suffrages, promote your Wealth, or Pleasure, or Grandeur: But still they have a Father in Heaven, even God in his Holy Habitation, who will, at the Resurrection of the Just, abundantly Recompence You for all the Acts of Kindness, Mercy, and Compassion, which You shall shew towards these Little Ones, whom He vouchsafes in a more peculiar manner to favour with his Paternal Love, and Care, and Blessing.

The Sick and Diseased, the Maimed and Wounded, do all seek at your Hands an Alleviation of their Sorrows, Refreshment under their Pains, and the happy Means of their Recovery. From Persons labouring under their Infirmities, disabled from the Offices of Life, ready to be swal-
lowed

lowed up by the Jaws of Death, the very utmost Requital You can at present expect is their Thanks, their good Wishes, and their Prayers. But if by your seasonable Relief, either their Lives should be prolonged, or their Deaths made more easy to them; whether they Live to acknowledge your Charity, or whether they Die, and the Hopes of any the least Recompence at their Hands be extinguished with Them; Your good Deeds shall be had in Everlasting Remembrance, and shall find an Ample Recompence at the Resurrection of the Just; when for your Charitable Assistance of your poor Brethren, under their Bodily Infirmities, God shall cloath your Souls with Bodies Incorruptible and Immortal, liable to no Infirmity, subject to no Disease, capable of no Decay, but by their Vigour, Activity, and Sprightliness, at all times fitted for the Enjoyment of Perfect and Consummate Happiness in that Blessed and Glorious State, where *there shall be no more Sorrow, nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain.*

We

We are still farther Supplicants to You in behalf of those Miserable Wretches, whose Minds are over-cast with a deep and settled Melancholy, or distracted by wild and outrageous Phrensy ; These do not indeed implore Your Help, being so far depriv'd of the Use of their Reason, as to be altogether Insensible of their Wants : But the more Incapable they are of pleading their own Cause, the more Excusable will be Our Importunity in solliciting, the more commendable Your Readiness in reaching forth to them Your Charitable Assistance. So great perhaps is the Stupidity of some of These, that they may have no Sense of the Help Administred to them ; so excessive the Rage of Others, that they may break out into the highest Expressions and most violent Acts of Fury against their best Friends and Benefactors. But although No Recompence is to be expected from Them, though for Good they may recompense Evil ; Yet this Ought to be no Bar to our Charity towards them, since the less Thankful or the more Injurious Treatment We find at their Hands, the stronger is our Claim
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to a Recompence at the Resurrection of the Just.

In Prospect of this Recompence We may venture to Recommend though not to Your Affection and Favour, Yet to Your Charity and Care, even the Idle and Vagrant, the Loose and Disorderly ; there is a Debt of Love, which even These may challenge at Your Hands, and which cannot be with-held from them without Injustice. Hard Labour, wholsom Discipline, due Correction are proper Methods of Reclaiming these Persons from their Vicious Courses ; and therefore in Charity to Them, as well as for Your own Security, and for the Publick Weal, these Methods ought to be applied. These Benefactions are not indeed sought for by those, who most stand in need of them ; so far will they be from being thankfully Accepted, that they will provoke the Keenest Resentments from those on whom they are bestow'd ; but if by Exemplary Punishments the Profligate shall be reform'd from their Evil Habits, or Others be deterr'd from running into the same Excesses ; if by Your well-plac'd Charity

Sinners shall be converted from the Evil of their Ways, and Innocent Souls shall escape the Contagion of Sin ; then, at the Resurrection of the Dead, both They and You shall stand at the Judgment-Seat of Christ, They to receive the Rewards promis'd to the Penitent, You to obtain a still Brighter *Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give You at that Day ;* from whenceforth, *the Wise shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn Many to Righteousness as the Stars, for ever and ever.*

A SER.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before
The Right Honourable the
H O U S E of P E E R S,
A T

Westminster - Abbey,

O N

Tuesday 29th of May, 1716.

B E I N G

The Day of Publick Thanksgiving to
Almighty GOD, for having put an
End to the Great Rebellion, by the
Restitution of King CHARLES II. and
the *Royal-Family.*

SEERION

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SERMON, &c.

PSALM cxv. I.

*Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us,
but unto thy name give glory, for
thy mercy, and for thy truth's
sake.*

THERE being no Title to this Psalm, which should lead Us into the Knowledge of the Author by Whom, the time When, or the Occasion upon Which it was penn'd, there is room left for Conjecture, but no way of arriving at a Certainty, as to Any of these Points. All the Light We can have therein is from the subject Matter of the Psalm; but even from That it doth not evidently appear, whether it was writ-

ten in a time of publick Calamity by way of Supplication, in order to implore God's Blessing, or on occasion of some publick Success, by way of Thanksgiving for a Signal Mercy already receiv'd. To this Latter case it is very applicable, and God be praised that We have so happy an Occasion, as this Auspicious Day affords Us, thus to apply it. The Inspired Author seems to have had His thoughts employ'd in the Contemplation of some Publick Blessing vouchsaf'd (a) *to the House of Israel, and to the House of Aaron*; some late and remarkable Instance of God's having been *their Help and their Shield*; some Interposal of the Divine power in favour of his Beloved people, at a Critical time, when there was no prospect of Humane Help; a devout Sense of which made Him break out into these Words, full of great Humility and pious Gratitude.

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

(a) Ver. 9, 10.

1. When the Psalmist denies, that the glory of those Mighty and Wonderful Successes, wherewith God's people are at any time blessed, doth belong to Them, He intimates, that Men are apt to Ascribe the praise thereof to their Own Merits, Counsels, or Achievements.

2. When He with Earnestness and Vehemence repeats that Denial, He doth by such reiterated Negation imply the great Folly and Impiety of Mens thus ascribing the glory of such Successes to Themselves, or to any of the Children of Men.

3. When He expresses his Desire, that the Glory thereof may be given to *God's Name*, He directs Us to pay the tribute of Praise and Thanksgiving to that Sovereign Being, to whom only of Right it is due.

4. When He requires, that this Glory should be given to God *for His Mercy and for His Truth's Sake*, He instructs Us, that, when We receive such Blessings from the Hands of God, We derive them not from his Justice, but from his Clemency; they are not such as We can of Right claim,

but such as He, out of His Unbounded Goodness, and regard to those gracious Promises, which He hath made to his Church, vouchsafes to grant.

I. That Men are apt to ascribe to Themselves those Signal and Glorious Successes, which are not the fruit of their Own Industry, nor the contrivances of their own Policy, nor the acquiescence of their own Wisdom and Strength, but the free Gifts of God, the gratuitous Largeesses of his overflowing Bounty, and the unmerited Acts of his peculiar Goodness and Favour, is evident, as from many Other Instances, so more especially from the intolerable Pride, and assuming temper of the *Israelites*, in whose Name the Penman of this Psalm might be the more concern'd to disavow any such invasion of God's peculiar Right, because They had been in all Ages notoriously guilty of such Unpardonable Usurpation. No Generation of Men under Heaven could have more Numerous, more Sensible, more Demonstrative proofs of their Dependence upon God, and their owing all the Advantages they enjoy'd to
His

His immediate Providence, than the *Israelites* had : By his Power they were first establish'd, and by his Protection they were constantly secur'd in the Possession of their Laws, their Liberties, and all other their Temporal and Spiritual Rights. In every Step they made from *Egypt* to the promis'd Land ; from the House of bondage to a Country flowing with an abundance of all things good and desirable in Life, his Power was visibly display'd, and *his Arm made bare* before them : They were Brought forth, they were Conducted, they were Fed, they were Upheld by a continued Series of Miracles. That they might not attribute their Escape from the bondage of *Egypt*, and the Tyranny of *Pharaoh*, to their Own Policy and Contrivance, God rescu'd them (a) *by a Mighty Hand, and a Stretched-out Arm, and in their Sight did marvellous things for their deliverance in the land of Egypt, even in the field of Zoan* : That they might not Ascribe their safe passage over the Sea to their Own skill and conduct ; (b) *God divided the Sea and caus'd them to pass through, and He made*

