Tho. Nelson
Joseph Wilbur his Book
Bought in Williamsburg in Virginia
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Presented by Mr. Wilbur to
the Theological Library Princet—
SERMONS
AND
DISCOURSES
ON SEVERAL
SUBJECTS
AND
OCCASIONS.

BY
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THE

PREFACE.

THE following Sermon, preached at Mr. Bennet's Funeral, was, soon after it came out, reflected upon with great Freedom, in a Letter, directed to Me from the Press; and exhorting me either to defend, or retract the Doctrine there delivered; which is said to have offended many serious understanding Christians. I have the Happiness, I thank God, to be well acquainted with several Persons of that Character, to whose Judgment (having great Reason to distrust my own) I appeal'd on this Occasion. They assured me, that, upon a deliberate Perusal of that Sermon, they saw nothing in it which offended them; or which could, in their Opinion, justly offend any one, who believed a Future State of Rewards and Punishments. Nor have I, after making what Enquiries I could on this Head, met with any one Person, who carefully considered my Doctrine, and yet judged differently of it. I might well therefore have spared my self the Trouble of re-

Vol. II. A 2 viewing
viewing and Defending, what appears not to me to have been blam'd by any Wise, or Good Man: for, whether the Writer of the Letter be such, till I know who he is, I may have leave to doubt. All he says of himself is, that he is an Obscure Person; One, I suppose, he means, that is in the Dark, and thinks it proper to continue so; that he may take advantage from thence to attack the Reputation of others, without hazarding his own. There may be somewhat of Wisdom, perhaps; but sure there is little of Goodness, or Fairness in this Conduct. Several such Obscure Persons as these we have had of late, Who have insulted Men of great Abilities and Worth, and taken pleasure to pelt them, from their Coverts, with little Objections. The ill Success of their Attempts hath justified their Prudence in concealing themselves.

Whoever my unknown Correspondent be, he press'd hard for an Answer; and is so earnest in that Point, that he would, I perceive, be not a little disappointed, if he should miss of it. Nameless Authors have no right to make such Demands. However, the Importance of the Argument itself, the serious Air with which he hath treated of it, and the solemn Professions he makes of being acted by no other Principle but a concern for Truth, soon determined me to comply with his Exhortations. And what follows therefore, was drawn up not long after his Letter appear'd; though the Publication of it hath been delayed by some Accidents, with an Account of which it is not necessary to trouble the Reader.
The PREFACE.

After all, I shall be looked upon, perhaps, as writing rather too soon, than too late; and as paying too great a regard to an Attempt, which was so far flighted, that the worthy Dean of Canterbury, not long afterwards, preach’d the Doctrine, there oppos’d, before her Majesty, and printed it by her Order. And in truth, there never was a Charge maintain’d with such a shew of Gravity and Earnestness, which had a lighter Foundation to support it. However, it may be of some use, carefully to examine what this Writer hath said, in order, by a remarkable Instance, to shew, how little Credit is due to Accusations of this kind, when they come from suspected (that is, from Nameless) Pens; and how artfully the Mask of Religion may sometimes be put on, to cover Designs which cannot be decently own’d.

That part of my Sermon to which the Letter-Writer hath confin’d his Reflections, contains the Explication of an Argument, which I suppose employ’d by the Apostle, in the Text, for the proof of a Future State. And I had reason therefore to hope, that what I offer’d on this head, would be favourably received, and candidly interpreted by all such as did in good earnest believe such a State. And yet, to my surprize, I have found One, who would be thought seriously to entertain this Belief, endeavouring all he can to weaken an Argument (and indeed the chief Argument drawn from Reason alone) by which it is upheld. I might have expected this Treatment indeed from the Pen of some Libertine, or disguis’d Unbeliever.

* See his Sermon at S. James’s, Nov. 3. 1706. on Matt. xi. 21. p. 11, 12, 13.
The PREFACE.

liever; it being an usual piece of Art, with that sort of Men, to undermine the Authority of Fundamental Truths, by pretending to shew, how weak and improper the Proofs are, which their Assertors employ in the Defence of them. But I did not, and could not expect such Usage from a Writer, who every where insinuates, and in one Place, I think, pretty plainly professes himself to be a sincere Christian. His Concern for the Cause of Religion would have appear’d to far greater Advantage, had he employed himself rather in vindicating some of its great Principles, which are every Day openly and daringly attack’d from the Press, than in lessening the Force of what I have urged in behalf of one of them. Had I err’d in this Case, it had been a well meant Mistake; and might have pass’d unobserved, at a Time, when Infidelity finds so much Employment of another kind for all those, who have a real Concern for the Cause of Religion.

Besides, Discourses on such Occasions, as that on which I then preach’d, are seldom the Productions of Leisure; and should always therefore be read with those favourable Allowances, which are made to hasty Compositions. So the Doctrine contain’d in them be but wholesome and edifying, tho’ there should be a want of Exactness, here and there, either in the manner of Speaking, or Reasoning, it may be overlook’d, or pardon’d.

When any Argument of great Importance, is managed with that Warmth and Earnestness, which a serious Conviction of it generally inspires, somewhat may easily escape, even from a wary
a wary Pen, which will not bear the Test of a severe Scrutiny. Facile est verbum aliquod ardens notare, idque, resistintis (ut ita dicam) animorum incendiis, irridere; said one of the best Writers in the World, who himself needed this Excuse as seldom as any Man.

In particular, what I offered on that Occasion towards the Proof of a Future State, deserved to be the less rigorously examin'd, because it was only by way of Introduction to some practical Points, which I chiefly design'd to insist on. I had not room in a few Pages, at the Entrance of a short Discourse, to consider all Things on all Sides, to balance the several Advantages and Disadvantages that attend the Pleasures of Men and Beasts, Good Men and Bad. I pretended not fully to State, much less to Demonstrate, the Truth contain'd in the Text, as I am falsely represented to have done. Those are Words which I never once used; nor would the Task itself have been proper at such a Time, and before such an Auditory. My declared Intention was only to explain the Apostle's Argument, to enlarge on it; to shew by several Instances, the undoubted Truth of it, to open and apply it; and this, by such Considerations chiefly, as were in some measure applicable to the Person then to be interred. For whoever gives himself the Trouble of reviewing that mean Discourse, will find, that as it consists of Three Parts; a speculative Point of Doctrine, some practical Reflections, and an Account of the Person deceas'd; so the two former of these Points are handled with a regard to the latter; the Practical Reflections being all
The PREFACE.

of them such as are suited to the Character of the Person, which follows; and the preceding Doctrine being illustrated in such a manner, and by such Instances, as naturally lead both to the one and to the other: that part of the Doctrine I particularly mean, which is professedly built on the Letter of the Text, and the express Authority of the Apostle.

It is no wonder, if in an Argument handled thus briefly, and with such views as these, every thing should not be said, which may be thought requisite to clear it. That, as it was no part of my Intention, so neither was it necessary, proper, or possible on that Occasion to be done: and therefore, for Omissions of this kind, I need make no Excuse. As to the other Parts of the Charge, which, if true, would really blemish what I have written; I shall, as I promised, reply to them very distinctly and fully.

The Accusation of my Doctrine turns, I find, upon three Heads; That it is altogether new, utterly foreign from the Intention of the Apostle, on whose words I build it, and false in itself. A very heavy Charge! nor is the first part of it to be neglected. For in Matters of Morality and Religion, which are every one's Concern, and which have therefore been often and thoroughly examined, New Doctrines, or Arguments are deservedly suspected. And when one, who is, by his Function, a Preacher of Virtue, doth by advancing such new Doctrines, or Arguments, make Concessions to the

*L. p. 17. Cause of Vice* (as I am said to have done) he is doubly Criminal. Let us see, therefore, what
The PREFACE.

what I have laid down in that Sermon, how far it is charged as New, and with how little Reason.

My declared Intention, in that part of my Sermon which displeases the Letter-Writer, is, to explain that great Argument for a future State, which St. Paul hath couched'd in the Words of my Text. "If in this Life only we have hope in "Christ, we are of all Men most miserable." I suppose them to signify, That if all the Benefits we expect from the Christian Institution, were confin'd within the Bounds of this Life, and we had no hopes of a better State after this, of a great and lasting Reward in a Life to come; we Christians should be the most abandon'd and wretched of Creatures, all other Sorts and Sects of Men would evidently have the Advantage of Us, and a much surer Title to Happiness than We. From whence I say, the Apostle would be understood to infer (though the Inference be not express'd) That therefore there must needs be another State, to make up the Inequalities of This, and to solve all irregular Appearances a.

In the Explication of this Argument, I profess to urge (what I call) the Concession of the Apostle somewhat farther than the Letter of the Text will carry us, by asserting under two different Heads, That were there no Life after this, 1st, Men would be more miserable than Beasts; and 2dly, The best Men would be often the most miserable. I mean, as far as Happiness, or Misery are to be measured from pleasing and painful Sensations. And, supposing the present to be the only Life we are to lead, I see not but that This might be esteemed the true Measure of them b. Upon
The **P R E F A C E.**

Upon the first of these Heads I shew, that in this Life Beasts have, in many respects, the Advantage of Men; in as much as they (1) enjoy greater sensual Pleasures, and (2) feel fewer corporal Pains, and (3) are utter Strangers to all those anxious and tormenting Thoughts, which perpetually haunt and disquiet Mankind. I enlarge on these Particulars, and then proceed on the same Foot likewise to shew, That the best Men would be often the most miserable; since their Principles (1) give them not leave to taste so freely of the Pleasures of Life, as other Mens do, and (2) expose them more to the Troubles and Dangers of it.

Both these Points I illustrate by various Instances; and, upon the whole conclude, That therefore, as certainly as God is, a Time there will, and must be, when all these unequal Distributions of Good and Evil shall be set right, and the Wisdom and Reasonableness of all his Transactions, with all his Creatures, be made as clear as the Noon-day.

I was willing to represent to the Reader, at one View, the whole Course of my Reasoning, according to the Order in which it lies, and in the very Words, which I have made use of to express it, in my Sermon. If he compares this short Account of my Doctrine, with the larger Explication given of its several Branches in the Sermon itself, he will find, That (whatever the Letter-Writer boldly affirms to the contrary) it must be understood, and is by me actually proposed, under the Restrictions following:  

1. When
1. When I prefer Beasts to Men, and bad Men to Good, in point of Happiness, it is upon a Supposition, not only that there is no other Life than this, but that Mankind are persuaded that there is none. The Men I speak of, are such as those Corinthians were, against whom St. Paul argued; Men, who in this Life only have hope in Christ; such as expect no Benefits from the Christian Institution, but what are confined within the Bounds of this present Life, and have no hopes of a better State after this, of a great and lasting Reward in a Life to come. This is the Account which I expressly give of them, when I enter on the Argument, and which I repeat several times in the Course of it; and which must be understood all along, even where it is not mentioned. And such a sort of Christians I may be allowed to suppose now, since such there manifestly were in the Days of the Apostles. Nor does it any ways interfere with this Supposition, to represent these very Men, as having now and then the uneasy Presages of a future Reckoning, and as fearing themselves sometimes with the Fears of another Life, even while they do not entertain the hopes of it. This, I doubt not, is the Case of all such who profess to disbelieve a Future State; they are not always equally satisfy'd with their own Reasonings about it, but tremble sometimes at the Thoughts of it. My Reprover, therefore, deals very unfairly, when he reckons this among the Advantages peculiar to Men, that they have the present Support of the Belief of a Future State, and the firm Expectation of Rewards in a Life to come; and assures his Readers,
The PREFACE.

ders, with equal Modesty and Truth, that this is agreeable to what I suppose, whereas I suppose the quite contrary; and, on that Supposition, all my Reasonings and Reflections turn. Nor is there a Word, throughout the whole Argument, that can justly be construed to a different Meaning.

2. Proceeding on this Supposition, I affirm, not that the best Men would be always, but often the most miserable. And that I might be sure of not being misapprehended, I repeat this (or some other equivalent) Expression at least six times, in the Compass of a few Pages.

Nor doth the Argument which I am explaining, require a more extensive Supposition; it being equally necessary that there should be a Future State, to vindicate the Justice of God, and salve the present Irregularities of Providence, whether the best Men be oftentimes only, or always the most miserable. The Letter-Writer dissembles his Knowledge of this remarkable Restriction; and having taken Advantage from thence to argue and object as he pleas'd, contents himself slightly to mention it towards the Close of his Pamphlet; which was discreetly done, since an earlier Acknowledgment of it would have discover'd at first sight, even to the meanest of his Readers, the Impertinence of several of those Objections and Arguments. He would excuse this Procedure, by saying, at last, That tho' I profess only to shew that the best Men are often the most miserable, yet I argue, as if they were always so, viz. from that Obligation to some particular Practices, from which they are never exempt in any Condition of
The PREFACE.

this Life a: Which is as great and groundless a L. p. 32. Misrepresentation, as any of the former; Since, 3dly, My chief Proof of this Point, is drawn from that State of Persecution, to which good Men, above all others, are subject: because their Principles expose them most to the Troubles and Dangers of Life b; because fore Evils S. p. 9. and temporal Inconveniences attend the Discharge of their Duty c; they become a Reproach and a p. 12,13. Bye-word a, are injur'd and outrag'd, suffer unjust and illegal Encroachments d; the greatest p. ibid. Saints being sometimes made the most remarkable Instances of Suffering e: for they are inflexible in p. 14. their Uprightness — No Prospect of Interest can allure them, no Fear of Danger can dismay them f. p. 12. Would one imagine, after all these Expressions, and several others of the same kind that I have made use of, any Man so loft to all Sense of Justice, and Truth, as to say, That I suppose no Case of Persecution e? that I do not once L. p. 29. suppose such a State of Persecution as the Apostle pointed at? but maintain my Positions with reference to the most quiet and prosperous State of this Life h? Certainly the Letter-Writer doth not h L. p. 21. mean this as one Instance of his Concern for the Cause of Virtue, and the Interest of practical Religion i! I do not indeed build my Reasoning i L. p. 3. wholly on the Case of Persecution; neither doth the Apostle himself, as will afterwards appear: However, I do not exclude it. On the contrary, I refer to it frequently, and should have dwelt more largely upon it, but that the other Considerations I suggest, were more applicable to the Character of the Person deceas'd; which was (as I have already said) the Point from whence
whence I chiefly took my Views in this Argument.