(a) P^{sal.} 78. 12. (b) ver. 13.

the Waters to stand on an Heap: That they might not imagine they found their Way without any Superior direction or guidance ; (a) *In the day-time God led them with a Cloud, and all the Night with a light of Fire*: that they might not pretend their Maintenance on the Way was owing to their Own Care and Provision, and the early Preparations they had made for so long and difficult a March ; (b) *God clave the rocks in the Wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths* ; (c) *He commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of Heaven, and rained down Manna upon them to eat, and gave them Angels food*: That they might not impute the Expulsion of their Enemies, and the Settlement of Themselves in the promised Land to their Own Valour and Prowess, to their Military Skill and Conduct ; (d) *God brought them to the Border of his Sanctuary, even to the Mountain which his right Hand had purchased* ; *He cast out the Heathen also before them, and divided them an Inheritance by line, and made the Tribes of Israel to dwell in their Tents*. And now can We imagine any Danger, any Pro-

(a) Ver. 14. (b) ver. 15. (c) ver. 23. (d) ver. 54.

bability, any Possibility, that Men thus call'd forth by the Audible Voice of God ; thus Brought out, Directed, Sustain'd, Secur'd, and put into actual Possession of the Country of their Enemies by the Immediate Hand of God, should at last look upon it not as God's Donation, but their own Acquest, and ascribe the Glory of this Miraculous Expedition, these Surprising Deliverances, these Unparallel'd Successes, not to God, but unto Themselves ? And Yet God, who knows the secret workings of Mens Hearts, and how apt they are to be infatuated with Proud thoughts and Vain conceits of their own Wisdom and Power, even where their Weakness and Impotence are most conspicuous, thought it necessary to caution that People against a Sin, of which it is not likely that they themselves, Before such Caution was given, or perhaps even After it was given, could think it so much as possible they should ever be guilty. This Caution We find recorded for our Admonition in the like Cases. (a) *Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God ; --- Lest when thou hast eaten,*

(a) Deut. 8. 11.

and art full, and hast built goodly Houses and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied, then thine Heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God; that very Lord and God, which brought thee forth out of the Land of Egypt, from the House of Bondage— and thou say in thine Heart, My power and the Might of my Hand hath gotten Me this Wealth.

Now if it was Possible for That People in Those Circumstances to ascribe their Wonderful Successes to their Own power; if the Caution here given by God shews, that it was Probable they would do so, if the Event prov'd that they Actually did so, then can it not be thought Unlikely, that Other Persons, in Different Circumstances, where the Hand of God doth as Certainly, but not as Visibly interpose; where Second Causes are more freely left to produce their Natural and Usual Effects; where the Means made use of do manifestly and confessedly contribute to the End thereby accomplish'd; should be lifted up with their Success, as gain'd by their Own Wisdom and Conduct; should look upon the

Events

Events which are wrought by the Prudence of their Counfels, or by the Prevalence of their Forces, as Owing intirely to thofe Subordinate Causes, to which they cannot without Injuftice be denied to be in a great Meafure due ; and confequently fhould want to be put in Mind, that although thefe are proper Instruments in God's Hands to bring about what He hath purpos'd, Yet they are ftill but Instruments ; and that therefore thofe who under God have moft contributed to the accomplifhing any Great and Glorious Event, (fuch as was that We this day celebrate, the Reftauration of our Ancient Government in Church and State) whether they were Men of Renown for Counfel, or for Action, whether they exerted themfelves in the Cabinet, or in the Field, Suffer no Diminution in their Character, when not out of any Envy or Ingratitude towards fuch Worthy Patriots, but out of a Jealous concern for the Honour of God, We declare, that *not unto them, not unto them, but to his Name the glory thereof ought to be given, for his Mercy and for his Truth's Sake.*

II. We

II. We ought to be the more cautious of thus Ascribing to our Selves or to the Sons of Men the glory of those Successes, which are due only to God, because, as the Prohibition of the Psalmist intimates that Men are very apt thus to proceed, so in the second place by the Vehemence and Earnestness with which He repeats that Prohibition, (*not unto Us, not unto Us*) He expresses the great Folly and Impiety of Such procedure. To give that Glory to any Other being, besides God, which is due only to God, is the proper Notion of Idolatry; and therefore, whether We fall down before an Image, or in the Pride of our Hearts arrogate divine Honours to our selves; whether the Idol We worship be the work of our Hands or the Creature of our Imaginations, We are in both Cases equally Idolatrous. For Idolatry doth not Properly, much less Solely, consist in the Outward Expressions of Honour, but in the Inward Sentiments; He, who ascribes to the Creature those perfections which are peculiar to the Creator; He, who assumes to Himself, or attributes to
Other

Other Men the Honour of accomplishing those Events, which God only Doth, God only Can accomplish, pays unto Man divine Worship, though He doth not bow the Knee to Him, or fall down prostrate before Him. Hence is it, that Impious and Irreligious Persons, who have insolently claim'd to themselves the Honour of those great Events, which God hath wrought by their Hands, have in a very Exemplary and Remarkable Manner been punish'd by the Almighty for the Invasion of his Peculiar and Unalienable Rights. Such was the Pride and Arrogance of the King of *Affyria*, who, because God had made use of Him as a Scourge to chastise a sinful and disobedient people, was lifted up in his Heart, and insolently boasted of his Conquests, as gain'd entirely by his Own Irresistible power. (a) *For he said, by the Strength of my Hand I have done it; and by my Wisdom, for I am prudent; and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their Treasures, and I have put down their Inhabitants, like a Valiant Man.* Righteous is the Judgment of God, who, in order

(a) *Isai. 10. 13.*

to convince Such bold Pretenders of their Unfufferable Impiety and Folly, hath made them feel the terrible effects of that Divine power, which they affected to rival, and hath forc'd them to acknowledge the Frailty of their Mortal Natures, by levelling them with the very lowest of Men, and bringing them back to that dust, out of which his Almighty Hand at first raised them. Such was the fate of this haughty *Affyrian*, (a) *when the Lord broke the Staff of his power, and caused the Arrogancy of this proud Man to cease, and laid low the Haughtiness of this Once terrible One.* Then did those, over whom He had insulted, whilst He was in his Grandeur, triumph over Him in the day of his Abasement, Speaking and Saying unto Him : (b) *Art thou also become weak, as We? Art thou become like unto Us? Thy pomp is brought down unto the Grave; the Worm is spread under thee, and the Worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning? How art thou cut down to the Ground, which didst weaken the Nations? Is this the Man, that made the Earth tremble, that did*

(a) *Isai. 13. 11.* (b) *Isai, 14. 10, &c.*

shake Kingdoms? If We would keep at the Utmost Distance from feeling the like strokes of Divine Vengeance, it will behove Us to keep at an Equal Distance from any the least approaches towards the like Presumption and Arrogance, and not only to hearken to the repeated Prohibition of the Psalmist in not ascribing the Honour of such glorious Successes to Men, but also in the third place to obey his Injunction in giving the Glory thereof to God.

III. There is no Doctrine more frequently, or more plainly delivered in the Word of God, None, of which We, who profess to believe that Word, ought to be more thoroughly perswaded, than that All things are governed by a Wise and Over-ruling Providence; that those Events, in the Accomplishment of which the Abilities of Men eminent for Prudence, Courage, or any Other commendable Quality, do most manifestly shine forth, and most deservedly gain publick Admiration and Applause, are not brought about without the Concurrence of a still superior Wisdom, and Power; that be

there never so much Foresight and Counsel in the Forming of a Design, never so much Steadiness and Application in the Carrying it on, never so much Vigour and Activity in the Execution of it, Yet, if God be Against it, if He be not For it, it cannot have the desired Success, it must of Necessity miscarry; that therefore when We undertake any Enterprize of great Weight and Moment, and especially in Affairs, where the Publick Safety and Welfare are concerned, We ought in the first place to apply our selves unto God by Prayers, and Supplications for his Assistance and Blessing; and that if our Hopes are Answered, and much more if they are Exceeded; if All that We asked of God is Granted, and greater Mercies, than We durst presume to ask, are Bestowed; if the Means by Us employed are by his powerful concurrence rendred effectual for attaining the desired End, We ought to give Him the Glory, and render unto Him our most Solemn Praises and Thanksgivings. It is Necessary, that We should have this firm Perswasion and lively Sense of God's being the bestower, as of every
good

good gift, fo particularly of All Publick and National bleffings, that We may have an Adequate Value of the Mercy received ; that We may be juft to the Merits of thofe, by whose Hands God is pleafed to convey it to Us ; and that We may not ftop at Them, but in our thoughts may rife up to Him, who is the Original Source and Well-fpring of All thofe Bleffings, which like a plentiful Stream do overflow and enrich a Nation.

How great and fignal foever any Temporal Bleffing may be, howfoever Considerable in it Self, and fruitful of happy Effects, which may reasonably be expected to follow from it ; how Terrible foever the Danger, which by it is efaped ; and how Valuable foever the Advantages, which are thereby gained ; it can never be fo great in Any of thefe regards, as it is in Consideration of God the Bestower of it. For No Enjoyment on this fide Heaven can equal this comfortable Affurance, that the *Preserver of Men careth for Us*, that *the Lord of all things delighteth to do Us good*. That which adds the greateft Price to Any National Mercy, is, that its bears the Sig-

nature of Heaven, and is sent Us as a sure token of the Divine favour. In order therefore to form a right estimate of it's Worth, We must *lift up our Eyes to the Hills, from whence cometh our Help*; and our Joy will then be full, when We consider *that our Help cometh from the Lord, which made Heaven and Earth.*

And as this Reflection will give Us just Sentiments of the Valuableness of the Mercy bestow'd, so will it raise in Us a suitable Veneration for those Worthy Patriots, whom God is pleased to pitch upon to minister to his Providence in the Conveyance of his blessings to the Sons of Men. For what can so much Distinguish or Dignifie any mortal Man, what can raise Him to so great an Height and Pre-eminence above Others, what can add so bright a Lustre to his Name, as to be an Instrument in God's Hand; One whom He chooseth out of the rest of Mankind, to bring about his Great and Glorious purposes; by whose Courage or Conduct He delights to convey Deliverances and Mercies to his Church, and to a chosen People! Be his Fame never so far spread
by

by the renown of his Actions, be his Title never so Noble by the Dignity of his Rank, be his Interest never so great in the affections of the People, or in the favour of his Prince, Yet all these Honours are but mean and contemptible in comparison of That much Greater glory, which redounds to such an One from his being, as it were, an Angel of God, by whom He dispenseth His blessings to the Sons of Men. Great things are said of *Naaman* in the Holy Story; that He was (a) *Captain of the Host of the King of Syria*; That *He was a great Man with his Master, and Honourable*; but the finishing Stroke of his Character is this; that *by Him the Lord had given Deliverance unto Syria*.

And as this Sense of God's being the Bestower of every National Blessing is thus Necessary to heighten our Opinion of the Mercy bestow'd, and to increase our Esteem for the Persons through whose Hand it is conveyed unto Us, so is it to be deeply imprinted on our Minds, for this reason above All Others, that We may not be Unthankful to Him, who is so

(a) 2 Kings 5. 1.

Watchful over Us, and so Beneficial to Us: that discerning his Hand in his Own work We may with our Lips, and from our Hearts, use those Emphatical words of the Psalmist, *To thee, O Lord, do We give thanks, Yea to thee do We give thanks.*

IV. And this we are the more strongly obliged to because, according to our fourth Observation from the Words of the Text, When We receive such Blessings from the Hands of God, We derive them not from his Justice, but from his Clemency; they are not such, as We can of Right claim, but such as God, out of his Unbounded Goodness to his Servants, and in regard to those gracious Promises, which He hath made to his Church, vouchsafes to grant.

We have before observed, how apt the *Jews* were to ascribe unto themselves the Honour of those Performances, which were truly owing to God's Immediate power; and how when by a remonstrance of the Absurdity of That pretence they were driven from a Plea so impossible to be supported, they then fled to Another, equally Unjustifiable; and being forced to acknowledge

ledge the Interposition of God in their behalf, accounted for his peculiar Favour towards them from their extraordinary Merits above all other People and Nations. And therefore We find that *Moses* took as much pains to confute this fond Notion of their Extraordinary Deserts, as He did to explode the former concerning their Self-sufficiency. That they might not falsely ascribe the Victory they should gain over their Enemies, and the Settlement they should make in a fruitful and pleasant Land to their own Courage or Conduct, He tells them, by whose Power this should be accomplished; (a) *Hear, O Israel, thou art to pass over Jordan this Day, to go in to possess Nations, greater and mightier than thy self; Cities great and fenced up to Heaven--- Understand therefore this Day, that the Lord thy God is He, which goeth over before thee, as a Consuming Fire; He shall destroy them, and He shall bring them down before thy face----- so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the Lord hath said unto thee.* And that they might not ascribe this Interposal of

(a) Deut. 9. 1.

the Divine Power for the speedy Destruction of their Enemies to their Own Piety or Virtue, He farther warns them against this Vain Presumption. (a) *Speak not thou in thine Heart after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my Righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this Land---- Not for thy Righteousness, or for the Uprightness of thine Heart dost thou go to possess their Land----- The Lord giveth thee not this good Land for thy Righteousness, for thou art a stiff-necked People.* In order to imprint in their Minds a deep and lively Sense of this their great Unworthiness, and to suppress all proud thoughts, which might arise in their breasts concerning their Imaginary Title to God's Favour, He there goes on with a great deal of plainness and force to recapitulate to them their Numerous and Heinous Sins ; Sins of the same Gigantick and Enormous Size, as were those Sons of *Anak* that they were to subdue ; Sins sufficient to have forfeited the Love of God, and to have exposed Them to the same Destruction, which He brought upon their Enemies, had not

(a) Ver. 4.

his regard to his Own Honour, and his concern to maintain the Truth of his Promises prevail'd with Him to continue his Protection to that Church, which his own Right Hand had planted. This was the only Plea, which their powerful Intercessor *Moses* could make to God in their behalf: (a) *O Lord God, destroy not thy people, and thine Inheritance, which thou hast redeemed through thy Greatness; which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty Hand: Remember thy Servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: Look not unto the Stubbornness of this people, nor to their Wickedness, nor to their Sin----- They are thy people, and thine Inheritance, which thou broughtest out by thy mighty Power, and by thy stretched-out Arm.*

That We of this Church and Nation, which were once overwhelmed with Irreligion and Anarchy, do now again enjoy the free Exercise of Our Holy Religion, and Our Ancient Constitution of Civil Government; that We are here met together to render unto God the Tribute of Praise and Thanksgiving for the signal

(a) Ver. 26.

and wonderful Deliverances by his Wife and Good Providence as upon this Day Vouchsafed to Prince and People, to Church and State, and to all Orders and Degrees of Men in both ; that the Blessings by the Divine Goodness then conferred on our Fore-fathers are still continued to Us, and that We have a prospect of their being derived to our Posterity, is confessedly owing not to any Great degree of Virtue and Holiness, for which we have been more Eminent than Other Nations, not to any Less degree of Vice, or lower Measures of Iniquity to be found among Us, than Other People have been guilty of, but to the Truth and Purity of that Holy Faith, which We profess, and to God's singular Love and Favour to his Church ; who having brought his Vine out of *Egypt*, and planted it amongst Us ; having prepared room for it, and caused it to take deep Root ; having sent out its Boughs unto the Sea, and its Branches unto the River, though, in his just Indignation against the Sins of his People, He for some time suffered the Boar out of the Wood to waste it, and the wild Beasts of the

the Forest to devour it, Yet in the Bowels of his Mercy was pleased once more to look down from Heaven, and graciously to behold, visit, and cherish this Vine, which his Own Right Hand had planted, and that Branch, which He had made so strong for Himself.

What the deplorable Condition of this distracted Kingdom was, as to Religion, after the Overthrow, and before the Restoration of the Church, I shall chuse to represent, not from the Relation of the Friends of Episcopacy, who may be thought Partial Judges in this Cause, but from the Confession of those, who had been most active and forward in the Extirpation of it; from Whom We have this Remarkable Complaint.