Fourthly, Even when I do not suppose good Men to be under a State of Persecution, yet still I suppose them to live in a State of Mortification and Self-denial; to be under a perpetual Conflict with their bodily Appetites and Inclinations, and struggling to get the mastery over them. I suppose them oblig'd, by their Principles, not to taste so freely of the Pleasures of Life (the innocent Pleasures of Life; for such I manifestly mean) as other Men do; but to sit as loose from them, and be as moderate in the use of them as they can; not only to forbear those Gratifications which are forbidden by the Rules of Religion; but even to restrain themselves, in unforbidden Instances. And whenever they taste even the allowable Pleasures of Sense, I suppose them to be under such Checks from Reason and Reflection, as by representing perpetually to their Mind the meanness of all these sensual Gratifications, do, in great measure, blunt the Edge of their keener Desires, and pall all their Enjoyments. And have I not Reason therefore to say, that good and pious Persons, by the Nature and Tendency of their Principles, (as they are most expos'd to the Troubles and ill Accidents of Life, so) are the greatest Strangers to the Pleasures and Advantages of it? And would not these be great and needless Abatements of their Happiness, if it were confin'd within the Compass of this Life only? But surely it doth not from hence follow, nor have I once suggested, much less affirm'd, That the Practice of Vice doth in its own Nature tend to make Men more happy, in all States of this Life,
The Preface.

than the Practice of Virtue. This is an Assertion by which the great Author of our Nature, and Enactor of the Law of Good and Evil, is highly dishonour'd and blasphem'd; and which cannot by any one, who hath the least Sense of Religion, be repeated, without being abhorred.

That Virtue and Vice do in their own Natures tend to make those Men happy, or miserable, who severally practifie them, is a Proposition of undoubted (and, I am sure, by me undisputed) Truth; as far as it relates to moral Virtue or Vice, properly so call'd; that is, to those Measures of Duty, which Natural Reason, unenlighten'd by Revelation, prescribes: For as to those Rules of Evangelical Perfection, in which we Christians are obliged to excel; they are (some of them) of so exalted a Nature, so contrary to Flesh and Blood, and so far above our ordinary Capacities and Powers, that if there were no other Life than this, I see not how our Happines could generally be said to consist in the Practice of them. And therefore when God made them Matter of strict Duty to us; he at the same time animated us to Obedience (not only by assuring us of the extraordinary Assurances of his good Spirit, but) by a clear Discovery of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments; whereas the Jews, who had the Promises of this Life only, had also, in proportion to those Promises, a lower and less excellent Scheme of Duty propos'd to them.

And here also this Author is altogether Silent; for he takes no notice of these Improvements.
ments made by the Gospel in the Measures of our Duty; but he supposes everywhere the Christian, and Heathen Morality to be in all respects the same: and that the innocent Pleasures of Life (which must be allowed to have some share in perfecting human Happiness) are no more affected and retrenched by the one, than the other. He supposes all the Instances of Abstinence, Mortification, and Self-denial, which the Gospel enjoins, to be included within those Rules of Virtue, which the Light of Nature teaches us to follow; and upon this Foundation proceeds to represent me as affirming, that the best of Men are rendered more miserable than the Wicked, by the Practice of Virtue: whereas, in truth, I only maintain, that the best Christians (who are unquestionably the best of Men) are, by their Observance of some Gospel-Precepts, render'd (more miserable, or, which is all one) less happy, than they would otherwise be, if they were releas'd from those Obligations. And, consequently, were there no hope of a Life after this, they, who are not ty'd up to these Severities, would have a manifest Advantage over those who are.

I instance indeed in some Acts of Virtue common to Heathens and Christians; but I suppose them to be perform'd by Christians after (a Christian, that is, after) a more sublime and excellent manner than ever they were among the Heathens; and even, when they do not differ in Kind from moral Virtues, strictly so styl'd, yet to differ in the Degrees of Perfection with which they are attended.

This
This Distinction between a State of Virtue and a State of Mortification; between Moral Goodness and Evangelical Perfection, and the greater Restraints (in point of worldly Pleasures and Advantages) which are laid upon Men by the former of these than by the latter, ought the rather to have been observ’d and own’d by the Letter-Writer, because in the Fifth Place, I pretend not to compare the Happines of Men and Beasts, good Men and bad, any further than it results from worldly Pleasures and Advantages, and the Objects of Sense that surround us. For these are my Words. “Were there no other Life but this, Men would really be more miserable than Beasts, and the best Men would be often the most miserable. I mean, as far as Happines, or Misery, are to be measured from pleasing or painful Sensations.” This is the Reflection which I more expressly and formally insist on, than any other. At the very opening of the Argument it occurs; nor do I, in the Prosecution of it, use any one instance, or Illustration, but what relates to such pleasing and painful Sensations, or to those delightful and uneasy Reflections of Mind, which are, some way or other, consequent upon them. And if, in these Respects, (and farther I do not go) the Happines of Beasts exceeds that of Men, and the Happines of the Wicked that of the Virtuous, it will not weaken what I have urg’d, to shew, that, in other Respects, (such as the Letter-Writer largely displays) the Advantage may lie on the contrary side; because, were it so, yet this Advantage would not be suffi-
cient to turn the Scale; according to my Supposition: which is, that without the hope of another Life, pleasing and painful Sensations (taken together with those inward Reflections which are naturally consequent upon them) might be esteemed the true Measure of Happiness and Misery. On this Supposition (which I had not then time to explain and prove) all my Reasonings proceed; and cannot therefore be affected by any Objections, which are so far from being built on the same Bottom, that they are design’d to overthrow it. Whether this Supposition be true, or false, may be a new matter of Dispute: but if it be true, the Argument I raise from thence, is certainly true, and the Objections of the Letter-Writer are as certainly vain and impertinent; being levell’d rather against the Supposition itself, than the Inference that I drew from it.

This is not a proper Place to justify that Supposition; thus much only I shall say at present concerning it. I am so far from retracting it, that I look upon it to be a most clear and indubitable Truth; and think myself to have express’d it with more Wariness and Reserve than was necessary. My Words are—I see not but that this might be esteemed the true Measure of Happiness, and Misery: Whereas this might not only be esteemed, but would really be the true Measure of Happiness and Misery, to the far greater part of Mankind, if they were not educated under the Hope and Fears of future Rewards and Punishment. The Objects of Sense would then determine the Views of most Men; of all such, to be sure, who convers’d per-
perpetually with them, and wanted the Opportunities and Capacities that were requisite towards withdrawing their Thoughts from these things, and fixing them on more refined and reasonable Pleasures. And even among those Few, who were better qualified, still fewer would be found, who, without the hope of another Life, would think it worth their while, to live above the Allurements of Sense, and the Gratifications of this World, as far as was necessary towards attaining the heights of Christian Perfection. Nor could any Argument be urg’d, sufficient to induce those so to do, who were otherwise resolv’d, and inclin’d. The Rule of Good and Evil would not then appear uniform and invariable; but would seem different, according to Men’s different Complexions, and Inclinations; and whatever they judged to be, upon the whole, most agreeable, or disagreeable to them, that they would be sure (nay they would look upon themselves as oblig’d) to pursue, or decline, without being restrain’d by any speculative Reasonings, concerning the Nature of Virtue and Vice, and the Obligations Men are under, universally to practise the one, and eschew the other.

But this, I am sensible, lies without the Compass of my immediate Design, which is only to reckon up the several Restrictions under which, what I have laid down in that Sermon, ought to be understood; Restrictions, not now first devis’d to qualify my Doctrine, but plainly propos’d together with it, and interwoven into the Body of those few short Reflections, which I had room to make concerning it. And yet
The Preface.

the Author of the Letter, in a very grave and solemn manner, argues throughout, as if no one such Restriction had been made. Let his Cause be as good as he pretends it to be, yet surely it is not at all beholden to him for his way of maintaining it. He that talks thus deceitfully even for Truth itself, must needs hurt it more by his Example, than he promotes it by his Arguments.

But to set aside these Restrictions, important as they are, for the present, and take my Doctrine at large, even as the Letter-Writer himself hath represented it; that is, as briefly contain'd in (what he calls) my two Positions, a and the Notions on which they are founded b:

Let us see how far the first Charge of Novelty can, even upon this Foot, be made good against it.

I. My Positions are these; That, were there no Life after this, First, Men would be really more miserable than Beasts; and Secondly, the best of Men would be often the most miserable. The Notion, on which they are founded is, 'That, supposing the present to be the only Life we are to lead, I see not but that pleasing, and painful Sensations might be esteemed the true Measure of Happiness, and Misery.

Against both the one, and the other, the Letter-Writer exclaims in a most tragical manner: He is sorry to see such Concessions made to the Cause of Vice by any Preacher of Righteousness c; he never yet heard, nor ever expected to hear any thing like this from the Pulpit d; he knows not that such Assertions have been ever, before this, seriously maintained by any Person of Virtue and Under-
**The PREFACE.**

Understanding, much less solemnly dictated as undoubted Truths from the Pulpit; he thinks, that all who have any Respect for the Clergy, must lament that such strange Doctrine should be recommended to the World by one of that Body; and all, who have any Regard to the Honour of Christ, must lament to see it solemnly back'd and confirmed by one of his Apostles.

The Charge of Novelty is here urged with so much Warmth, and Gravity, and such an Air of Assurance, that even a wary Reader would be apt to think it well founded; and yet never was there a Censure more rashly vain, or more entirely destitute of all Colour of Truth. For first, as to the Positions themselves, they are so far from being New, that they are commonly to be met with in both Antient and Modern, Domestick and Foreign Writers; particularly in the Works of our English Divines, which are in every one's Hands, and with which the Author of the Letter, I believe, is best acquainted. I begin with Archbishop Tillotson, who cannot be suspected to have made Concessions to the Cause of Vice, either through Weakness, or a worse Reason: and yet these are his Expressions. 'The Condition of Men in this present Life is attended with so many Frailties, liable to so great Miseries and Sufferings, to so many Pains and Diseases, to such various Causes of Sorrow and Trouble, of Fear and Vexation, by Reason of the many Hazards and Uncertainties, which not only the Comforts and Contentments of our Lives, but even Life itself is subject to, that the Pleasure and Happines of it is by these much
much rebated: so that were we not so train-
ed up with the hopes of something better
hereafter, Life itself would be to many Men
an insupportable Burthen. If Men were not
supported and born up under the Anxieties of
this present Life, with the Hopes and Ex-
pectations of an happier State in another
World, Mankind would be the most imperfect
and unhappy part of God’s Creation. For altho’
other Creatures be subjected to a great deal of
Vanity and Misery, yet they have this Hap-
piness, that, as they are made for a short Du-
ration and Continuance, so they are only af-
fected with the Present; they do not fret and
discontent themselves about the Future, they
are not liable to be cheated with Hopes, nor
tormented with Fears, nor vexed at Disap-
pointments, as the Sons of Men are. But if
our Souls be immortal, this makes abundant
Amends and Compensation for the Frailties
of this Life, and all the transitory Suffer-
ings and Inconveniencies of this present State:
Human Nature, consider’d with this Advan-
tage, is infinitely above the Brute Beasts that
perish. Serm. Vol. ix. pag. 68, 69. Again,
What would a Man gain by it, if the Soul
were not immortal, but to level himself with
the Beasts that perish [nay] to put himself
into a worse and more miserable Condition
than any of the Creatures below him? Ibid.
P. 72.
The same thing is said more shortly, but as
fully, by the present Lord Bishop of Rochester;
Without that Belief [of the Joys of another
Life] as Christians of all Men, so Men of all
Creat-
Creatures were most miserable. Sermon on Jan. 30. p. 14.

To the like purpose Mr. Glanville. If this Life be all, we have the same End and Happiness with the Brutes; and they are happier of the two, in that they have lesser Cares and fewer Disappointments, Serm. p. 294.

Dr. Moor, whom my Reprover must allow to have been a Person of Virtue and Understanding, expresses himself on this occasion, in very significant Terms. If (says he) there be no Life hereafter, the worst of Men have the greatest share of Happiness; their Passions and Affections being so continually gratify'd, and that to the Height, in those things that are so agreeable, and, rightly circumstantiated, allowable to human Nature; such as the sweet Reflection on the Success of our political Management—the general Tribute of Honour and Respect for our Policy and Wit, and that ample Testimony thereof, our Acquisition of Power and Riches; that great Satisfaction of foiling and bearing down our Enemies, and obliging and making sure our more serviceable Friends: To which finally You may add all the variety of Mirth and Pastime, that Flesh and Blood can entertain itself with, from either Musick, Wine, or Women. Imm. of the Soul, L. 2. Ch. 18. Sect. 9.

Dr. Goodman, in his Winter Evening Conferences, a Book received with general Applause, and now in every one's Hands, represents one of the Persons in his Dialogue speaking as follows. It is plain, that nothing but the hope of another and better World at last, can enable
The PREFACE.

ble a Man tolerably to enjoy himself in this present—Nothing but eternal Life is a sufficient Antidote against the Fears of Death. And all these are the Effects and Benefits of Religion. Therefore if this be uncomfortable, Mankind must needs be the most deplorably unhappy kind of Being in the whole World. For though other sort of Creatures are, in some sort Fellow-sufferers in the common Calamities of this World; yet, besides that their Share is ordinarily not so great as his, it is evident that they fear nothing for the Future, but only feel the present Evil; and they have no Restraint upon them for what they desire, nor no Remorse for what they have done. Therefore, if Mankind have not the Glory of his Conscience, when he doth well, to set against the Checks and Girds of it when he doth amiss; and if he have not hopes to counterbalance his Fears, and a Reward hereafter for his Self-denial at present, his Condition is far the worst of any Creature in the World, Part 3. p. 43.

In like manner (Part 2. p. 114.) after allowing, that 'Several sorts of Brute Creatures continue longer in the World, and have as well a quicker Sense of Pleasure, as a more unlimited and uncontrolled Enjoyment of it,' he makes the same Inference from hence that I have done; 'That upon these very Considerations, there is great Reason to believe that there is such a thing as another World, wherein Man may have Amends made him, for whatever was amiss, or defective in this. For it is not credible with me, that such Power
The PREFACE.

Power and Wisdom, as is plainly displayed in the Constitution of Man, should be so utterly destitute of Goodness, as to contrive things so ill, that the noblest Being should be finally the most unfortunate.

Bishop Wilkins in his Princ. of Nat. Relig. pag. 159, 160. 'There is a strong Aversion among Men against a dark State of Annihilation, which no Man can think of without great regret of Mind; and likewise a natural Desire in all Men after a State of Happiness and Perfection. And no natural Desire is in vain. All other things have somewhat to satisfy their natural Appetites. And if we consider the utter Impossibility of attaining to any such Condition in this Life, this will render it highly credible, that there must be another State wherein this Happiness is attainable: Otherwise Mankind must fail of his chief End, being, by a natural Principle, most strongly inclin'd to such a State of Happiness as he can never attain to; as if he were purposely fram'd to be tormented betwixt these two Passions, Desire and Despair; an earnest Propension after Happiness, and an utter Incapacity of enjoying it; as if Nature itself, whereby all other things are disposed to their Perfection, did serve only, in Mankind, to make them most miserable.

And, which is yet more considerable, the better and wiser any Man is, the more earnest Desires and Hopes hath he after such a State of Happiness. And if there be no such thing, not only Nature, but Virtue likewise must contribute to make Men miserable.'

I have
I have search'd the Volumes of Sermons publish'd by Divines here in England, and find as yet but Two on the same Text with mine; one preach'd by the learned and pious Mr. Pemble, the other by Dr. Stradling, the late worthy Dean of Chichester; and both of them full of the same Points of Doctrine, and the same ways of explaining those Points, as I have employ'd. I refer the Reader to the Sermons themselves, and shall mention here but a Paffage or two out of them.

Mr. Pemble's first Position is, that 'True Christians are more unhappy than other Men, if their Happiness be confin'd to this Life only—are in a worse State than Epicures and Atheists, and other ungodly Persons, &c.—in regard to the Nature of true Religion which they profess, which agrees not with the good liking of the World, and therefore It [the World] cannot agree with That, nor with them that sincerely profess it.—They are Men of another Generation, their Lives are not like other Mens, and therefore the World wonders at them—and always fees, in their Well doing, a Reproof of their own Evil-doing,' &c. He concludes thus—'We see then the Point to be plain enough, that true Christians, barr'd in their Hope in Christ, for the Life to come, are more miserable than other Men; because all are alike hereafter; and for this Life, the Godly miss of those Contentments which the Wicked enjoy; nay, are more miserable, not only than Men, but than Beasts also,'—p. 480.

Dr,
Dr. Stradling's second Head is, 'That, upon Supposition of no better Hope [than this Life] affords] all good Christians should be not only Miserable, but of all Men most Miserable—p. 463.

more unhappy than the most brutish Men, yea, than the Beasts that perish. For whereas these feel their Misery when it comes, but do not anticipate it, &c. b Christians make themselves yet more miserable, by their severe Principles of Mortification and Self-denial, debarring themselves of those Comforts and Satisfactions which others enjoy—c They lose the good Things here, and fail of those hereafter d.

To these modern Instances from our own Writers, I shall add that of Mr. Calvin, who says*, 'That Gryllus, in Plutarch, reasons wisely, when he affirms, that Men, who live without Religion [i.e. without a Sense of God, and a Belief of future Rewards] do not only not excel Brute Beasts, but are by many degrees far inferior to them, in as much as they are liable to various sorts of Evils, and live always in a tumultuary and restles State." And again, There is none of us but who would be thought, throughout the whole Course of his Life, to aspire after Immortality. For we are ashamed in nothing to excel the Brute Beasts, whose Condition would be no ways inferior

* Sapientissimè apud Plutarchum, Gryllus ratiocinatur, dum homines affirmat, si ab eorum Vita semel absit Religion, non modo Bruttis Pecudibus nihil excellere, sed multis partibus esse longè inferiores; ut qui tot malorum formis obnoxii tumultuariam & irrequietam Vitam perpetuò trahant, &c. Inst. Cap. 1. Sect. 1c.
The PREFACE.

to Ours, if we had not the Hope of Eternity after Death to support us.

I shall trouble the Reader with one Citation more, out of Athenagoras; because the Words of that antient Writer are very full and expressive. If (says he) human Actions were not to be judged, Men would have no Advantage over Beasts; indeed, more miserable than Beasts would such Men be, who were always busied in subduing their Passions, and improving themselves in Piety, and Justice, and every other Virtue. At this rate, the animal and belluine Life would be the best; Virtue would be downright Folly; the Threats of future Vengeance, Matter of Sport and Laughter; the Pursuits of all kind of Pleasure, our chiefest Good; and the Rule, by which Men and Beasts ought then equally to guide themselves, would be that beloved Maxim of the Epicures; Let us Eat and Drink, for to morrow we die.


b Ei mem μετεματικη μεταματικη ovement θεορμαθηματων γενοικο περαστη, ἐδει εξωθὶς αλειφὸν ὡς ἀλογον ἀθεωτης: μᾶλλον ἐξ ἀκειμον παραπτωσιν αμιλωτερον οτι τὰ καθη διδακτογνωσίας, καθ' ἐργατικῆς ἐστις ἡμείσας, καθ' ἐκκαυστωσιν, ε ἀλλὰς ἡγετής. Ὢ δὲ καινωτὸς βίως καθ' ἐπικουρωδὴς αἰεισῶς. ὁπετὶ ἀνάλης δικης ἓ ἀπειλη, γελοὺς πλατύς τὸ ἡ, πάσαν θεοπάνην ἡδονῆ ἄγαθαν τὸ μέγιστον δόμα ἡ ἀλλοτροὶ τῶν ἀνάλων, καὶ νόμος εἰς, τὸ τοῖς ἀκολάσος Καίσερος φῖλον Φάγωμεν καθ' πιστίμη, αὐθεν που ἀποθεωσικημ. Ἑκα Ανασ. Οξων. Ed. p. 255.
The PREFACE.

This last Passage from Athenagoras includes, and very strongly affirms, all the Parts of my Doctrine which have been excepted against; not only my Positions, but the Notion itself also, on which they are founded; and which now, therefore, I proceed likewise to vindicate from the Charge of Novelty, by the following Authorities.

My Notion (as it is call’d) is, That supposing the Present to be the only Life we are to lead, I see not but that pleasing and painful Sensations might be esteemed the true Measure of Happiness and Misery. This is all I say of the Matter, there being no other Passage of like import with this throughout my whole Sermon. And have not Archbishop Tillotson, Dr. Scot, Dr. Sherlock, Dr. Lucas, and others said the same thing, in a manner less reserv’d, and in Terms of yet greater Force and Compass, without giving any Offence (that I know of) to any one of those many serious and understanding Christians[1], who daily peruse their excellent Writings with Pleasure and Edification?

Archbishop Tillotson, Vol. ix. p. 48. 'The Determination of the Apostle is according to the Nature, and the Truth and Reason of things, 'That if in this Life only we have Hopes, we were of all Men most miserable. For although it be true, that, as things now stand, and, as the Nature of Man is fram’d, good Men do find a strange kind of inward Pleasure and Satisfaction in the Discharge of their Duty, yet every Man that consults his own Breast, will find that his Delight and Contentment chiefly springs from the Hopes which
The PREFACE.

which Men conceive, That an holy and virtuous Life shall not be unrewarded. And, without these Hopes, Virtue is but a dead and empty Name.

Vol. II. p. 265. 'If we were sure that there were no Life after this, if we had no Expectation of a Happiness or Misery beyond this World; the wisest thing that any Man could do, would be, to enjoy as much of the present Contentments and Satisfactions of this World, as he could fairly come at. For if there be no Resurrection to another Life, the Apostle allows the reasoning of the Epi
cure to be very good; Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die.

Dr. Scot's Christ. Life, Part iii. Vol. i. Ch. 5. p. 301. 'If there were no other Life after this, it would be Folly so much as to attempt it [the Enjoyment of God by Contemplation and Love, and the Imitation of his Perfections]: for what Man in his Wits would ever think it worth the while to spend a considerable part of his Life in waging War with himself, mortifying his Affections, crossing and starving out his dearest Inclinations (which yet he must do, e'er he can arrive at any comfortable degree of divine Enjoyment) if there were no other Recompence to be expected at last, but to live a few Days longer in a rapturous Muse, and then lie down in everlasting Darkness and Insensibility? Had he not a thousand times better please and gratify himself at present, content his craving Desires with the Goods that are before him, and take his fill of those sensual Delights that readily offer
The Preface.

offer themselves to his Enjoyment, than run
away from them in a long and wearisome
quest of spiritual Joys, which, for all he
knows, he may never arrive to, or, if he
doeth, is sure, within a few Moments, to be
depriv’d of them for ever?

Dr. Sherlock’s Practical Discourse concerning
a Future Judgment, p. 116, &c. ‘The whole
Christian Religion is founded on, and adapt-
ed to the Belief of a Future Judgment, and
is a very unintelligible Institution without it
— The temporal Promises made to an holy
and virtuous Life ______ extend no farther
than Food and Rayment, to our daily Bread
— — But who would be contented with such
a scanty Provision, while he sees the greater
Prosperity of bad Men, who dissolve in Eafe
and Luxury, were there not an happy State
reserv’d for him in the next World? Where
is the Man who would not comply with the
Devil’s Temptation, to fall down and wor-
ship for all the Kingdoms of the World, and
the Glory of them, were he not to lose a
brighter and a richer Crown for it?

Ibid. p. 119, &c. ‘Many of our Saviour’s
Laws are founded on the Supposition of a fu-
ture Judgment, and are extremely unreason-
able, if there be no Rewards or Punishments
after this Life— The only Rule of our Ac-
tions would [then] be, to live as long; and to
enjoy as much of the World as we can. But
Christian Religion will not in many Cases al-
low of this, and therefore is no Religion for
this World, were there not another World
to follow— How many Restraints doth the
Christian
The Preface.

Christian Religion lay on us, to lessen the Pleasures and Satisfactions of this Life? It teaches us a great Indifference to all the things of this World; but how unreasonable is that, if this World be our only Place of Happiness? — It commands us to mortify our sensual Appetites, to crucify our Flesh with its Affections and Lufts, to live above the Pleasures of the Body, to pluck out our right Eyes, to cut off our right Hands: but what Reason can there be to deny ourselves any of these Enjoyments, as far as is consistent with preserving our Health, and prolonging our Lives, if we have no Expectations after Death? Nay if Men are contented to live a short and a merry Life, what Hurt is there in it, if Death puts an end to them?

— It forbids earthly Pride and Ambition, an Affectation of secular Honours and Power: But why must we submit to Meanness and Contempt in this World, if this be the only Scene of Action we shall ever be concern'd in? For a mean and base Spirit is no Virtue; and for the same Reason it can be no Virtue to be contented with a low Fortune, to be patient under Sufferings, which, if they will never be rewarded, is to be patiently miserable, and that is Stupidity and Folly: But to have our Conversation in Heaven, to live upon the Hopes of unseen Things, is Madness and Distraction, if there be no Heaven, no unseen Things for us— The Reasons of most of the Evangelical Commands must be fetched wholly from the other World, and a future Judgment.

Bishop
The PREFACE.

Bp. Wilkins Princ. of Nat. Rel. p. 67. If there be no such thing to be expected as Happiness or Misery hereafter; why then the only Business that Men are to take care of, is their present well-being in this World: there being nothing to be counted either good, or bad, but in order to that: Those things which we conceive to be conducible to it, being the only Duties; and all other things, which are cross to it, the only Sins. And therefore, whatever a Man’s Appetite shall incline him to, he ought not to deny himself in it (be the thing what it will) so he can have it, or do it, without probable Danger. Suppose it be Matter of Gain or Profit, he is dispos’d to; if he can cheat or steal securely, this will be so far from being a Fault, that it is plainly his Duty; that is, reasonable for him to do, because it is a proper Means to promote his chief End. And so for other Cases of Anger, Hatred, Revenge, &c: According to this Principle, a Man must take the first Opportunity of satisfying these Passions, by doing any kind of Mischief to the Person he is offended with; whether by false Accusation, or Perjury, or, (if need be) by poisoning or stabbing him; provided he can do these things so as to escape the Suspicion of others, and human Penalties.

Dr. Lucas, Enquiry after Happiness, Part 3. p. 245: ‘The Epicureans confin’d the Happiness of Man to this short Life; and by a probable Consequence resolv’d it ultimately into the Enjoyments of the Body. Ibid. p. 145. Without another Life, all other Motives to Vol. II. G Perfect.
Perfection will be insufficient. For though, generally speaking, such is the Contrivance of human Nature, &c.—Yet it is certain, that not only in many extraordinary Cases, there would be no Reward at all for Virtue, if there were not one reserv’d for it in another World, but also, in most Cases, if there were not a future Pleasure that did infinitely outweigh the Enjoyments of this Life, Men would see no Obligation to Perfection. For what should raise them above the Love of this World, if there were no other? or above the Love of the Body, if when they dy’d, they should be no more for ever?

For the Law of our Nature being, I humbly conceive, nothing else but the Law and Dictates of Reason: and the Business of Reason being, in this Respect at least, only to distinguish between Good and Evil, our Reason would talk to us at another rate, because it would proceed by different Principles: Good and Evil would then peradventure be different things [from what they are at present] for whatever would make for the Pleasure and Interest of this present World, would be good; and even Pleasure and Interest would not peradventure be the same thing then, as now: For the Soul would not challenge so distinct a Consideration and Provision then, as now: For it would not only be lawful, but wise for it to become sensual and worldly: and to the same pleasure and interest would minister to the Happiness of both Body and Soul, &c.

Were there no Life to come,
come, it would behove every Man to be con-
tent with, and make the most of this. Nor
do I at all doubt, but that Men may ma-
nage their Luxts so, as that they may not be
able to infer Reason enough to relinquish
them, from any Influence they have upon
their worldly Interest. Or if any one should
think it necessary to purchase a Pleasure by
shortening of his Life, or lessening his E-
state, I cannot see why he may not have
Reason on his Side: For a short Life and a
merry one, and, my Mind to me a Kingdom
is, would, upon the former Supposition, be
wise Proverbs: For, upon this Supposition,
the Pleasures of the Mind would be narrow
and faint, and the Checks of Conscience
none, [or] insignificant.

Bp. Pearson on the Creed, p. 304, 305. 'Such
is the Sweetness of our Sins, such the Con-
naturalness of our Corruptions, so great our
Confidence of Impunity here, that, except
we look'd for an Account hereafter, it were
unreasonable to expect that any Man should
forfake his Delights, renounce his Compli-
cencies by a severe Repentance, create a Bi-
terness to his own Soul — We are natu-
really inclined to follow the Bent of our own
Wills, and the Inclination of our own Hearts:
All external Rules and Prescriptions are bur-
thensome to us; and did not we look to
give an Account, we had no Reason to sa-
tisfy any other Desires than our own, &c.

Mr. Glanvill's Sermons, p. 278. ' If this
be all the Life of Man, [i.e. the only Life
he is to lead] ' his End and Happiness would
then
The PREFACE.

then be to provide for the Body, and the
Gratifications of its Senses.

Mr. Pemble's Sermon, p. 479. ' Poor is the
Contentment that can be found in Virtue
and Religion, if it stretch no farther than to
the end of this Life. Cut from a Man
his Hope in Christ for hereafter, and then the
Epicure's Counsel will seem good, Let us eat
and drink, for to morrow we die. Let us take
our Pleasure while we may. If we die as
Beasts, and come to nothing, then let us live
as Beasts too, &c. What avails us to joy in
Virtue and Religion? to follow an empty
Name of Goodness? when nothing is got
by it after Death, and for the Present, no-
thing worth the desiring? Let us restrain
our Eyes and our Hearts from no Pleasures
that may be procured; Let Virtue be only
our Stale to win Honour, where Men, out
of Error, esteem highly of it: Among o-
thers love we Vice, where Virtue is banish-
ed, &c. Good wholesome Counsel, if the
Day of our Death were the utmost Period of
our Time, beyond which no Happiness
were to be enjoyed!

Dr. Stradling's Sermons, p. 476. ' The Im-
mortality of the Soul once denied, the Concern for
it could not be much; it being not probable that
such Men should please themselves with a pretence
of Virtue, who denied the future Rewards of it.
And from such Premises that Conclusion men-
one'd by St. Paul could not but follow, Let us eat
and drink, for to morrow we die. It is but rea-
sensible to imagine that they, who thought they
should die like Beasts, should live like them;
The PREFACE.

Husband that Life the best they could, which should never return when once gone, and make it as pleasant as they saw it was short. Which, if there were no other Life to come, was, no doubt, a rational Course, and the biggest Wisdom, &c. P. 479. But here some may object, that if there were no God, no Life to come, yet there is so much Satisfaction in living according to the Rules of right Reason and Virtue, that even that Consideration should oblige Men to do so, and make Men most happy.