----- *When We look upon the present rueful, deplorable, and deformed Face of the Affairs of Religion, as they stand at this Day, our Spirits are amazed, our Hearts are overwhelmed, Our words are swallowed up. How shall We speak? How shall We hold our peace? And yet where shall We pour out our Complaint?*
 ----- *Instead of an Establishment of Faith and Truth, We swarm with noisome Errors, Heresies*

*sies, and Blasphemies: Instead of Unity and Uniformity in Matters of Religion, We are torn in pieces with destructive Schisms, Separations, Divisions, and Subdivisions; Instead of true Piety and the power of Godliness, we have opened the very flood-gates to all Impiety and Prophaneness; Instead of submitting to the Government of Christ, We walk in a Christless looseness and licentiousness; Instead of a Reformation, We may say with Sighs, what our Enemies heretofore said of Us with Scorn, We have a Deformation in Religion.**

Now if this was the State of Religion amongst Us, after the down-fall of the Church (our Adversaries themselves, who had pulled it down, being Judges) as We cannot but ascribe the Restitution of the Monarchy to the Interposal of Divine power, so may We with good reason believe, that God did the rather vouchsafe to exert his power in restoring the Ancient Government of the State, because, together with That, the Primitive and Apo-

* *A Testimony to the Truth of Jesus Christ, and to Our Solemn League and Covenant; As also against the Errors, Heresies, and Blasphemies of these times, and the Toleration of them. Subscribed by the Ministers of Christ within the Province of London, Dec. 14. 1647.*

Itolical Government of the Church, the Profession of Christ's true Religion, and the Honour of his Holy Name, were, by a wonderful complication of Mercies, at the same time re-established. For We shall form a very Narrow and Inadequate Notion of the Deliverance which We this Day commemorate, if We confine our thoughts Wholly and Singly to the Restauration of an Exil'd Prince, and do not farther extend our View to those several Circumstances which Attended, and Followed that Event, and which exceedingly Improved, if they did not entirely Constitute, the Blessing.

The Prince, whose Happy Birth, and Joyful Restauration We now celebrate, as He was the Undoubted Heir of these Kingdoms, and acknowledged to be so by those Execrable Traytors who murdered the Father, and disinherited the Son, so was He from his Infancy bred up in the Principles of the Reformed Church of *England*, under the Influences of his Royal Father, who was a Zealous Defender of our Faith, had long suffered as a pious Confessor, and at last died as a glorious
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Martyr for it : In this Religion his Father had, amongst his last dying commands, strictly charged Him to persevere ; as thinking *his fixedness therein would be Necessary for his Soul, and for the peace of his Kingdoms, when God should bring Him to them* : In the Profession of this Faith, if any credit may be given either to his Own solemn Declaration, or to the Recognition of his People, He continued, during his Exile, Stedfast and (a) Unshaken : He did not exprefs more Solicitude for recovering his own Regal Power and Dignity, than for the (b) *Preservation of the Prote-*

(a) If you desire the Advancement and Propagation of the Protestant Religion, We have by our constant Profession and Practice of it, given sufficient Testimony to the World, that neither the Unkindness of those of the same Faith towards Us, nor the Civilities and Obligations from those of a contrary Profession could in the least degree startle Us, or make Us swerve from it ——— *The King's Letter to the House of Commons, Clar. Hist. Vol. III. p. 582.*

We have yet more Cause to enlarge our Praise, and our Prayers to God for Your Majesty, that You have continued Unshaken in Your Faith ; that neither the temptation of allurements, persuasions and promises from seducing Papists on the one hand, nor the persecution and hard usage from some seduced, and misguided Professours of the Protestant Religion on the other hand, could at all prevail on Your Majesty, to make You forsake the *Rock of Israel*, the God of Your Fathers, and the true Protestant Religion, in which You were bred. *Ibid. p. 593.*

(b) Vid. *King's Letter to the General and the Army, ibid. p. 579.*

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stant Religion, the Privileges of Parliament, the Liberty and Property of the Subject, and the Fundamental Laws of the Land: These Valuable Blessings were still enhanced in their price, as being obtained (a) without the least Opposition or Effusion of blood, through the Unanimous, Cordial, and Loyal Votes of the Lords and Commons in Parliament assembled, and the passionate desires of all other his Majesty's Subjects. All these Circumstances were wisely considered by the Legislature, when they appointed this Day, which the Lord Himself had crowned with so many National Blessings, and Signal Deliberances, to be kept in perpetual Remembrance throughout all Generations to come; and the Same therefore must be taken into Our Consideration, if We would celebrate this Joyful Festival in such a Manner, and with such Views, as Authority hath directed. For had there been a coincidence of Other Circumstances of a Nature very Different from, or directly Opposite to, those which We have observed; had that Prince from his Infancy been bred up in

(a) Vid. *Act of Parliament*, 12 Car. II. c. 14.

the Superstitions and Idolatry of the Church of *Rome*; had He been strongly persuaded, that there was no possibility of Salvation to those who were out of that Church, and very slender hopes to those who were in the Communion of It, unless they did exert All their Power in reducing Others to it; had there been no probable View of his Accession to the Throne, without shedding much Christian Blood, or without the total Subversion of all the Religious and Civil Rights of a Great and Numerous People; His Restauration in such Circumstances might have been a greater Miracle, but certainly it would not have been so Valuable a Blessing; it might by devout and well-prepared Christians have been submitted to (when no longer to be Avoided) as all the Dispensations of Providence ought to be, with Patience and Resignation; but it could scarcely by any Tender and Affectionate Lovers of their Church and Country have been made an Object of their Wisheſ, of their Prayers, or of their Endeavours; the Day, on which it had been accomplished, would probably through all
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succeeding Ages have been remembred, but not certainly, as this Happy Day is, with Joy and Delight, with Publick Praises and Thanksgivings.

By Our Prefence in this Holy Place, and bearing our part in the Festival Devotions of this Day, We have declared it to be Our Sense, that the Deliverance, which We now commemorate, by whatever Subordinate Means it was brought about, was the Work of God ; to Whom therefore We have offered an Oblation of Praise and Thanksgiving, with appearance of great Gladness. Whether the Addresses We have now made to the Throne of Grace have sprung from an Inward and Vital Sense of God's great Mercies to Us, or whether We have been Offering a Sacrifice unto Him without an Heart, which hath always been look'd upon as Inauspicious and Ill-boding, will best appear by the future Conduct of our Lives and Actions. If We shall with Constancy and Perseverance render unto the *Divine Majesty that Holy Obedience in thought, word, and deed*, which We have this Day solemnly vowed ; if We shall faithfully pay *all that*

Loyal and Dutiful Allegiance to God's Anointed Servant, now set over Us, and to his Heirs after Him, which We have in the Office of this Day religiously promised; if We shall in our several Stations, and according to our several Capacities, be careful to preserve that Excellent Constitution in Church and State, which was this Day restored, Whole and Intire in all its parts; and be strictly upon our guard against any Innovations, which, as Woful Experience hath taught Us, may gradually lead to its Total Dissolution; then shall We in the Best, and most Acceptable manner express our Unfeigned Gratitude to God for the great Mercies on this Day vouchsafed to our Forefathers; then may We with full Assurance hope, that the same Blessings will by the same Divine Goodness be perpetuated to Us, and to our latest Posterity.

A SERM.

A

SERMON

Preach'd before the

Sons of the Clergy,

A T

St. *Werburgh's* Church

I N

B R I S T O L,

October 2^d. 1716.

ST. RALPH'S
SERMON

By the Rev. Mr. [Name]
of the [Church]

Preached at St. Ralph's Church
on the [Day] of [Month] 1843

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A

S E R M O N, &c.

P R O V. XXII. I.

A good Name is rather to be chosen than great Riches, and loving favour rather than Silver and Gold.