In answer to this Objection he confesses (p. 480.) That, to live according to the Rules of right Reason is most agreeable to human Nature, and conducing to Happiness in this Life; But adds——It may be questionable, whether a dry Platonical Idea of Virtue, perishing with our selves, or a bare moral Complacency in it, might, in the balance of Reason, weigh down those other more sensual Delights, which gratify our lower Faculties; or a severe and morose Virtue have Charms in it equal to all those various Pleasures which soothe and flatter our Appetites. And he soon after subjoins these admirable Words, which I do in a very particular manner recommend to the Consideration of the Writer of the Letter: Far be it from me to decry moral Virtue, which even Heathens have granted to be a Reward to itself; but surely, in the Case of Annihilation, very short of a complete one. And to cry it up, as some do, to the weakening of our Belief and Hope of the Immortality of the Soul, however at first blush it may seem plausible, is, in effect, no better than a subtle Invention to ruin Virtue by itself; since it cannot possibly...
The Preface.

possibly subsift but by the Belief and Support of another Life, &c. p. 481, 482, 483.

The Letter-writer (unknown as he is, and resolves to be) cannot, I persuade myself, even in his privacy, read these Citations without blushing, after the confident Charge he hath advanced against me, of preaching new Doctrine. If he had not any of these Passages in his Eye (as one would be charitably inclined to suspect) the Accusation is extremely rash; if he had, it is base and dishonest. Either way there is little room to hope for any Candor, or common Justice, in the Management of this Dispute, from a Man who lays the Foundation of his Reasonings in so notorious an Untruth.

St. Austin, as I find him cited by Grotius, was exactly of the same Sentiments. Augustinus, subletis praemii praemisque post hanc vitam, verum statutum ait a partibus Epicuri, in Matth. xvi. 24.

Laëntianus speaks very largely, and very emphatically to the same Purpose; where he argues against the Opinion of Epicurus concerning the Soul's Mortality. I will not swell this piece with a Translation of the Passages. Quis cum hoc affirmari audiat, vitiiis & sceleribus abstant? Nam, si periturae sunt animae, appetamus divitiias, ut omnes suavitates capere possimus. Quae si nobis desunt, ab is, qui habent, auferamus clam, dolo, vi; eo magis, si humanas res Deus nullus curat: quandocunque speis impunitatis arriferit, rapiamus, necemus—Voluptatibus igitur, quoquo modo possimus, serviamus. Brevi enim tempore nulli erimus omnino. Ergo nullum diem, nullum temporis
The PREFACE.

temporis punctum fluere nobis sine Voluptate patiamur; ne, quia ipsi quandoque perituri sumus, id ipsum, quod viximus, percat, Lib. 3. Sect. 17. Again, Virtus, soli homini data, magno argumento est, Immortales esse Animas; quae nec erit secundum naturam, si Anima extinguitur; hic enim praebenti vitae nocet, &c. Si ergo & prohibet ilis bonis hominem, quae naturaliter appetuntur, & ad sustinenda mala impellit, quae naturaliter fuguntur; ergo malum est Virtus, & inimica nature, sultumque judicare necessi est qui eam sequitur, quoniam se ipse ledit & fugiendo bona praebentia, & appetendo aequae mala sine spe fructus amplioris, &c. Lib. 7. Sect. 9.

Need I urge any farther Authorities? perhaps the Names of Mr. Locke, and Monf. Paschal, may be of greater weight with some Men than most of those I have mention'd; and therefore a few Lines, taken from either of their Writings, shall close these Citations.

Locke's Hum. Underft. Book 11. Ch. 21. Sect. 35. 1 Ed. If Men in this Life only have hope, if in this Life only they can enjoy, 'tis not strange, nor unreasonable, they should seek their Happiness, by avoiding all things that disease them here, and by preferring all that delight them; wherein it will be no wonder to find Variety and Difference: for if there be no Prospect beyond the Grave, the Inference is certainly right. Let us eat and drink, let us enjoy what we delight in, for to morrow we die.

Paschal, according to his way, hath rather hinted, than fully express'd the same thought. However, those who are acquainted with his manner of writing, will easily learn his opinion from what follows; 'Tis certain, that either the
Soul is mortal, or immortal. And the Rules of Morality will be entirely different according to the one, or the other of these Suppositions. Nevertheless the Philosophers treated of Morals without any regard to this Distinction. What a Degree of Blindness was this? All our Actions, and all our Thoughts ought to be conducted after so different a manner, according as there is, or is not an eternal Happiness to be hoped for, that it is impossible wisely to take a single Step in Life, without regulating it by this View — 'tis our great Interest, and our chief Duty, to satisfy ourselves on this Head, upon which our whole Conduct depends.

The Passages I have cited (though but few of many which might have been urg'd to the same purpose) may seem too large and numerous. But it became me effectually to remove this groundless charge of Novelty, with which I am loaded. I have the rather abounded in such Authorities as relate to the Notion, whereon I am said to build my two Positions, because it is but once, and then but briefly intimated in my Sermon: and therefore these Authorities may serve, not only to justify, but moreover to explain, and clear it; and, by

* Il est indubitable que l'ame est mortelle ou immortelle.
Cela doit mettre une différence entière dans la Morale. Et cependant les Philosophes ont conduit la Morale indépendamment de cela. Quel aveuglement étrange! ch.xxix.§.54.

† Toutes nos Actions, & toutes nos Pensées doivent prendre des tours si différents, selon qu'il y aura des biens Eternels à espérer, ou non, qu'il est impossible de faire une démarche avec fens & jugement, qu'en la reglant par la veue de ce point, qui doit être notre dernier objet. Ainsi notre premier interêt, & notre premier Devoir est, de nous éclaircir sur ce sujet, d'où depend toute notre conduite, Chap. 1.

that
The PREFACE.

that means, supply the Omission, which, consider-dering the short Bounds, within which the ar-gumentative part of my Discourse was neccessa-rily confin’d, I could not well avoid. And as to the Positions themselves, the Reader sees they are so far from being New, that there is (which I am not afham’d to own) nothing new even in my manner of handling them. The fame Instances, the same Mediums, that I em-ploy to illustrate them, are made use of also by Archbishop Tillotfon, Dr. Sherlock, Dr. Goodman, Mr. Pemble, Dr. Stradling, &c. Nor are these Affertions that dropt from their Pens by chance, but deliver’d by them in places where they profes to consider and state the Points in Que-estion; and where, yet, they have express’d themselves with (at leaft) as few Guards and Restrictions as I have done. It may, I think, even from hence be presum’d, that I am not much mistaken in what I have laid down, since I have fallen into like Thoughts with these Writers, without knowing (I am fure, without attending in the leaft to) what they had written on the Subject; especially, since I have the Honour fo exactly to agree with Archbishop Tillotfon, one who, in my poor Opinion, wrote, and reason’d as justly as any Man of his time.

II. It is plain that these Writers generally built their Opinions and Reasonings, on that very Text of St. Paul, which gave rise to my Discourse; and it being very probable that They, it is very probable also that I, have not mistaken his Sense; though the second Article of my Ac-cusation runs, That the Doctrine I have de-liver’d,
The PREFACE.

liver'd, is extremely foreign from the Design of the Apostle, on whom I fix it a.

Of the two Propositions, which I profess to maintain,

The First is this, that without Hope in another Life, Men would be more miserable than Beasts. Now this I am so far from fixing expressly on the Apostle, as the Letter-Writer affirms b, that he himself, in other Places, represents me, as only insinuating it to be agreeable to the Apostle's Purpose, tho' not necessarily implied in the Letter of the Text c: which is much nearer to the Truth; for it is with Regard to this Proposition that I profess to urge (what I call) the Concession of the Apostle somewhat farther than the Letter of the Text will carry me d. And therefore, after enlarging on this first Proposition, I conclude, by simply affirming the Truth e of it, without vouching the Authority of St. Paul, or even alluding to his Expressions: whereas I refer to both, at the Close of the second, and say, that 'on the Accounts [beforementioned] what the Apostle lays down in the Text, is evident and experimentally true; That, if in this Life only good Men had Hope, they were of all Men most miserable.' It is then an Artifice in him, to represent me as equally building these undoubted Truths on the Authority of the Apostle. I speak only of the undoubted Truth of the Apostle's Concession; and I expressly limit that Concession to the latter of these two Propositions, without entitling the Apostle to the former; for the Truth of which, I make my Self (not Him) answerable.

There
There is (I grant) room still left for a Caviller to misrepresent my Meaning; and therefore he tells me, that "I call the Argument, that great Argument for a future State, which is urg'd by St. Paul in the Words before us. But why must I needs call it so, as including that Proposition; since in the same Place I own, that I have enlarged on the Apostle's Argument, that is, extended it (as I elsewhere speak) somewhat farther than the Letter of the Text will carry me? Yes, but in my Paraphrase upon the Text, I explain those Words [We are of all Men most miserable] by these that follow [We Christians should be the most abandoned and wretched of Creatures]: and by Creatures, my sroward Interpreter will understand Beasts; forgetting that the Scriptural use of that Word determines it sometimes to Men; particularly in that Text where our Saviour commands his Disciples to preach the Gospel to every Creature: I suppose, he meant not, to the brute Creatures of the Air, the Sea, or the Field: For then, St. Francis, I am sure, would have obeyed this Command much better than either St. Paul, or St. Peter. By Creatures here, we are to understand, Reasonable Creatures; and so this perverse Gentleman might, if he pleas'd, have understood it, in that Passage of my Sermon; and have taken, what follows there, concerning all other Sorts and Sexes of Men, not as a distinct Proposition, but as a farther Explication only of what had preceded. Had he not been very eager to find out Mistakes in what I have said, he would not thus, in one place, have
strain'd my Words to such a Sense, as he owns, in another, they will not bear; nor have ventured to say, and unsay the same thing in a few Pages, rather than miss this small Occasion of a Cavil.

As to my second Proposition, That were there no Life [or, had we no hope of a better State] after this, the best Men would be often the most miserable [all other Sorts and Sects of Men having the Advantage of Us Christians, upon such a Supposition]. I do indeed fix it expressly on the Apostle; and am now ready to prove, that I have not falsely (or at all) mistaken his Meaning.

The Apostle's Words are, If in this Life only We have hope in Christ, We are of all Men most miserable. Wherein have I misapprehended him? Is it, because I suppose those Corinthians, whose Opinions he here encounters, to have disbelieved a future State, as well as the Resurrection of the Body? No Man, who reads St. Paul attentively, can suppose otherwise. Less cannot be signify'd even by that Phrase in the Text which speaks of them, as having Hope in Christ in this Life only. Sadducizing Christians, I suppose, they were, who said, There was no Resurrection, neither Angel nor Spirit; affirming perhaps with Hymenæus, and Philetus, that the Resurrection was past already, and that what our Saviour had taught on that Head, was not to be understood literally, but allegorically, of the new Birth of the Soul, and of its rising from the Death of Sin to the Life of Righteousness, by the Efficacy of the Christian Doctrine, and the Operation of a Divine Principle on
on the Hearts of Believers. The Sadducees * held (and so, it is likely, did these Corinthians) that Virtue and Vice were a sufficient Reward to themselves; and therefore, that future Rewards and Punishments were not necessary to justify the present Distributions of Providence. However, that they denied a Future State, either expressly, or by plain consequence, is evident from several of St. Paul's Reasonings in this Chapter, which are of no Force but only upon that Supposition; as Origen, in his Comments on St. Matthew, largely and irrefragably proves a. It will not be necessary to produce a p. 486; his Words, since the Letter-Writer seems to 487; have yielded this Point, where he owns, that St. Paul is here arguing against some weak Persons in the Church at Corinth, who professed to believe in Jesus Christ, and yet denied the general Resurrection, and consequently (says he) the Rewards of a future State b. b L. p. 6;

Am I then mistaken in extending the Apostle's Assertions to Christians in general? WE are of all Men most miserable! that is, You, and I, and All, who profess to live up to the strict Rules of the Christian Institution, without a future Prospect! The Letter-writer shall vouch for me in this respect also: For he thus expounds the Word, WE, We Christians c, All d L. p. 10; who now believe in Christ; in which Exposition he is so constant and uniform e, that I need p. 16, 17, not, in order to any Advantage I may draw 18, 19.


from
from thence in the present Dispute, be at the Trouble of proving the Truth of it.

Thus far then we are agreed. In what Points do we differ? why chiefly, if not wholly, in this; that I make that a general Proposition, and accommodate it to all Times, which the Apostle hath made a particular one, by accommodating it manifestly to the Times of the bitterest Persecution<sup>a</sup>; what he says, being spoken merely with respect to the bitter Sufferings the Profession of Christianity then expos'd its Professors to<sup>b</sup>: Upon this Head I join Issue with him; and proceed therefore to prove, that St. Paul's Affertion is not (as he affirms) limited to the Times of the most grievous Persecution<sup>c</sup>. That it includes them, I have own'd<sup>d</sup>, but that it is confin'd to them I absolutely deny; and I think with good Reason. For, as to the Words themselves, there is nothing in them that sounds that way; or points particularly at the Case of Persecution. 'Tis own'd, that the Apostle speaks here of Christians in general, that is, of Christians, as distinguish'd from other Sects and Professions of Men: why must these Christians needs be consider'd, as in a suffering State? What Ground, what Colour is there for such a Restriction? There are but two things urg'd, or insinuated by the Letter-Writer in behalf of it. And one of them is, the Coherence of the Text with the preceding Verse, where mention is made of those who were fallen asleep in Christ; which Expression he would willingly fo understand, as if it were intended particularly to signify the Martyrs, who had laid down their Lives for Christ's sake, and dy'd, not only in his Faith,
Faith, but for it. And indeed if the Apostle be there speaking of the Martyrs, and their Sufferings, it will be natural to understand what follows, in the next Verse, of a suffering State, and of that only. But this Restriction is altogether as groundless as the former. For by those who were fallen asleep in Christ, the Apostle manifestly means, not the Martyrs alone, but all departed Christians; as our learned Gataker proves* from various Authorities, which I forbear to repeat, because the thing is otherwise sufficiently evident; for the τοις κοιμηθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ, v. 18. are plainly oppos'd to those who were still living, of whom the Apostle spake in the 17th Verse. And therefore he adds (v. 20.) that Christ, by rising, became the first Fruits of them that slept, τῶν κεκοιμημένων. Now Christ was not the first Fruits of the Resurrection, in respect of the Martyrs only, but of All who died in the Christian Faith; and therefore they, who were fallen asleep in Christ, must comprehend all that died in the Faith of Christ, whether by Martyrdom, or otherwise. The Apostle employs the same Word twice more in this Chapter, v. 6. where he affirms Christ, after his Resurrection, to have been seen by five hundred Brethren at once; of whom (says he) the greater Part remain unto this present; but some are fallen asleep, ἐκοιμηθοῦσαν. Again, ver. 51. We shall not all sleep, (ἐκοιμηθοῦσαν) but we shall all be changed. In both these Places, Sleeping are oppos'd to Living, not to Martyr'd Christians; and so likewise, 1 Thes. iv. 15. We which are

alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them who are asleep, τὰς κοιμηθέντας. Nor is there a single Passage in the New Testament *, where the Word (taken in its metaphorical Sense) signifies otherwise. For as to what is said of St. Stephen, that he fell asleep, ἐκοιμήθη, (Acts vii. 60.) it means no more than that he died; though, from the Circumstances of his Death, before related, it appears, that he died by Martyrdom.

I was willing to clear the Sense of this Phrase beyond Dispute, because, leading to the Assertion of the Text, it is of great use to shew the Extent of it, and to prove that it is not limited to the Times of the most grievous Persecution, as this Author peremptorily affirms a. However, he hath still another Evidence of this Limitation in reserve. For, 'that St. Paul speaks this merely with respect to the bitter Sufferings the Profession of Christianity expos'd its Professors to, is (he says) evident from Verses 30, 31, 32 b.' The Words of which run thus: And [if the Dead rise not at all] why stand we in Jeopardy every Hour? I protest by your rejoicing, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, that I die daily. If after the manner of Men I have fought with Beasts at Ephesus, what profiteth it me, if the Dead rise not? Let us eat, and drink, for to morrow we die. That St. Paul in these Verses, argues for the Resurrection and a future State, from the grievous Sufferings of Christians, is indeed evident; but it is evident

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* See Matt. xxvii. 52. John ix. 11. Acts xiii. 36. 1 Cor. vii. 39. 1 Cor. xi. 30. 1 Thes. iv. 13, 14. 2 Pet. iii. 4.

from hence, that he argued from the very same Topick, eleven Verses before, where nothing of that kind is express'd, or intimated? I should rather think, that he proceeds here to prove his Point by a new Medium; not before particularly insisted on. This, as it is in itself most probable, so is it most agreeable to St. Paul's manner of handling the present Argument. For however his Reasonings in these, and other parts of this Chapter may, upon a slight view of them; seem to fall in with each other; yet upon a closer Examination, we shall find them to have been propos'd by him with great Variety, and Distinction.

But we will suppose, that the Apostle argues from the same Medium in both these Places, and that the 30th, 31st, and 32d Verses are a bare Comment on his Assertion in the 29th; it will even from hence appear, that his Assertion is not limited to the Case of Persecution, because, in the last of these three Verses, there is somewhat laid down, inconsistent with the supposal of such a Limitation. For the Apostle there plainly allows, that if the Dead rise not, it might be reasonable to resolve with the Men of this World, Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die. 'Let us please and gratify our selves with what we like best, and be as easy as we can in this World, since we have no Prospect of another.

His Doctrine here is far from being pointed on the particular Case of Persecution: it relates to the ordinary and quiet Course of Things; and manifestly implies, that, without Hope in another Life, the Austerities of Religion would
be an unnecessary Entrenchment on the Happiness of those, who ty’d themselves up to the strict Practice of them: that is, the best Men would by this means [as well as by reason of the Sufferings to which they are expos’d] become the [least happy, or the] most miserable. And this is the very thing that I have affirm’d, in my second Proposition; except only, that I have qualify’d it with the Word, often; thereby making allowance for those Cases, wherein Men of excellent Minds may possibly, by a long Practice of Virtue, have render’d even the Heights and Rigours of it delightful, and brought their Duty and Happiness to be in every Case consistent, without attending to the Rewards of a future State. But these Instances are so rare, that the Apostle seems to have overlooked them in his Decision; and therefore declares in general, that, if the Dead rise not, the Inference would be just; Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die. And his Steps therefore, I followed, his Doctrine I reafferted, when I thus explained these Words in my Sermon, ’Supposing the present to be the only Life we are to lead, I see not but that Happiness or Misery might be measured from pleasing or painful Sensations.’ Which being granted, it will follow, that since Beasts have a manifest Advantage of Men, in these Respects, they may be call’d the happier Creature of the two, as enjoying greater Pleasures, allay’d with fewer Pains: and so, even my first Proposition, tho’ it be not contain’d expressly in St. Paul’s Words, yet will be found perfectly agreeable to his Doctrine, and manner of Reasoning.
Let me add one thing, to prevent any Cavil, which may be rais’d about the Sense of these Words; that this Verse is pointed wrong in our English Translation; for in the Original it was read otherwise; the first Member of the Sentence ending with the Words, What advantagest it me? and the next beginning with those, If the Dead rise not, [If after the manner of Men I have fought with Beasts at Ephesus, what advantagest it me? If the Dead rise not, Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.] This way of reading the Words completes the Sense of the last Clause, which would otherwise be too abrupt, and disburthens the first of a double [if] whereby the Construction is render’d intricate.

Thus therefore most of the Greek Exploiters divide the Verse, particularly St. Chrysostome, and Theophylact. Thus the Pseudo-Ignatius (and his two antient Interpreters) in the Epistle ad Tarsenses, read it*; thus St. Jerome cites it, in his Comments †; thus the Arabick Version hath render’d it; nor doth it appear that the vulgar Latin read it otherwise: for the eldeft MSS. of that Version being in Capitals, without any Distinction of Words, the present way of pointing them is of no Authority. Daniel’s Edition of Beza’s N. T. so divides the Verse, both in the Greek, and in his Version. Piscator, therefore, ‡ Crellius, and others, justly contend for this Division; and who pleases may, in the latter of these, see very convincing Reasons for it. However, without such

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† Isaiab xxii 13
a Division, the Sense of the Apostle is still the same, and sufficiently plain; as I might shew from the Testimony of various Expositors, if that were requisite. I shall only place their Names at the Bottom*; and the Reader may be assur'd, that All of them, though they follow the usual way of pointing this Verse, yet suppose the Apostle to have allowed the Epicure's Maxim to be good, if so be there were no Resurrection. And the Terms, in which several of them deliver his Meaning in this Case, are much fuller and stronger than any I have employ'd to that purpose in my Sermon.

As far therefore as the Context can guide us into the Meaning of St. Paul, we may now rest assur'd, that he did not intend to limit the Assertion of the Text merely to the Times of most grievous Persecution.

Indeed, were his Assertion so limited, his Argument would not be conclusive; Christians not being of all Men most miserable, merely on the Account of their Persecutions and Sufferings: for the Jews had been then, and have been since, persecuted for adhering to their Religion in (at least) an equal Degree with the Christians. No one can doubt of this, who knows the Story of that People, their Sufferings, during their several Captivities, and under

* Theodoret.
Oecumenius.
Erafminus.
Luther.
Zuinglius.
Marlorat.

Tillem. Heswlius.
Vorltius.
Andr. Hyperius.
Episcopius, de lib. Arbitr. cap. 4.

their
The PREFACE.

their several Conquerors, and particularly in the Times of the Maccabees. Of these Sufferings St. Paul hath given a very copious and moving Description in the 11th Chapter of his Epistle to the Hebrews, in order to fortify the new-converted Jews, by proposing to them the heroic Patterns of Patience under Affliction, and Constancy in Religion, which had been set by their Forefathers: implying certainly, that the Instances of Constancy and Patience which he propos'd, were as remarkable as those to which he invited Christians by the means of them. In later Ages, tho' the Persecutions of Christians were very great, yet those of the Jews were not less violent. For, after the miserable Slaughter made of them at the Destruction of Jerusalem, they were scattered into all Corners of the Earth, driven from one Kingdom to another, oppress'd, spoil'd, and detested every where; and sometimes even massacred, and extirpated. Persecutions therefore having been the common and equal Lot of Jews and Christians; Christians cannot by St. Paul be represented, as of all Men most miserable, merely on the Account of those Persecutions. It must be somewhat peculiar to the Evangelic Institution, somewhat that distinguishes the Christian Scheme of Duty from all others, which gave Rife to this Decision of the Apostle: and that plainly is, the Sublimity and Rigour of those Precepts of Mortification and Self-denial, by which Christians are oblig'd to walk, to govern their inward Thoughts as strictly as their outward Actions, to refist their dearest Appetites, and most natural Inclinations, and to taste even the
The PREFACE.

the Innocent and allow'd Pleasures of Life but sparingly; in a Word, to live, as it were, out of the Body, even while they continue in it, and are chain'd to it. Now, no Struggle of this kind can be joyous, but grievous, while it lasts: and it lasts usually, in some Degree, or other, as long as Life itself; a complete Mastery of our Appetites being what the best of Men in this Life do very rarely attain. So that the State of Christians, even when they are not actually persecuted, is yet a perpetual State of Warfare, and voluntary Sufferings; such as neither the Professors of the Jewish Religion, nor of any other Religion, but that of Christ, were ever bound to undergo. And this Consideration, added to that of the external Sufferings to which Christians are expos'd, is indeed sufficient (tho' those Sufferings, in themselves consider'd, be not sufficient) to justify the Apostle's Assertion, that, without Hope in another Life, Christians would be the (least happy or) most miserable of all Men.

But if the Apostle's Argument (when limited to a State of Persecution) be not conclusive in general; it is much less so with respect to those Corinthians, to whom it is particularly address'd, and who gave rise to that Supposition in the Text, on which his Inference is there founded. For how can an Assertion, relating merely to a bitter State of Persecution, include the Case of those Corinthians, who neither then were, nor had ever been in such a State, since the Gospel was first planted among them? That the Corinthians had been then grievously (or at all) persecuted, appears not from Ecclesiastical History,
The PREFACE.

History, or the sacred Writings. On the contrary, they are represented by the Apostle himself in this very Epistle, as abounding in Wealth and Ease, and free from all external Presurces, and Troubles. *Now ye are full, now ye are rich (says he) ye have reigned as Kings without us.* 1 Cor. iv. 8. The Schisms, and Divisions, the heinous Impurities, the Intemperance, and Litigiousness, with which he reproaches some of them, are sufficient Evidences that they had not as yet been under any general Persecution; for these are the Vices of Prosperity and Abundance. The only Difficulty they seem then to have lain under, was a Temptation to partake of the publick Feasts of their Fellow-Citizens, in which they fed upon the Sacrifices offer'd to Idols. These Entertainments were very grateful to a People, naturally Lovers of Pleasure, and bred up in Ease and Luxury, as those of Corinth were: and perhaps the Christians of that place might find themselves under some little Inconveniences, for refusing to partake of them. But surely nothing of this kind could deserve the Name of an Affliction, much less of a Persecution; and therefore with relation to these, and all other Trials of their Steadfastness, which they had hitherto met with, the Apostle expressly affirms, that no Temptation (i. e. no

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a Of their calm, plentiful, and prosperous Estate, many Years afterwards, St. Clement in his Epistle to the Corinthians witnesses — ἀκακα καὶ πλατυμιᾶς (says he) ἐμοῦ ὑπίν, (and the ill use they made of it follows) καὶ ἐπετελέσθη τὸ ρηγαμμένον, ἔραγεν, καὶ ἑπτείν, καὶ ἐπατνυθεὶ, καὶ ἐπαυχόνθ, καὶ ἐπαιπτεινοῖς, ἐπαιπτεινοῖς. Ἐν τοῖς ζύλοις, καὶ ἐπίς, καὶ παῖς, καὶ ὑπερτίτας. C. Clement. Ep. Jun. p. 4. 5.
The PREFACE.

Affliktion; for so the Word, ἀναγκασμός, often signifies in the N. T.) had taken them, but such as was common to Man, that is, none but what was ordinary, and easy to be born.

These being the Circumstances under which the Corinthians then were, and the Argument, which the Apostle here advances in behalf of a future State, being intended to reach their particular Case; can we think it possible, that he should draw it merely from a State of grievous Sufferings, and bitter Persecutions, to which those Corinthians were utter Strangers? No certainly, when he concludes the Corinthian Christians more miserable than other Men, who had not embrac'd Christianity; it must be on the Account of somewhat, which, as Christians, they had actually felt; at least, not purely for a Reason, the Force of which they had no ways experienc'd.

He argues indeed afterwards, in the same Chapter, from the Head of Persecution. But when he doth so, we may observe, that, with great propriety and justness, he confines his Reflections of that kind to Himself, and his own particular Sufferings. 'Tis He that fought with Beasts at Ephesus, that dy'd daily, that was in Jeopardy every Hour, and it is his own Folly that he there proclaims, and condemns, if he suffered all this, without a well-grounded hope of a future Reward; but he doth not endeavour (there, or elsewhere) to prove the Corinthians, Fools, on the Account (much less, solely on the Account) of Sufferings which they had never undergone.
The PREFACE.

Upon the whole therefore, I conclude, that, when St. Paul says, *If in this Life only we have hope in Christ, We are of all Men most miserable*; he there considers Christians, as denying themselves in the Pleasures and Advantages of this World, for the sake of Christ, and not merely as persecuted for their Christianity.

Nothing now remains toward making good this Interpretation of St. Paul's Words, but to shew that the Stream of Expositors falls in with it. And so indeed it doth: for this Text hath been thus expounded by Writers both Antient and Modern; Greek and Latin; by Papists and Protestants; Lutherans and Calvinists; by Divines of the Church of England, and by those who separated from her Communion. What our own Divines have said in this Case, (even where they profes'd to explain the Text) I have amply shewn: As to other Authorities, the narrow bounds of a Preface (already too much extended) will not allow me to recite them in Terms. I can only refer the Reader to the Authors themselves, who speak very home to the Point, and do all of them represent the Apostle's Decision as built on the peculiar Disadvantages, which Christians lie under, in point of worldly Enjoyments, and not as restrained

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a I now add to them, Assemblies Notes upon the Place. Gataker Advers. cap. 17. Jackson Vol. 3 p. 456.

Episcopius de lib. Arb. c. 4. Mr. Locke.
merely to a State of Persecution. And these (had I room to produce them) would be so many fresh Evidences of the Rashness, or Insincerity of my Accuser, where he presents the Assertions, by me laid down, to be such as were never before seriously maintain'd by any Person of Virtue and Understanding.

III. Having now fully considered the two first Articles of his Charge, and shewn, that my Doctrine is so far from being new, that it is maintain'd by the most pious and judicious Pens, and is exactly agreeable to the Sense of St. Paul; I am the less concern'd thoroughly to examine what is said of it under the 3d Head of Accusation, viz. that it is false and pernicious in itself. For if the Authority of these eminent Writers, and of the blessed Apostle himself will not justify it in that respect, nothing else will. Besides, in the Passages which I have before cited at large from our own Divines, most of the Reflections and Reasonings, which make out the Truth of both my Positions, are already suggested; and therefore need not here be repeated and applied to every little Exception made by this Author. Nor hath he himself put me under any Necessity of doing it, by his Method of attacking my Doctrine: for he pretends only to prove it false, by offering some Observations on my manner of proceeding in the Argument I have undertaken: As if Observations on my manner of proceeding in this Argument, would determine the Truth or Falsity of the Argument itself! And yet this is the Mark, at which his Ten grave Observations chiefly aim: not to prove the Doctrine itself false, but my
The  PREFACE.