IT hath been made a Question by some, whether a good Name be a thing of that price, that it is worth our taking any pains to Get or to Keep it; whether a sincere Christian, who ought to fit loose to the world, and to approve Himself to God, and to his Own Conscience, should let a regard to his Reputation, and to the *Loving favour of Men*, bear any sway at all in the Governing of his Actions; whether, when He can honestly

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neftly fatisfie Himfelf, that what He doth is in it felf Innocent, and pleafing to God, though it may appear to Others fcandalous, the fear of hurting his Good Name thereby Ought to refrain Him from an Action, which by carrying the face of Evil, will tend to his Difgrace.

Now that Reputation is a real Valuable good, and, as fuch, Ought to be of Some Weight with Us in the Conduct of our felves, is what, I prefume, would never have been questioned, had not Some Men put fo High a price upon it, and over-rated it fo much, that Others, to abate this extravagance, have run into the contrary Extreme; and have funk it as much Beneath, as the Former had rais'd it Above its true worth. For fome well-meaning Men, not content to allege, that the Defire of popular Applaufe ought not to be the firft and governing principle of our Actions; that it is not in Our power, whether We fhall be thought well of or not, and that it is folly to place Our Chief Happinefs in what We are not fure to compafs; that an Over-eager purfuit of Praise hath put Men upon Unwarrantable

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Methods of obtaining it ; and an Immoderate fear of disgrace hath betray'd many Souls into the Commission of fashionable Sins ; that an Affectation of Vain-glory hath been the Occasion of the Worst, and has blasted the very Best Actions of Men ; some, I say, not content to allege these things in abatement of the Excessive Value, which hath been put upon Reputation, have thought they could not Cheapen it enough, unless they yet farther Disparag'd it, as an Empty, Vain, Imaginary thing ; destitute of any foundation in Nature ; prejudicial to the graces of the Gospel ; not Worthy to be pursued by a Wise, Grave, and Thinking Man, but industriously to be avoided by an Humble, Mortified, and Self-denying Christian.

Now although there is generally more danger, that Men should, through their Natural Pride and Vanity, be too fond of Reputation, than that, through a mistaken Opinion of its Worthlessness, they should shake of all due regard to the Esteem of Others, yet because such a careless hazarding Our good Name, is at-

tended with very Evil Consequences, and is of great Disservice to the Interests of Vertue and of Religion; because a fair Reputation may by good and Wise Men, and especially by Persons plac'd in Eminent and Publick Stations, and happy in the Esteem and Loving favour of the people, be made use of for promoting the best and Noblest purposes, it may not be Improper to shew, that this Indifference to a Good or Bad Name is so far from being either a Moral Duty or a Christian Grace, that it is directly contrary to the rules of right reason, and to the precepts of the Gospel.

A Sense of Shame or aversion to Disgrace, however it comes to be omitted by Moralists in their Catalogues of the Passions, is as deeply rooted in our Natures, discovers it self as early, and as sensibly, and was, without question, design'd by our Wise and Good Creator, for as noble Uses, as any Other Affection We feel within Us; and hath this preeminence above most of the rest, that it is not common to Us with Other Inferiour Beings; but seems peculiar to a Rational Na-

Nature ; doth then first exert it self, when We first begin to make Use of our Reason ; grows up together with our Understanding ; is Weaker or Stronger, as our Knowledge is more or less Improv'd ; works more powerfully on the Minds of Men Civiliz'd and Learned, than on such as are Uncultivated and Untaught ; is most Quick and Lively in those, that are most Humble, Sober, and Ingenuous ; and is scarcely ever to be wholly stifled and subdued but by such, *who having their Understandings darkened through the Ignorance that is in them, or being past feeling, through an Habitual Course of Vice, have their Senses too far stupified to discern between Honour and Dishonour, Praise and Dispraise, Good and Evil.* As to those who are not Yet arriv'd to this perfection of Insensibility, they cannot but feel a great Uneasiness in their Minds upon the thoughts of having done any thing, which may lessen them in the Opinion of those, whose Esteem they Value, and are sure to find an Equal pleasure in being Conscious that their Actions, which their Own Hearts condemn not, are approv'd
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by the Concurrent Judgment of those, who pass Sentence upon them. Why a favourable or evil Opinion of Us should thus affect Us, when attended with no other Good or Bad Consequences, when our Interest is neither promoted, nor impair'd by such Opinion; when all the Benefit or Hurt We receive by it is Owing merely to our Own Reflection upon it, may not perhaps be very easie to be accounted for; but the difficulty of explaining how a thing so foreign to Us, as the Sentiments of Others, should so Inwardly concern Us, doth no more prove, that there is no real Good in being well-spoken of, nor Evil in Disgrace, than the Doubts which some have rais'd about the manner of sensible Objects working upon the Mind, and their suppos'd Inability of raising agreeable or disagreeable perceptions in our Soul, do prove, that there is no difference betwixt Bitter and Sweet, Pleasure and Pain, the Kindly Warmth that refreshes Us, and the scorching Heat that torments Us. Whether a good or bad Name have in themselves any real Efficacy upon our Minds to make Us Ea-

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fie or Uneasie ; or, whether We only take
 Occasion from Our being well or ill spoken
 of to be pleas'd or disturb'd ; if, whenever
 such Occasions offer, We cannot help
 being such a Way affected ; a good Repu-
 tation will still be in its Own Nature Va-
 luable, and worth our Aiming at ; an Ill
 Name will be an Ill thing, and worth our
 taking all Honest Means of Avoiding : I
 say all Honest Means ; for if Reputation
 be no other Ways to be gain'd, but by the
 loss of our Vertue, nor Disgrace any
 other way to be avoided, but by sinful
 Compliances, it is readily agreed, that
 the Purchase of the One, and the Avoid-
 ance of the Other, would be very much
 too dear upon such Unequal Terms. But
 it is no proof that a good Name is not at
 all Valuable, because it is not so desireable,
 as a good Conscience ; or that Reputation
 is Worth Nothing, because Our precious
 and Immortal Souls are worth a great
 deal more.

The true Reason, why Esteem is some-
 times to be despis'd, and Disgrace in some
 Circumstances is to be courted, is not,
 because the One is in it self despicable,
 and

and the Other for its Own sake desirous ; but because an Undue thirst after present fame might hinder Us of greater glory in Reversion ; and a patient bearing of Disgrace Now, may be an Effectual Method of escaping greater Shame hereafter : so that to be well esteem'd is Absolutely good, and to be ill spoken of is Absolutely Evil, though in comparison of a greater Honour the One may be a Loss, and in proportion to a greater Shame the Other may be an Advantage. For as it is Undoubtedly true, that a good Christian is never oblig'd to refuse any Pleasure, but what may deprive Him of a greater satisfaction to come, nor to submit to any Pain, but that which He can't decline without danger of sometime suffering Pains more grievous ; so I take it to be Equally certain, that, according to the terms of the Gospel, We are never forbidden to desire the Praises of Men, but when, by such ill-tim'd Desire We may lose the greater praises both of Men and God ; nor are ever oblig'd to choose Ignominy, but when the Unseasonable shunning of it may render Us Obnoxious to a Greater
and

and more Lasting Disgrace. Adorable therefore is the Wisdom and Goodness of God, who having Implanted in our Breasts such a vehement desire of Glory, and such a strong aversion to Shame, hath graciously provided, that whilst We act by these Motives We cannot finally miscarry ; since by his Eternal Decrees He hath order'd, and by his holy Gospel He hath made Known to Us, that the greatest glory of which our Natures are capable, shall be the result of our Obedience to his Laws ; and that We can no way lay up to our selves such Treasures of Shame against the day of Shame, as by transgressing his Righteous Commandments. For, It is very observable, that our future Happiness and Misery are in Scripture represented to Us not only under the Notion of exquisite Pleasure and Pain, to work upon the Hopes and Fears of such as are most affected with these Sentiments ; but also as a state of Unmixt Glory or Shame, to engage the Desires, and awaken the Apprehensions of such, as by their different make of Soul, or course of Education, are most apt to be prevail'd upon
by

by these more Ingenuous Motives. And indeed the fear of Torment, though most suited to work upon the Generality of Mankind, must be own'd to be a less powerful Restraint from sin, than the apprehension of shame, if what hath been observ'd by some Learned Men is well-grounded, to wit, that though We have sure promises in Holy Writ, that the sins of those who repent shall be Forgiven, Yet We have no Assurance, that they shall not be Remembred and Exposed; that since *Nothing is secret which shall not be made Manifest*, the sins of the Penitent as well as of the Impenitent shall be brought to light; that God's Mercy will be as much display'd by the Discovery of those sins, which He shall pardon, as his Justice shall be clear'd by the Manifestation of those which He shall punish, and that therefore though some shall at the Day of Judgment be forgiven, Yet All shall be discover'd: If, I say these Notions are as found as they are Ingenious, the fear of Shame must be allow'd to have a greater Influence to make Men Vertuous, than the apprehensions of Torment; since though timely

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Repentance for past sins may rescue Us from Punishment, nothing but Unspotted Innocence can secure Us against the shame of Discovery. But however this Matter stands, it being plain from Experience, that We find a relish in Esteem, and are disquieted in our Minds by Disgrace ; it being evident from Reason, that these Affections were by God implanted in Us as Spurs to Vertue, and Preservatives against Vice, and it being expressly commanded in Scripture, that We should do those things *that are of good report*, and avoid scandal as well as sin, what some speculative Men may have Unwarily advanc'd to prove that the Distinctions betwixt Honour and Dishonour, Praises and Reproaches, a Good and a Bad Name are Notional, and without any foundation in the Nature of things, ought not to make Us so indifferent towards them, as not to aim at Esteem, and guard against Censure, by all Wise and Honest Methods.

Would Men impartially judge of the Value of Reputation by the price which they set upon it, when it is either Hurt or Assaulted by Others, We need not fear
their

their having too low an Opinion of its Worth : Their nice jealousie of its being at never so great distance attackt, their quick and warm resentments upon its being in the least degree hurt, and the large demands they are never wanting to make for the Reparation of such Wrongs, are sufficient proofs that how cheap soever their good Name is to them in other regards, Yet upon such Occasions the Value of it runs very high ; but certainly *diverse Measures and diverse Weights* are not more against the Rules of Civil Commerce, than these different Valuations of One and the Same thing are against the Laws of Moral Justice ; so that if We will act Equally, and not make use of *a Greater and Less Measure*, which in This as well as in Other Instances *is an Abomination to the Lord*, We should not exact more from our Neighbour for any damage done to our Reputation, than We our selves truly Value it at ; but either by patient suffering Dishonour, shew that We do not look upon Reputation to be worth any thing, or by doing such things as are praise-worthy, convince the world that We Value it Our selves

felves at the same rate We would have it valued at by Others.

The price, that Humane Laws put upon Reputation, is still Another and a better proof of its real Worth: for Laws do not use to provide for the security of such things, as are in themselves of No Value, nor look upon it as any undue Invasion of Right to take away that from Another, which, though He might have a good title to, Yet by his total neglect and dereliction of it, He shew'd He had no Mind to Keep: so that when Detraction is by the Laws made Criminal, and Defamation punished as Injurious, it is presum'd, that a *Good Name* is what every One wishes to preserve. And in all well-order'd Governments, the Penalty of Slander is greater or less, as the party aspers'd hath more or less Reputation to lose; which shews that the price, which the Law puts upon Mens repute, rises or falls in proportion to the Care which they Themselves have taken to Encrease or Lessen it: so that, unless We will be wiser than the Laws, and forfeit our just claim to their Protection, what We would have

fenc'd and guarded by Them, that We should not rashly give up Our selves, but by all Warrantable Methods should shew, that We have a concern for that Reputation, which We desire the Laws should protect.

Nor have Humane Laws taken more care to preserve Mens Reputation than the Laws of God; the sins, with which Calumny or *false Witness* is sort'd, when it is reckon'd by our Saviour (a) amongst *Murders, Adulteries, Fornications and Blasphemies*; the Rank which Slanderers and Back-biters are plac'd in, when numbred by the Apostle (b) with *Murderers and Haters of God*; the Punishment threatned in the Gospel to *Revilers*, of whom as well as of (c) *Idolaters, Adulterers, Abusers of themselves with Mankind, Thieves, Covetous, Drunkards, and Extortioners*, it is expressly said, *that they shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*; and the solemn Declaration of our blessed Saviour, that (d) *Whosoever shall say to his Brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of Hell-fire*, (which severe Sentence, how-

(a) Matt. 15. 19. (b) Rom. 1. 30. (c) 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. (d) Matt. 5. 22.

ever softned, must still carry terrour in it against all such as load their Christian Brethren with Unchristian Calumnies;) These, I say, and Other parallel threats denounc'd against Those, who shall by Slander and Detraction rob Others of their good Name, are convincing proofs of the Care which God hath taken to guard Mens Reputation against the Assaults of Others, and are at the same time strong Motives to our utmost Diligence and Caution not to destroy, by Our Own ill Conduct, what the Wisdom and Goodness of God hath us'd such effectual Methods to preserve.

The Heinous Guilt of Detraction, and the severe punishments annex'd to this gross sin by the Laws of God and Man, are so proper Arguments of the Valuable-ness of Reputation, that those very Moralists and Divines, who take great pains to depress the worth of it, when they are to represent the folly and sin of Vain-glory, take care to exalt it as much when they are to aggravate the Mischief and Sinfulness of Calumny. But certainly those can never be firm principles of Establish-

ing any One Duty, which being Once admitted overthrow Other Duties of equal Moment with it: so that there is no need of our advancing such Notions in order to recommend Humility or Lowliness of Mind, which if allow'd will lessen the guilt of Slander. Detraction cannot be a sin of that blackness, which the Scriptures represent it to be, if Reputation be worth Nothing; but Reputation may be worth something, and Yet Humility be a Necessary Vertue.

The more We consider this Notion of the indifference of a good or bad Name, the worse We shall like it; for so far is it from being the foundation of any Christian Vertue, that it Overthrows several. Our Saviour hath made it an Instance of Christian Perfection, that We should speak Well of them, who speak Evil of Us. But why should speaking Evil of Us be a sign of Enmity, as it is here suppos'd to be, or speaking Well of Others a part of Christian Charity, as our Saviour has made it, if to be spoken Well or Ill of, are things wholly Indifferent?

A patient Suffering of Reproach, when We are revil'd by Men for keeping a good Conscience towards God, is another Duty very frequently inculcated, and very earnestly press'd upon Us in the Gospel. ° But what Occasion is there for Patience under Reproach, if Reproach it self be no Evil? What merit is there in suffering what We are not at all Averse to? Or how indeed can We with any propriety of Speech be said to suffer, what is in it self no way Grievous?

We find in the Acts, that the Apostles (a) *rejoyc'd, that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's Name*; It was an honour for them to suffer in so good a Cause, but still they suffer'd; they *rejoyc'd, that they suffer'd shame for Christs Name*, which implies that there was need of such a Motive to make it sufferable: but were Shame not at all grievous to Humane Nature, there had then been no Honour in suffering it for Christs sake, and consequently no ground for the Apostle's *rejoycing*, that they were *counted worthy to suffer*.

(a) Acts 5. 41.

Our Saviour is so far from confounding the Distinctions betwixt Honour and Dishonour, Reputation and Disgrace, that when by way of Parable He warns His Disciples to be aware of Pride, and exhorts them to Lowliness of Mind, He lays hold of that fear of Shame which is Natural to Us, to prove the folly of Ambition, and makes the desire of Glory a Motive to Humility. The Person bidden to a Wedding is caution'd against taking the Highest room, lest He should with Shame be thrust down to a Lower, and is advis'd to sit down in the Lowest, that He might have Worship in the presence of the Guests, when He came to be advanc'd Higher; and it is laid down as a general Aphorism, that *Whosoever exalteth Himself shall be abas'd, and He that humbleth Himself shall be exalted*. Now if Esteem and Disesteem, Honour and Disgrace were in themselves Indifferent, the force of our Saviour's Argument would be quite broken; since We need not fear exalting our selves, if there were no Harm in being Abas'd; nor care to Humble our selves, if there were no Good in being Exalted.