Defence of it weak and improper. And therefore he proposes every one of them with some Phrases of Admiration, which may be worthy of the curious Reader’s Perusal. 1. It hath (he says) a very strange Appearance; and is a very strange way of proceeding a. 2. It is likewise as unaccountable b. — 3. It is again wonderful c. d. e. — 4. It is wonderful strange d, it is very strange e. — 5. On the other hand, it is equally strange f. e. p. 27. — 6. It is likewise unaccountable g. — 7. It is extremely unaccountable h. — 8. It looks very strange and unaccountable i. — 9. It is likewise very unaccountable k. — 10. Last of all, be cannot but think it very strange l. — Now all these Exclamations of strange! wonderful! unaccountable! (manag’d with so happy a Variety of Expression) have plainly a personal View; and so have the Reflections themselves, which are ush’d by them, being intended rather to disparage Me, than disprove my Doctrine; and indeed, to disprove the one, only by disparaging the other. How this is consistent with his solemn Assurances, of being acted by no other Principle but a Desire that the Truth may be known in so important a Matter m, I do not apprehend; and must have leave to tell this Exclaimer, in my turn, that, if that were his real Aim, his manner of proceeding is very strange, wonderful, and unaccountable! what tendency hath it towards a Discovery of Truth in this important Matter, to spend two Pages n in proving, that when I call the Text, a Concession of the Apostle, I speak improperly? surely the Fortunes of Greece do not depend upon such Criticisms as these! the Merits of our Dispute are no ways concerned in my use of an improper Expression!
The PREFACE.

Expression! which after all, is not so improper, it seems, but that the Letter-Writer himself vouchsafes to employ it in the very same Sense, and upon the very same Occasion, a very few Pages afterwards; where, having produced what he calls my Explication of the Text, he adds, This is in Truth a Concession. And if it be, so also is the Text itself, in that Sense at least wherein I understand it.

But to let this (and some other such material Remarks) pass——If there be any thing in his ten Observations, which deserves a Reply, it is what he hath urg'd in the Fourth of them; which seems indeed to be directly level'd against the Truth of my Doctrine. And because it contains in it the Sum of what he hath elsewhere loosely scattered to the same Purpose, and will give me an Opportunity of proposing at one View, and briefly vindicating, what I take to be the very Truth in this important Matter, it shall therefore be particularly consider'd. He there observes, that 'The chief Happiness of any Being, in whatsoever State it is, or of what-foever Duration its Life is, must result from the most excellent Parts of its Constitution; that the Happiness of a Being, made capable of imitating God, though for never so short a time, must consist in that Imitation; that Virtue is the Imitation of God, and therefore must be the Happiness of Man: That the chief Happiness of a reasonable Creature must consist in living as Reason directs, whether he lives one Day, or to Eternity; whether he lives in this State only, or in another afterwards; whether he hath Inclinations to the contrary or not, pro-
The PREFACE.

vided they be such as may be conquer'd. For neither can the Time of his Duration, nor the Tendency of such Inclinations, alter any thing in this Matter, unless to make Virtue more difficult; which doth not destroy the Excellence of it, and present Happiness resulting from it, but enhance and improve it. Besides on the other hand, the Practice of Vice, though it be with the Inclination, yet is against Reason and Conscience.

These are his Words; to which I reply—

1. That if this Argument proves any thing, it proves too much; even that a Man may be happy under the greatest bodily Pains, and the most grievous Persecutions. For it is certain, that, notwithstanding such Pains and Persecutions, he may still preferve his Virtue: and if the Practice of Virtue be the Happiness of Man (Happiness itself, as he elsewhere speaks) then those Pains and Persecutions, not robbing him of his Virtue, would not rob him of his Happiness. This is too romantick and absurd a Doctrine to deserve a serious Confutation: And therefore I shall dismiss it with the Words of Archbishop Tillotson; Though some Men have been so fantastically obstinate, as against the Reason and Common-Sense of Mankind, to maintain this Paradox, That a wise Man may be as happy upon the Rack, or in Phalaris his Bull, as in the greatest Ease and Freedom from Pain that can be imagined; Yet Nature cries Shame of this Hypocrify; and there are none of those wise Men, they speak of, who were ever such Fools as to try the Experiment.

2. If
The PREFACE.

2. If we consider the Being of Man, as circumscribed within the Bounds of this Life, I deny that his chief Happiness results from the most excellent part of his Constitution (as those Words are intended to exclude all Regard for the Pleasures of the Body): For it results, not from any one Part, but from the Whole. The chief Happiness of a Creature, compos'd of Body and Soul, and design'd for this Life only, is, to be as happy as it can be, during this Life, both in Body and Soul: And the more and greater Pleasure of both kinds it enjoys (which can be rendred consistent with each other) the more entire and perfect is its Happiness. I grant indeed,

3. That the chief Happiness of a reasonable Creature must consist in living as Reason directts, whether he lives one Day, or to Eternity. But had we no hope in another Life, the Directions of Reason for our Conduct in this, would not be the same, as they are now. Reason would then direct us to do every thing, in which we delighted; to deny ourselves no Pleasures, which Inclination, Custom, or Opinion prompted us to take; so it did not otherwise interfere with our Eafe, with our Health, our Reputation, and Convenience; that is, so Men judg'd upon the whole, that is would conduce more to their Happiness to indulge themselves in such or such Pleasures, than to forbear them. And how falsly the greatest Part of Mankind would, through the corrupt Tendency of their Nature, and the perpetual Solicitations of the Objects of Sense, judge in such a Case, I need not say. And whenever they judg'd wrong, there would be
be no sure way of setting them right; that is, of arguing them out of their Taste and Experience, to which they would always retreat and appeal, as to the sure Test and Measure of Happiness. The Restraints of Conscience, in such a State, would no ways check Men in their Pursuits: For Conscience being nothing but the Judgment which a Man passeth on the Reasonableness, or Unreasonableness of his own Actions, and that being to be measured from the Subserviency of those Actions to his present Happiness; whatever appeared to him, upon the best Judgment he could frame, necessary to his present Happiness, would appear highly reasonable; and his Conscience would be so far from blaming, that it would approve his Pursuit of it; nay, it would blame him for not pursuing it. And therefore,

4. To tell Mankind, in such a State as this, that their supreme Felicity consisted in the Imitation of God, would be to talk to them in a Language which they would not relish, or understand. For how should a poor imperfect Creature, compos'd of Body, as well as Spirit, and design'd for this material World only, think itself obliged, or any ways able, to imitate an eternal, infinite-pure and perfect Mind? or place its Happiness in copying Excellencies, which human Life is too short, and human Nature too weak to reach? How should a Soul, made to inhabit Flesh and Blood, and to perish together with it, judge it reasonable, or possible, to live above the Desires and Infirmities of Flesh and Blood? How should one part of the Man be induc'd to neglect and for-
The PREFACE.

get the other, in order to arrive at a Divine Perfection and Resemblance, which (not hoping to reach) it would scarce think itself design'd to pursue? No, the Rule of imitating God can never be successfully propos'd to Men, but upon Christian Principles, such as these; that this World is a Place, not of Rest and Happiness, but of Discipline and Trial; where we are to be train'd up for another and more perfect State, and to qualify our selves for the divine Enjoyments of it, by resisting and subduing our bodily Appetites and Inclinations; a State, into which Flesh and Blood shall not enter, where our present Struggles shall be rewarded with complete Conquests, and our Imitation of God end in the undisturbed Fruition of him to all Eternity. Upon these Principles indeed it is highly reasonable to imitate God: but if we are design'd to live only in these Bodies, and in this World, what should hinder Us from endeavouring to make the best of both? and from coming to the Conclusion mention'd (and not disapproved) by the Apostle; Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die?

5. I deny not, after all, but that, even in such a State as this, the Pleasures of Virtue would be superior to those of Vice, and justly preferable, upon the Comparison; the Pleasures, I mean, of a mature and confirm'd Habit of Virtue, not of the lower and imperfect Degrees of it. Such an Habit, once acquir'd, would indeed afford the Professors of it greater Satisfactions than any the Wicked and Licentious did, or could en-
joy,
joy. But how few would judge thus rightly of Virtue at a Distance? How much fewer would be at the Pains of acquiring such an Habit, and of conquering all the Reluctancies and Difficulties, that lay in the Way towards it? And, till that were done, the strict Practice of Virtue would be entirely pleasing: to be sure, no part of the Pleasure of it would consist in the Struggle itself; and therefore I am much at a Loss to know, what the Letter-writer meant by the following Assertion, that the Difficulty of [attaining and practising] Virtue doth not destroy the present Happiness resulting from it, but enhance and improve it. This I take to be a Stoical Rant, without any Foundation in the Nature of Man, or the Reason of things. For no Practice whatsoever can be attended with present Happiness, any farther than it is easy and delightful to the Doer; and what is difficult to be done, cannot be easy and delightful, while it is doing.—Unless when those Difficulties are lost and swallowed up in the sweet Hope of a better State, which we are sure of attaining by the Means of them. Where once such a Persuasion as this is well fix’d, I grant it will smooth all the Roughness of the Way, that leads to Happiness, and render all the Conflicts we maintain with our Lufts and Passions pleasing: but surely, without the Hopes of such a State, the mere Prospect of the Pleasures which Virtue in this Life may yield, would scarce make the Struggle itself delightful to those who were Strangers to such Pleasures.
Thus far, in answer to his fourth Remark, which contains the Grounds of his Doctrine, and offers at somewhat towards the disproof of mine. As to the rest of his Observations on my manner of proceeding in the present Argument, were it worth while to reduce them from their present Confusion into some Order, they might be rang'd and consider'd under three Heads, my Omissions, my Inconsistencies, and the ill Consequences of my Doctrine. My Omissions are confess'd, for I did not write a Treatise, but a few Pages only on the Subject; which I handled with particular Views, and pretended not to exhaust. Whether any of the Reasonings by me employ'd, are inconsistent with each other, I securely leave to the Judgment of the Reader, who hath now, toward the latter end of this Volume, the argumentative Part of that Sermon before him, verbatim, as it was first printed. But the ill Consequences of my Doctrine, which he objects, deserve to be a little consider'd.

My Doctrine is, as I have endeavoured to shew, the very same with that of St. Paul; and if this hath been made out, the same ill Consequences are equally chargeable upon both, and He too may be said to have made Concessions to the Cause of Vice, by allowing, that if the Dead rise not, the Inference would be just, Let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die. All that needs be done toward justifying the Apostle, (and my self, by his means) is, to open the Design and Manner of his Reasoning. He is there making use of that sort of Argument, which, in order to prove a Doctrine
trine true, supposes the contrary Doctrine to be true; and then shews, what Absurdities follow, upon such a Supposition: and the greater those Absurdities are, the more strongly do they evince the Falsity of that Supposition, from whence they flow, and, consequently, the Truth of the Doctrine let aside by that Supposition. Thus, in the present case, the more absurd it is to affirm, that Beasts have the Advantage of Men, and bad Men of good, in point of Happiness; or that a sensual Life may be preferred to a severe and rigid Virtue; the more clearly doth the Folly, and Falshood of that Supposition appear, which is the Parent of these wild Absurdities, viz. that We have hope in this Life only; and the Falshood of that Supposition being prov'd, proves the Truth of the contrary Doctrine, which was design'd to be establish'd. Now these very Absurdities, are by the Letter-writer represented as Concessions to the Cause of Vice, when indeed they are employed by me, and do in themselves tend, to confirm the Truth of a capital Article in Religion, upon which (as I verily think) the whole Cause of Virtue depends. It may suffice to have given this short, but full Answer to all the ill Consequences he hath vainly endeavoured to fasten on my Doctrine; and which are in truth so far from being ill Consequences of my Doctrine, that they are Consequences only of that false Supposition, which I advanced, in order to disprove it, and, by that means, to prove the Truth of my Doctrine. If the Letter-Writer was sincere in this part of his Charge, he must be contented
to bear the Reproach of understanding nothing of Logick, or good Sense; an Imputation, which I find he looks upon as carrying a greater Absurdity in it, than even any thing I have said in my Sermon!

I doubt, whether he can as easily get rid of the ill Consequences of his Doctrine; which manifestly tends to shew, That there is no need of a future State, to set right the unequal Distribution of Happiness in this Life. And if once this be allow'd, we give up the very best Argument for such a State, with which mere Reason furnishes us. And of what use that Concession can be to the Cause of Virtue, this pretended Patron of it will be pleased to tell us. Had he substituted any other Argument for a Future State, in the Room of this, he thus endeavours to weaken; had he once, throughout his Pamphlet, directly and plainly affirm'd, that any convincing Evidence of such a State was to be had from Reason alone, or that even the bitter Sufferings of good Men were sufficient to prove it; his Conduct would have been so much the more excusable: But he hath offer'd at nothing of this kind.

Once indeed (in a very odd and wary manner) he says, I have heard the Sufferings and Afflictions of many good Men here below, made an Argument that, in another State, all the Virtuous shall have the outward, as well as inward Tokens of God's Favour. But we are left at a Loss to know, whether he approves the Argument, he thus heard; whether he thinks it a good Argument for a future State, as well as a Proof of what shall happen in such a State, if such a State

\[a\text{ L. p. 16.} \]

\[b\text{ L. p. 32.} \]
State there should be: He says not, whether a future State be, in his Opinion, necessary, in order to a Manifestation of these outward Tokens of God's Favour; or whether the inward Tokens of it, bestow'd in this Life, may not suffice to all the purposes of Virtue.

In another place, he mentions the Presumptions of Reason, and owns, that our Lord's Resurrection, his Assurances of a FUTURE STATE, and his Miracles, ADDED to these Presumptions (such is his manner of Speech) are sufficient (for what? why) to satisfy all that are willing to listen to Truth. But of what Truth they are to be satisfy'd; and, if it be the Truth of a Future State, what Interest They are to have in it, and what Right They have to it, he cares not expressly to say. And, as to these Presumptions of Reason, he gives us no account of them, what they are, or whence they arise. On the contrary, he hath all along employed such Reasonings, as if true, are strong Presumptions against a Future State. For he supposes Virtue to be a sufficient Reward to itself in this Life: It is the Imitation of God (he says) and therefore must be the Happiness of Man; nay, the Practice of Virtue is Happiness itself. And if so, then it is not necessary that a future Reward should be reserv'd for Virtue; for it hath a sufficient Reward already. A virtuous Heathen is, at this rate, as happy as a virtuous Christian; a Man without the Prospect of another World, is as happy as with it: for if the Practice of Virtue be Happiness itself, he that possesseth Happiness itself can, by no other Considerations, or Views, have
The Preface.

have any *Addition* made to his Happiness. If
the Doctrine of the Letter be true, This
World may be our Home, and not the Place
of our Pilgrimage, as we Christians think, and
call it: for our present State is, it seems, a
State of Fruition and Felicity, not a State of
Preparation and Trial; and, should there be
no other Life, yet such a Supposition will not
reflect on the Justice, or Goodness of God,
which are sufficiently vindicated by his wise
Distribution of Good and Evil in this Life,
and by that Pleasure and Pain, with which
Virtue and Vice are severally and inseparably
attended.