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Those, who are so refin'd in their Speculations, as to assert that Shame is only an Imaginary Evil, and that Infamy hath nothing in it really shocking to humane Nature, must surely have forgot the History of Christ's Sufferings, of which the Despight and Contempt, with which He was treated, seem to have made the most bitter and afflictive part ; the loading him with the scandalous Imputations of being a Blasphemer, a factious Teacher, an Incendiary, a Fellow, who was found perverting the Nation, and forbidding to give tribute to *Cesar* ; the Unanimous postponing Him to a notorious Thief, Rebel, and Murderer, as One whom they would have to be accounted a more execrable Wretch, than *Barabbas* was ; the Pageantry of a Mock-Coronation, investing Him with a purple Robe, putting a Reed instead of a Scepter into his Hands, and placing a Crown of Thorns upon his Head ; the Mockery of bowing the Knee before Him, and saying in Derision, *Hail King of the Jews* ; the Insolence of spitting in his Face, blindfolding Him, buffeting Him, and saying in their brutal railery,

Propheſie unto Us, thou Chriſt, who is He that ſmote thee? The leading Him away in Triumph to the place of Execution, and there crucifying Him betwixt two Thieves; the Scurrility of thoſe, who paſt by, reviling Him, wagging their Heads, and calling upon Him ſarcaſtically to make good his Boaſts, to exert his pretended Power, to ſhew Himſelf the King of Iſrael, the Son of God, and a Saviour of Others, by coming down from the Croſs and ſaving Himſelf; the caſting this in his Teeth by One of the Malefactors, who was crucified with Him, and rail'd on Him, ſaying, *if thou be that Chriſt, ſave thy Self and Us*, theſe, I ſay, and Other Circumſtances of this Nature, recorded in the Goſpel, and ſpecified with a more than Uſual particularity, do plainly ſhew, that Shame was the moſt predominant Ingredient of that bitter Cup, which our Saviour drank for our ſins, even the very dregs of the Cup of God's fury. Now had Ignominy ſo great a ſhare in our Saviour's Meritorious Paſſion, and is it an Evil only in Imagination? Was our Saviour forc'd to *look up to the Joy, that was ſet before Him*, that He might there-

thereby be enabled to *despise the Shame*; and is Shame a Thing in it self altogether Indifferent? Was Christ in a more than Ordinary manner supported, that He might bear Reproach, and is Disgrace after all a mere Notional Evil, purely of our own making? Those, who advance such novel and Uncouth Notions, as these, whatever service they may design to Religion, proceed upon Principles, which, as they have no foundation in Reason, so neither have they any countenance from the Gospel, do no way promote true Piety, but tend to the Overthrow of several Duties enjoin'd in Holy Writ; and directly contradict those express precepts of Scripture, which require Us to provide things *Honest*, or as the Original word Imports, Beautiful and Honourable *in the sight of Men*; to *exercise our selves to have a Conscience void of Offence towards Men as well as towards God*; to *think of such things as are of good report, and worthy of Praise*; to *be blameless as well as harmless, the Sons of God without rebuke*; to *take care that We be not despis'd*; to *leave no stain on our Honour*, but to have a tender regard to our good Name,

as a thing which is better than precious Ointment, is rather to be chosen than great Riches, shall continue with Us above a thousand great Treasures of Gold, and shall Outlive even Vertue it self, since a good Life hath but few days, but a good Name shall endure for ever.

It was the prospect of this durable Glory, which made the Blessed Virgin break out into Holy raptures, and, in the depth of her Humility, to express an extraordinary Joy for the glad Tidings of Her Exaltation. Her Soul magnified the Lord, and Her Spirit rejoic'd in God Her Saviour, because He had regarded the low Estate of his Handmaiden, and because from thenceforth All Generations should call her Blessed. Nor did Our Saviour bestow an Empty Imaginary Blessing on the Other Mary, when in recompence for the good Work She had wrought upon Him, He graciously promis'd, that *wheresoever His Gospel should be preach'd throughout the whole World, there also what She had done should be spoken of for a Memorial of Her.* A Noble Reward this! and Overproportion'd, as all the Rewards of God are, to the Work done, according to the Notions of Scripture, which

teach

teach Us, that *a good Name is better than precious Ointment*; but a very scanty Re-
compence, and which fell much short of
the good work Wrought by Her, if with
this precious Ointment, *which might have
been sold for Much*, She purchas'd Nothing,
but a Vain, Empty, Imaginary Phantom.

It is very well known, that as Insigni-
ficant a thing as Fame and Glory is in the
Opinion of some Speculative Writers, the
desire of it has been One of the strongest
Motives, which has stirr'd up Men no
Ways Inferior to them in Wisdom, or in
Justness of thought, to the performance
of the most Vertuous and Praise-worthy
Actions; and We should not, methinks,
be over-eager to run down a Principle,
which, whether it can it self be well sup-
ported or not, has been in Many Countries,
and for Many Ages, the Principal, if not
the Only Support of Vertue. If We en-
quire of the Heathen, what was the main
Spring of those laudable Actions, by which
they signaliz'd themselves; adorn'd the
Ages they liv'd in, and consulted the good
of Posterity, they Openly profess to Us,
that they neither expected, nor desir'd
any

any Other reward of the Labours, which they Underwent, or of the Dangers, which they Hazarded, but That of Praise and Glory; that, if this Recompence were not held forth to them, they could see no Reason, why in this narrow and short course of Life they should waste themselves with so Many Cares, and expose themselves to so Many Hazards; that if they had no Prefages of what was to come, if all their Thoughts were circumscrib'd within the compass of One Age, they would never break themselves with Unwearied Cares, nor wear out their Lives in endless Labours for the good of their Country; but that there was in every Good, in every Great, in every Publick-spirited Man, a Natural Thirst after Glory; that This night and day whetted their Industry, and summon'd them to exert all their faculties; that by This they were constantly admonish'd, that their Memory was not to be terminated with their Lives, but would be of the same extent with Eternity; that therefore whenever they set about any thing, this thought should be always present to their Minds, that what they were

now

now doing should be View'd, Examin'd, and, if well-done, Applauded, not by the Men of One Country or of One Age, but by the Universal Suffrage of All Men of All Countries throughout All Succeeding Generations; that therefore, whether after Death they should have any Knowledge of what Sentence should be past upon them, or not, it was however a sufficient Encouragement to Vertue, that they were at present entertain'd with the thoughts and hopes of having the Memory of their good Actions faithfully transmitted to Posterity. These were the Principles, which in some Measure supplied the want of Revelation, before *Life and Immortality were brought to Light by the Gospel*; to these Principles We Ow the Learned Writings of their Contemplative, and the glorious Exploits of their Active Men; to these We Ow those Excellent Rules of Living, which they have left Us in their Books, and those Noble paterns, which they have set Us in their Examples.

Now if a good Name comes not too late, even after Death, if Shame comes too soon, though it reaches Us not before
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We are gone down into our Graves, if the Scriptures have represented to Us the One as a Blessing, and the Other as a Curse, even then, when We are not assur'd, that We shall have any perception of Either, much more must that Good Reputation, which closely follows Our Good Actions, so that We plainly taste and feel the pleasure of it, be a Valuable Good, and that Shame, which Immediately attends upon our Evil Actions, so that We at present smart under the pain of it, be Acknowledg'd to be a Mischief fit, by all due Methods, to be Avoided.