Now these Principles do, as I conceive, tend
to subvert the Belief of a Future State; and
have therefore been generally entertain'd by
all those who doubted of the reality of such
a State, or expressly disbelieve'd it, without
shaking off at the same time the Obligations
of Morality. Such, particularly, were the
Stoics, who first brought these Tenets into Re-
pute and Fashion: An Atheistical Sect of Phi-
losophers, that held the World to be God:
and having no certain Persuasion, much less
Evidence, of another Life, and yet desiring
to be thought Lovers of Virtue, knew not how
to defend its Cause, but by affirming that
Virtue was its own Reward; and the Practice of
it, Happiness itself; such an Happiness, as no
Afflictions, no Torments, which befel a Man,
could deprive him of, or any ways diminish.
I will not argue against such wild *Paradoxes* as
these: the excellent Words I have once al-
ready cited\(^a\), are a sufficient Reply to them—

\(^a\) Pref. p. 32.
Thus to cry up Virtue, to the weakening our Belief and Hope of the Immortality of the Soul, however at first blush it may seem plausible, is in effect no better than a subtle Invention to ruin Virtue by it self, since it cannot possibly subsist but by the Belief and Support of another Life.

Whether the Letter-writer intended, by what he hath wrote, to undermine this Belief, is left to God, and his own Conscience. Sure I am, there are several Passages in his Piece (besides those I have mention’d) which look that way; and require a great deal of Candor to be interpreted in such a Sense, as doth not reflect on the Certainty of this great Article of all Religion. For he is not afraid to say, that he much questions, whether ever there was, or can be a Persecution, merely for the Sake of the moral Virtues of any Person. A Doubt, which shakes the only moral Evidence of a future State, which he can any ways be suppos’d to allow of: For if Virtue, as Virtue, be not persecuted here, there is certainly (upon his Principles) no reason for rewarding it hereafter. And what could tempt him to entertain such a Doubt? Were not Socrates, and Aristides (to name no other Heathens) plain Instances of this kind? and, when Joseph suffer’d under the Accusation of Potiphar’s Wife, was he not persecuted merely for the Sake of a moral Virtue? And can this be in any Degree strange to those who have consider’d, how wicked Men look upon themselves as reproach’d and affronted by exemplary Goodness? and how justly therefore they are represented in the Book of Wisdom, as speaking this Language—The Righteous (say they) is not
for our Turn, he is clean contrary to our Doings; he was made to reprove our Thoughts, he is grievous unto us even to be bold; for his Life is not like other Mens, his Ways are of another Fashion— Therefore let us lie in wait for the Righteous, &c. a For my part, I can no way account for his Doubts, in so plain a Case, but upon this Foot, that he forefaw the Persecution of Virtue, as Virtue must necessarily infer a future Reward.

But should Virtue, be persecuted, yet still he denies that the Hopes of a distant Recompence would afford it any immediate Relief: for these are his Words—That the best of Men are sometimes in this State the most miserable, as far as the Evils of this World can make them so, may possibly be true; but it is equally true, whether you suppose a future State, or suppose it not b; that is [for I can make no other Sense of his Words] the virtuous Persons, so persecuted, are equally miserable under both Suppositions; their Hopes of a future Happiness being no manner of Allay to their present Miseries. And how can the Belief of a future State be more effectually supplantet than by such an Opinion? Can one think him in Earnest when he says, that He is sure, the Certainty of a future State stands in need of no such Supports, as mine? for even without them, Philosophers asserted it—and so may Christians c—He takes away the strongest Inducement which the best Philosophers had (or indeed which mere Reason could have) to believe a future State; and then he leaves us to depend upon the bare Assertions of some other Philosophers (on their Authority without Reason)
The PREFACE.

(ton) for the Truth of it. And is not this a very satisfactory and ample Equivalent? What should hinder us from exchanging the clearest Evidences of a future State, for the groundless Assurances of these Philosophers of his Acquaintance concerning it?

Other Passages there are in the Letter, equally liable to Exception: but I delight not to dwell on these Blemishes, or to make the worst and most invidious Construction of things. My chief Business was to prove, that the Doctrine deliver'd in my Sermon was neither New nor Unscriptural, nor in itself false and pernicious: and having, I hope, effectually made good what I undertook in these Respects, I shall not be solicitous to enquire into the peculiar Articles of this Writer's Creed, nor even to dive into the secret Springs and Motives that set him at Work.

He solemnly disclaims any Uneasiness conceiv'd at the Character given of Mr. Bennett, or any Desire of lessening mine. If his Professions be real, it will puzzle him to give a good Account, why he took Occasion from my Sermon to vent his Thoughts on this Argument. How come I to be singled out from that Crowd of Writers, who have all along maintain'd the same Doctrine? Why must he particularly represent me, as putting Pleas into the Mouths of licentious Persons, for saying That, which hath been so often already said by Men of Learning, and Judgment, and Virtue, without incurring the Reproach either of their own Times, or those that followed? But (which is worst of all) why are these Positions charg'd
The PREFACE.

charged upon Me, as their sole Author and Inventor; and the Reader led into a Belief that they were never before seriously maintain'd by any Person of Virtue and Understanding?* L. p. 19.

There are such manifest Indications of Inscrivency and Malice, as all his grave Pretences of Concern for the Cause of Virtue will not cover, or elude. If, after all, he pleads Ignorance for his Excuse; since I have shewn him his foul Mistakes and injurious Misrepresentations, it will become him publickly to own and retract them; and I now call upon him, in my turn, to do it. If he doth not, they will lie heavy upon him in another World, to whomsoever he may have recommended himself, in this, by the means of them.

After I had finish'd this Preface, and a great part of it was printed, there came to my Hands an Affize Sermon, preach'd lately in the Cathedral at Winchester, by Mr. Richard West, Prebendary of that Church. He hath, I find, stept a little out of his way, to give his peremptory Opinion in the Points controverted between me and the Letter-writer; and, withal, to prove himself no competent Judge of them. For, after affirming, 'That the PRACTICE of Christian Virtues, though we set aside the Consideration of a future Reward, HAVE a fairer Title to present Happiness, than their contrary Vices; (which is better Divinity than Grammar) he proceeds to say, 'Nor does it appear that the Pharisees themselves ever deny'd it, THO' a Notion hath been invented of late, that prefers brutish Pleasures (for the
The more brutish, it seems, the more preferable to those of Religion. Serm. p. 7, 8.

It is a shrewd Remark, which this sagacious Writer here makes, that though a Notion hath been invented of late, yet it doth not appear that the Pharisees of old had the same Notions; he might with as great acuteness of Judgment have observ'd, that the Art of Printing doth not appear to have been known to the Antients, tho' it hath been invented since their Times. But to pass by this judicious Observation—if Mr. West pleases to read over my Sermon, and this Preface, he will easily see, that he hath mistaken my Notion, of which he here gives a very injurious Account, in very unseemly Language; to say no worse of it. He is still more mistaken in thinking that to be a late Invention of mine, which hath been asserted by so many pious and eminent Pens of our own, and other Communions; to whose Sentiments a Man, that professes to dedicate himself to the Study of Divinity, ought not to have been altogether a Stranger. And I am very apt to think also, that he hath, in this Paragraph, mistaken the Pharisees for the Sadducees. The Sadducees, indeed, did set aside the Consideration of a future Reward, and yet pretended to support the Practice of Virtue upon the Foot of present Happiness, as Epicurus likewise did; from whom they are sometimes call'd Epicureans, in the Jewish Writings. Neither Epicurus nor Zadock declar'd openly for Vice and Immorality, though they deny'd a future State; but held Happiness to be attainable in this Life by our own Conduct and Virtues.

But
The PREFACE.

But it no ways appears that the Pharisees had any such Notions, or Disputes as these stirring amongst them, or any Occasion to deliver their Opinion about the Title, which the Practice of Virtue hath to present Happiness; setting aside the Consideration of a future Reward: And why, therefore, their Authority should be vouch’d to this purpose, I do by no means comprehend.

Much less can I imagine, why a JEWISH Sect [whether of Pharisees or Sadducees] should be represented, as delivering their Judgment about the Consequence of practising CHRISTIAN Virtues; a Point, in which they had as little Reason to concern themselves, as Mr. West hath to interpose in this Dispute, unless he were better acquainted with the true State, and Grounds of it, and with the Opinions of those who have gone before him in the Argument. I hope, this was not one of the correct Passages, which Mr. Jervoise, and the other Gentlemen had in their View, when they desired him to print his most excellent Sermon.—Of which I am tempted to say somewhat more, but shall forbear; having, I hope, sufficiently prevented whatever this Gentleman hath said, or can say, against any part of my Doctrine. And some Attacks are so harmless, that nothing but a Defence can make them considerable.

What gave rise to this civil Digression of Mr. West, and at whose Shrine he offer’d his Incense, is too plain to admit of any Doubt; and carries in it a Reflection, so much to the Disadvantage of Religion, that, could it possibly be concealed, I should think myself obliged to
The PREFACE.

to pass it over in Silence. How must it afflict good Men, to consider, that our unhappy Disputes about Rights and Privileges, should spread themselves into Points of a foreign Nature, and of the most sacred Importance; and be purfu'd to the very Horns of the Altar, without any regard to the Interests of our common Christianity! What! can we not differ about Adjournments, without differing also about the Evidences of a future State; and managing our Contests on that Head, in such a manner, as even to take part with, and make Sport for Unbelievers? Are these the blessed Effects of that Moderation and Temper, of which we have heard so much in some Men's Writings, and seen so little in their Practices? How long shall the best Words in the World be thus perverfly applied to the worst Purposes; and made use of to cover, and advance Designs, widely distant from our specious Pretensions? Can we look upon it, as one Instance of that most amiable Virtue, to stand by cool and unconcern'd for the great Truths of Religion? neither to defend them our Selves, nor yet suffer them to be defended by Others; and, when we chance to spy an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of our Brethren, to be so far from avenging the Wrong, as to encourage and assist the Doer of it? what is this, but to imitate the wicked Policy of our worst Enemy, which we have so often complain'd of? For how Eloquent have some Men been in their Invectives against a neighbouring Prince (the Subject of their Panegyricks on some other Occasions) for making scandalous Leagues with Mahome-
The PREFACE.

Tans, and attacking Christians in Conjunction with the great Enemies of Christendom? And is their Conduct less liable to Reproach, who are not ashamed to espouse the Cause even of Infidelity itself, rather than miss an Opportunity of expressing their Resentments against Men they do not like, and of keeping up their little Party-Interests, and Quarrels? When Popery was at our Doors in a late Reign; did we take this way of keeping it out? And are Atheism and Deism less dreadful in themselves? Or are we now in less Danger of being over-run with them? In God's Name, if we cannot agree in other things, let us unite at least in an equal Zeal for those capital Doctrines, which we all equally embrace, and are alike concerned to maintain: Nor let our personal Views, and Prejudices (if we will not be persuaded to part with them) ever lead us to do any thing, that may expose Religion itself to the Laughter and Scorn of profane Men; who shoot out the Lip, and shake the Head, saying, Aba! So we would have it.
THE CONTENTS

Serm. I. A Large Preface in Defence of a Sermon preach'd at the Funeral of Mr. Thomas Bennet.

1 Cor. xv. 19. If in this Life only we have Hope in Christ, we are of all Men most miserable. p. 1

Serm. II. A standing Revelation the best Means of Conviction.

St. Luke xvi. 31. If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, tho' one rose from the Dead. p. 39

Serm. III. A Sermon preach'd at the Election of the Lord-Mayor.

Job xxix. 14. I put on Righteousness, and it clothed me; my Judgment was as a Robe and a Diadem. p. 81

Serm. IV. A Sermon preach'd before the Lord-Mayor, on a Day of public Humiliation.

Psal. xxx. 6, 7, 8. In my Prosperity, I said, I shall never be moved: Lord, by thy Favour Thou hadst made my Mountain to stand strong. Thou didst
The CONTENTS.

didst hide thy Face, and I was troubled. I cryed unto Thee, O Lord, and unto the Lord I made my Supplication.  

Serm. V. A Spittal Sermon at St. Bridget's Church, on Easter-Tuesday, 1707.  

St. Matth. xxv. 40. Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. 142

Serm. VI. An Acquaintance with God, the best Support under Afflictions. A Sermon preach'd before the Queen at St. James's, Octob. 31. 1708.  

Job xxii. 21. Acquaint thyself with him, and be at Peace. 182

Serm. VII. A Spittal Sermon preach'd before the Lord-Mayor, &c.  

Luke x. 32. He came and looked on him, and passed by on the other Side. 213

Serm. VIII. A Sermon preach'd before the Sons of the Clergy, at their Anniversary-Meeting in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Dec. 6. 1709.  

Rom. xi. 6. If the First Fruit be holy, the Lump is also holy; and if the Root be holy, so are the Branches. 255

Serm. IX. Concio ad Clerum Lond.  

Rom. xiii. 1. Omnis Anima Potestati- 
bus sublimioribus subdita sit. 309
A SERMON
PREACH'D in the
Cathedral-Church of St. PAUL,
AT THE
FUNERAL
OF
Mr. THO. BENNET,
Aug. 30. 1706.

I CORINTH. xv. 19: If in this Life only we have Hope in Christ, we are of all Men most miserable.

SUCH Discourses, on such Mourn-ful Occasions as these, were instituted, not so much in Honour of the Dead, as for the Use of the Living; that...
Opportunity may be taken from hence to excite in Persons, attending on these Solemnities, a due Sense of the Uncertainty and Vanity of all Earthly Satisfactions; to imprint upon their Minds, by proper Arguments and Reflections, a lively Persuasion of the Certainty of a Future State, and an earnest Desire of fitting and preparing themselves for it.

There is no Season, to which such Thoughts as these are more suitable; nor any, wherein Men are likely to be more affected with them: And therefore I have chosen (not unfitly, I hope) to explain to you, at present, that great Argument for a Future State, which S. Paul hath couch'd in the Words I have read to you; If in this Life only we have Hope in Christ, we are of all Men most miserable: that is, If all the Benefits we expect from the Christian Institution, were confin'd within the Bounds of this present Life, and we had no Hopes of a better State after this, of a great and lasting Reward in a Life to come; We Christians should be the most abandon'd and wretched of Crea-
Funeral of Mr. Bennet.

Creatures: All other Sorts and Sects of Men would evidently have the Advantage of us, and a much surer Title to Happiness than We.

This Concession the Apostle openly makes, and from hence he would be understood to infer, (tho' the Inference be not express'd) That, therefore, there must needs be another State, to make up the Inequalities of this, and to save all irregular Appearances; since it is impossible to conceive that a just and good God should suffer the justest and best of Men (such as the best Christians certainly are) to be oftentimes the most miserable.

If S. Paul found it necessary, earnestly to press this Argument on the Corinthians, soon after he had planted the Gospel among them, and confirm'd it by Miracles; it cannot but be highly requisite for Us, who live at such a Distance from that Age of Miracles, to support and enliven our Faith, by dwelling often on the same Considerations: And this Argument, therefore, I shall endeavour to open, and apply, in the following Discourse; wherein,
I. First, I shall shew the undoubted Truth of the Apostle’s Concession; and from thence shall establish, in the

II. Second Place, the Truth of that Conclusion, which he builds upon it.

III. After which, I shall suggest to you some Rules and Directions, which, if duly pursu’d, will enable you to live like those who have their Hope in another Life; like Men, who look upon themselves, as being only on their Passage through this State, but as belonging properly to that which is to come; on which, therefore, their Eye, their Aim, and their Hopes are altogether fix’d and employ’d.