The Summ of what hath been deliver'd is This. The desire of a good Name, and the fear of Disgrace are Natural to Us; that We are pleas'd with the One, and disturb'd with the Other, is not from Choice, but Instinct; these Impressions were wrought in our Souls by the Author of our being, and are not to be Overrul'd, but to be rightly Directed; they are then directed aright, when we are mov'd thereby to seek Honour by Actions truly Honourable, and to Avoid Shame by any thing, either Really or even in Appearance,

pearance, sinful; these Propensions are constantly and steadily to be Obey'd; the greatest Honour is always to be pursued, and the Greatest Shame is always to be Avoided: the Interests of Vertue and of Religion are best secur'd by acting up to these Principles, since Vertue will in the Issue procure Us the most lasting Honour, and Sin will in the last result expose Us to the greatest Shame; the Excesses therefore of Ambition and Vain-glory do not proceed from our valuing Honour too much, but from our being mistaken wherein Our true Honour consists: the Laws of God and Men set an high price upon Reputation, by annexing severe penalties on all Injuries done to it; which are a proof of its being truly and highly Valuable: the tenderness We express for our Reputation, when it is really or seemingly hurt by Others, is an evidence of the regard We naturally have for it, and a Reason, why We should not be prodigal of it Our selves; the Desire of it is in it self prejudicial to no One Christian Duty, and the Neglect of it is Destructive of Several. The Scripture doth require Us to
Use

Use all lawful means to gain and preserve it; those, who are propos'd as the most exact patterns of Holy Living have express'd a great Regard to it; Reputation therefore is for these Reasons to be Valued, and sought after, and whatever may hurt our Reputation is, for the same Reasons, carefully to be Avoided.

There may indeed be danger of our being too Covetous of Reputation, but there is also danger of being too Lavish of it. If We desire to be Esteem'd by Men for Qualities, which belong not to Us, or which are not worthy of Esteem, or which do not deserve All that Esteem We claim; if We are Infatiable or Immoderate in our Thirst after Fame; if We set a greater Value upon it than it deserves; if We prefer it to Vertue, and to a good Conscience; if We Use indirect Means to compass it; if We are too much dejected, when we fall short of it, or too much elevated with it; if our Diligence is slackned, or our Vanity is fed by our having gain'd it; if We acquiesce in it as our chief aim, and sovereign good, which We love *with all our Strength, with all our Mind, and with all*

all our Soul; if We Use it to Bad, or make no Use of it to Good Ends, such a Desire of Reputation as this, is indeed Dangerous and Criminal, but if We regulate our pursuit of it by those Measures, which Right Reason and Divine Revelation prescribe; if We never do any thing sinful to Gain it, and resolutely perform our Duty, even when We are sure thereby to Lessen it; if We take care to deserve it by the open Appearance of those Virtues, which We Inwardly and Conscientiously practise; if We are tender of its being hurt by any false shew of Vice, which our own Hearts do sincerely acquit Us of; if We can bear it without being lifted Up, and be disappointed of it, without being cast Down; if when We have got it, We make use of it to the Glory of God, to the Edification of our Neighbours, and to the quickening our selves in a Vigorous performance of all laudable Actions, a Regard for Reputation, springing from these Principles, bounded within these Limits, and directed to these Holy Purposes, is the Duty and Ornament of every sincere Christian.

A Good Name is an Inheritance which most Clergy-Men, God's Holy Name be prais'd for it, take care to leave to their Sons: And, God Knows, it is too Often the only Inheritance they do leave behind them. But then it should administer comfort to their Children, that according to the Judgment of *Solomon*, who was as well qualified, by his Wisdom and Experience, as any One, to make a true estimate of things, *a Good Name is rather to be chosen than great Riches*; so that the want of These is compensated to them by that which is more than an Equivalent. Now it ought to be the Care of all Those, to whom this Valuable Patrimony is deriv'd, to take all proper Methods of Preserving and Encreasing it; the least, which can be expected from them is, that they would not prodigally Squander away that Reputation and Esteem, which it cost their good Fathers so much pains to Acquire, to Preserve, and to Convey down to their Families. This Good Name their Fathers procur'd by their Honesty and Integrity; by the Soundness of their Principles, and the Regularity of their Lives; by their
meek;

meeke, quiet, and peaceable Behaviour; by doing no Wrong to Any, and doing all the Good they could to Every One; by their Love to their Country, by their Loyalty to their Prince, by their Affectionate Zeal for the Church; by promoting in their Stations, and according to their Abilities, the *Honour of God, Peace upon Earth, and Good-will towards Men*. Now by the Same Means, whereby the Fathers purchas'd a Good Name, their Sons must take care to Maintain it. But if they degenerate from the Characters of those, of whose House and Lineage they are, if they have no regard to the Domestick Examples set them by their Fathers, if they are Unruly and Disorderly, if they are factious and turbulent; if they renounce those Principles, in which they were bred from their Infancy, and which they suckt in as it were with their Mothers Milk; if they forsake those Altars, at which their Fathers Ministred, and Desert That Interest for which they were Zealous Actors, if not also Grievous Sufferers; if they are disloyal to their Prince, if in any respect they shew themselves Adversaries, if on all

Occasions they do not shew themselves Friends to that Church, of which their Fathers were Members, Ministers, and perhaps able Champions, they do by such a conduct disclaim their Parentage; and, to speak in the Language of the Apostle, *they are Bastards and not Sons.* But this is not the Case, as We have good reason to presume of Any One, before whom I now speak. The End of Your Appearance in this Assembly, and upon this Occasion, is to do Honour to Your Birth, and to testify to all the World, that You Value Your selves upon Your Descent from the Clergy: to proclaim the goodness of God in recompensing the Piety of Your Parents by the Blessings He hath pour'd down upon their Children, to shew forth in Your Own Persons an Ocular and Sensible proof of the truth of his Gracious Promises, that, *Blessed shall be the Man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his Commandments: His Seed shall be mighty upon Earth; the Generation of the Upright shall be blessed. Wealth and Riches shall be in his House.* And lest the Truth of these Promises should by Ungodly and Profane Men

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be brought into Question, by reason of the extreme Poverty of some immediately related to the Clergy, You take the most proper and effectual Method of Answering these Objections, by contributing cheerfully and liberally to supply the wants of the distress'd Sons of the Clergy, and by putting them into such a Way of livelihood, as may, by God's Blessing, enable them in their Generation to do the Same Honour, as You now do, to their Parentage. For We have good reason to hope that these tender Plants, which are now cultivated with Your Care, and water'd with Your Bounty, will through the Showres of Heaven pour'd down upon them receive such a plentiful Encrease, that in another Age they may spread forth their Boughs to afford Shelter to those, who shall fly to them for it, and to bring forth Fruit in Abundance, which in its time may farther fructifie, so that the benefit of Your Liberality may be propagated through All succeeding Generations. By this Excellent and Well-plac'd Charity You do, in a Lower Sphere and in a more Narrow Measure, carry on that pious Design, the Advancing
of

of which in a higher Sphere and a more extensive Manner did, amongst Other things, make the Memory of our late Gracious Sovereign precious and Immortal: She by Her Royal Bounty, in Augmenting the Livings of the poor Clergy, took Care that the Ministers of the Gospel, in succeeding Ages, should not groan under the same burden of Poverty, which lay so heavy upon the Shoulders of their Predecessors: Your Charity looks backwards, and though it is not within the Compass of Your power to make the Income of those who are Deceas'd larger than it was, Yet, which comes to the same thing, You take Care that their Poverty shall not be Utterly Ruinous, and Destructive to their Families.

Go on, my Beloved, thus to do good as unto All Men, according to their respective Wants and Occasions, and the Relation You bear to them, so more especially unto them, who are more nearly Entitled to larger Shares of Your Bounty, as being of the Same *Household of Faith*: Thus shall You make Your Good Name like a precious Ointment, send forth its
 Odour

Odour for the refreshment and delight of those who are Witnesses and Partakers of Your Charity : and thus shall Your Memories be preserv'd from perishing, when You are dead and gone : Thus shall You do Honour to Your selves, and (a) *to the Fathers which begat You* : These, shall Posterity say, were *Rich Men, furnish'd with Ability, living peaceably in their Habitations : These were Honour'd in their Generations, and were the Glory of their times ; These were Merciful Men, whose Righteousness hath not been forgotten : With their Seed shall continually remain a good Inheritance, their Seed stands fast, and their Children for their Sakes ; their Seed shall remain for ever, and their Glory shall not be blotted out : their Bodies are buried in Peace, but their Name liveth for Evermore.* Thus, lastly, shall You be Entitled to a still greater Recompence than that of an Immortal Fame here on Earth, even a Crown of Glory and Immortality in the Highest Heavens.

(a) Ecclus, c. 44.

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