IV. And these General Reflections shall be follow’d (as they will very naturally be follow’d) by a just and faithful Account of that Valuable Person, whose Remains now lie before us.
As to the *Concession* of the Apostle, I shall urge it somewhat farther than the Letter of the Text will carry us; proving to you, under two different Heads, That, were there no other Life but this, *First*, Men would really be more miserable than Beasts; and Secondly, The best Men would be often the most miserable: I mean, as far as Happiness or Misery are to be measured from Pleasing, or Painful Sensations; and, supposing the Present to be the only Life we are to lead, I see not, but that This might be esteemed the true Measure of them.

*First*, Were there no Life after this, Men would be more miserable than Beasts: for in this Life, it is plain that Beasts have, in many respects, the Advantage of them; in as much as they enjoy greater Sensual Pleasures, and feel fewer Corporal Pains, and are utter Strangers to all those Anxious and Tormenting Thoughts which perpetually haunt and disquiet Mankind.
The pleasures of Sense are probably relish'd by Beasts in a more exquisite degree, than they are by Men; for they taste them sincere and pure always, without mixture, or alloy, without being distracted in the Pursuit, or disquieted in the Use of them.

They follow Nature, in their Desires and Fruitions, carrying them no farther than she directs, and leaving off at the Point, at which Excess would grow Troublesome and Hazardous; so that their Appetite is not destroy'd or dull'd, by being gratified, but returns always fresh and vigorous to its Object. Hence Their Organs are generally better dispos'd than Ours, for receiving grateful Impressions from sensible Objects; being less liable to be vitiated by Diseases, and other Bodily Accidents, which disorder our Frame, and extremely lessen the Complacence we have in all the good Things of this Life that surround us. Nor are the Pleasures, which the Brutal Part of the Creation enjoy, subject to be lessen'd any way by the Uneasiness which arises from
Funeral of Mr. Bennet.

from Fancy and Opinion. They have not the Art of growing Miserable upon the View of the Happiness of others; it being the peculiar Privilege of Thinking Beings, when they are otherwise sufficiently bless'd, to create Trouble to themselves, by needless Comparisons.

They are under no Checks from Reason and Reflection, which, by representing perpetually to the Mind of Man the Meanness of all Sensual Gratifications, do, in great measure, blunt the Edge of his keenest Desires, and pall all his Enjoyments. They are not aware of a Superior Good, or of any higher End, to which they might be ordain'd. They feel no inward Reproaches for transgressing the Bounds of their Duty, and the Laws of their Nature. They have no uneasy Presages of a future Reckoning, where-in the Pleasures they now taste must be accounted for; and may, perhaps, be outweigh'd by the Pains, which shall then lay hold of them. None of their Satisfactions are impair'd by the Fear of losing them, by that Dread of Death, which hangs
A Sermon preach'd at the

hangs over the mere natural Man; and, like the Hand-writing on the Wall, damps all his Mirth and Jollity; and by which he is, as the Apostle speaks, *all his Life-time subject unto Bondage*; that is, in a mean, dejected, flavius state of Mind. In a word, they have no Concern for what is past, no uneasy Expectations of what is to come; but are ever ty'd-down to the present Moment, and to the present Enjoyment, and in that they are vigorously, and totally employ'd.

In these Respects, it may be truly affirm'd; That, if we had hope in this Life only, Men would be really more miserable than Beasts; and on the same Account,

*Secondly, The best of Men would be often the most miserable.* For their Principles give them not leave to taste so freely of the Pleasures of Life, as other Mens do; and expose them more to the Troubles and Dangers of it.

The Principles of good Men give them not leave to taste so freely of the Pleasures of
of Life, as other Mens do: for their great and prevailing Principle is, to sit as loose from those Pleasures, and be as moderate in the use of them, as they can; in order to maintain the Empire of the Mind over the Body, and keep the Appetites of the One in due Submission to the Reasoning Powers of the Other. No small Part of Virtue consists in abstaining from that, wherein Sensual Men place their Felicity; in mortifying the Deeds of the Body, and making no Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof. A truly good Man thinks himself obliged, not only to forbear those Gratifications, which are forbidden by the Rules of Reason and Religion, but even to restrain himself in unforbidden Instances, when by allowing himself in what is Innocent, he would either run the Risk of being farther betray'd into what is not so, or would breed matter of Offence to his weak and misjudging Neighbour. He lives not for Himself alone, but hath a Regard in all his Actions to the great Community wherein he is enclos'd; and gives the Reins,
Reins, therefore, to his Appetites no farther, than the Indulging them is consistent with the general Good and Happiness of Society.

He is so far from grasping at all the Advantages and Satisfactions of this World, which are possible to be attain'd by him, that he thinks the bounding of his Desires and Designs within the Line, which his Birth and Fortune have mark'd out, to be a great and indispensable Duty: He hath learn'd, in whatsoever State he is, therewith to be Content; and doth not, therefore, eagerly aspire after an higher Condition of Life, is not over-solicitous to procure to himself a larger Sphere of Enjoyment.

From these and many other Considerations (which I need not mention) it is manifest, that the best of Men do generally enjoy least of the Pleasures and Satisfactions of Life: It is as manifest, that they are most expos'd to the Troubles and Dangers of it.

They are determin'd to live up to the Holy Rule, by which they have oblig'd them.
Funeral of Mr. Bennet.

themselves to walk, whatever may be the Consequences of it, tho' fore Evils, and great Temporal Inconveniencies should sometimes attend the Discharge of their Duty. The Hypocrite hath the Art of bending his Principles and Practice always to whatever is for his Convenience, and of falling in with the Fashion of a Corrupt and Wicked World: but the truly upright Man is inflexible in his Uprightness, and unalterable in his Purposes; Nothing can make him Remiss in the Practice of his Duty, no Prospect of Interest can allure him, no Fear of Danger can dismay him.

It will be his Lot often, to look singular, in Loose and Licentious Times, and to become a By-word and a Reproach on that account among the Men of Wit and Pleasure. *He is not for our turn,* (will they say, as their Words are represented in the Book of Wisdom) *He is clean contrary to our Doings; he was made to reprove our Thoughts; he is grievous unto us, even to behold; for his Life is not like other Mens, his Ways are*
are of another Fashion. And these ill Thoughts, once entertain'd, will (we may be sure,) as Occasion offers, be followed by worse Usage.

Some Christian Virtues (for Instance, Humility, and Meekness) do, as it were, invite Injuries: For it is an Encouragement to base and insolent Minds to outrage Men, when they have Hopes of doing it, without a Return. If it be a Man's known Principle, to depart from his Right in a small matter, rather than break Christian Peace; Ill Men will be tempted to make illegal and unjust Encroachments upon him. He who resolves to walk by the Gospel Rule of forbearing all Attempts, all Desire of Revenge, will probably have Opportunities every now and then given to exercise his Forgiving Temper.

Thus Good and Pious Persons are, by the Nature and Tendency of their Principles, more expos'd to the Troubles and ill Accidents of Life, as well as greater Strangers to the Pleasures and Advantages of it, than other less Conscientious Men.
Funeral of Mr. Bennet.

Men are: And, on both these Accounts, what the Apostle lays down in the Text, is evidently and experimentally true; that, if in this Life only they had Hope, they were of all Men most miserable.

From which Concession, which he thus openly makes, he would be understood (as I told you) to infer, tho' the Inference be not express'd, that there must, therefore, necessarily be another State, to make up the Inequalities of this, and to salve all irregular Appearances. For if God be infinitely holy, and pure, and just, and good; he must needs take delight in those of his Creatures that resemble him most in these Perfections: He cannot but love Virtue, where-ever it is, and reward it, and annex Happiness always to the Exercise of it. And yet this is so far from being the Case, that the contrary often happens in this Life; where even the greatest Saints are sometimes made the most remarkable Instances of Suffering. We may, therefore, surely conclude, that there must be a Future
Future State, wherein these Rewards shall be bestowed, and this Love of God to good Men made to appear, and the eternal and inseparable Connexion between Virtue and Happiness manifested, in the sight of Angels and Men. It cannot consist with the Divine Attributes, that the impious Man's Joys should, upon the whole, exceed those of the Upright; or that the Beasts of the Field, which serve him not, and know him not, should yet enjoy a more entire and perfect Happiness, than the Lord of this Lower Creation, Man himself, made in God's own Image, to acknowledge and adore him: and, therefore, as certainly as God is, a time there will and must be, when all these unequal Distributions of Good and Evil shall be set Right, and the Wisdom and Reasonableness of all his Transactions with all his Creatures be made as clear as the Noon-Day.

And this, before that Revelation had enlighten'd the World, was the very best Argument for a Future Estate, which Mankind had to rest upon. Their Philosophical
Funeral of Mr. Bennet.

Iosophical Reasonings, drawn from the SERM. Nature of the Soul, and from the Instincts and Presages of Immortality implanted in it, were not sufficiently clear and conclusive. The only sure Foundation of Hope, which the wisest and most thoughtful Men amongst the Heathen pretended in this Case to have, was, from the Consideration suggested in the Text: and from thence some of them reason'd without Doubt, or Hesitancy; and liv'd and dy'd in such a manner, as to shew, that they believ'd their own Reasonings.

It may suffice, thus far to have enlarg'd on that great Argument of a Future State, which is urg'd by S. Paul in the Words before us: "If in this Life only we had "Hope, Men would really be more mis- "erable than Beasts; and the best of "Men oftentimes the most miserable. "But it is impossible to imagine, that "a God of infinite Wisdom and Good-
"ness should distribute Happiness and "Misery, so unequally and absurdly: "It remains, therefore, that good Men "have
A Sermon preach'd at the

I. " have a well-grounded Hope in ano-
ther Life; and are as certain of a fu-
ture Recompence, as they are of the
" Being, and Attributes of God.

II. The best Use I can make of this Com-
fortable Truth, thus explained, is, To ex-
hort you from thence to live like those
who have their Hope in another Life,
like Men who look upon themselves as
being upon their Passage only through
this present World, but as belonging pro-
perly to that which is to come. And
thus we may be said to live, if we ob-
serve the following plain Rules and Di-
rections; which are not the less useful,
because they are plain ones. Several of
them will give a natural Occasion to
those, who knew the deceased Person,
of anticipating his Character in their
Thoughts: for he did really in good mea-
sure (and with due Allowances made for
Human Frailties) govern himself by them;
and I may, for that Reason, I hope, be
suffered to insist the more freely upon
them.

Now,
Funeral of Mr. Bennet.

Now, to live like those that have their Hope in another Life, implies,

First, That we indulge ourselves in the Gratifications of this present Life very sparingly; that we keep under our Appetites, and do not let them loose into the Enjoyments of Sense: but so use the good things of this World, as not abusing them; so take delight in them; as to remember that we are to part with them, and to exchange them for more excellent and durable Enjoyments.

_Brethren_ (says St. Peter) _I beseech you, as Pilgrims, abstain from Fleshly Lusts:_

They, who pass through a Foreign Country, towards their Native Home, do not usually give up themselves to an eager pursuit of the Pleasures of the Place; ought not to dwell long upon them, and with Greediness; but make use of them only for their Refreshment on the Way, and so, as not to be diverted from pursuing their Journey.

A good Christian must partake of those grateful Repasts of Sense, which he meets with here below, in like manner as the Jews
A Sermon preach'd at the

SERM.

Jews did of their Passover, with their Loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand, eating it in haste; that is, he must always be in a Travelling Posture, and so taste Sensual Pleasures, as one that is about to leave them, and desires to be stopp'd as little as he can by them, in his Way towards the End of his Hopes, the Salvation of his Soul. And to this Custom of the Jews St. Peter, in his Exhortation to Sobriety and Temperance, may be supposed to allude; Wherefore (says he) gird up the Loins of your Mind, and be ye sober.

Indeed, it is impossible for a Man to have a lively Hope in another Life, and yet be deeply immers'd in the Enjoyments of this; inasmuch as the Happiness of our Future State so far exceeds all that we can propouse to ourselves at present, both in Degree, and Duration; that to One firmly perswaded of the Reality of that Happiness, and earnestly desirous of obtaining it, all Earthly Satisfactions must needs look little, and grow flat and unfavourable; especially, when by Experience he
he finds, that too free a Participation of These indisposes him extremely for Those; for all the Duties that are necessary to be perform'd, and all the good Qualities that are necessary to be attain'd, in order to arrive at them. He perceives plainly, that his Appetite to Spiritual Things abates, in proportion as his sensual Appetite is indulg'd and encourag'd; and that Carnal Desires kill not only the Desire, but even the Power of tasting Purer Delights; and, on both these Accounts, therefore, flies too deep a Draught of all Earthly Enjoyments: Having this Hope in him, he purifieth himself; even as He (i.e. even as the Author and Revealer of this Hope) is pure. A

Second Instance, wherein we may be said to live like those who have their Hope in another Life, is, if we bear the Uncasinesees that befall us here, with Constancy and Patience; as knowing, that, tho' our Passage through this World should be rough and troublesome, yet the Trouble will be but short, and the Rest and Contentment we shall find at
the End, will be an ample Recompence for all the little Inconveniences, we meet with, in our way towards it. We must not expect, that our Journey through the several Stages of this Life should be all smooth and even; or, that we should perform it wholly without Disasters, Ill Accidents, and Hindrances. While we live in this World, where Good and Bad Men are blended together, and where there is also a Mixture of Good and Evil wisely distributed by God, to serve the Ends of his Providence; we are not to wonder, if we are molested by the One, as well as benefited by the Other. 'Tis our present Lot and Condition, to be subject to such Casualties; which, therefore, as they ought not to surprize, so much less should they deject us: nor can they, if we look forward, and entertain ourselves with the Prospect of that Happiness to which we are hastening; and at which when we arrive, even the Remembrance of the Difficulties, we now undergo, will contribute to enhaunce our Pleasure.

Indeed,
Funeral of Mr. Bennet.

Indeed, while we are in the Flesh, we cannot be utterly insensible of the Afflictions that befall us; what is in itself harsh and ungrateful, must needs make harsh and ungrateful Impressions upon us. And therefore, to pretend to be perfectly easy under any great Calamity of Life, must be the Effect either of Hypocrisy, or Stupidity. However, tho' it be not in our Power to make an Affliction no Affliction; yet it is certainly in our Power to take off the Edge, and lessen the Weight of it, by a full and steady View of those Divine Joys that are prepar'd for us in another State, which shall shortly begin, and never end: We may say, and think with S. Paul, I reckon that the Sufferings of this present Life are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed. And thus saying, and thinking, we may bear the heaviest Load that can be laid upon us, with Contentedness, at least, if not with Cheerfulness. A

Third Instance of our living like those that have their Hope in another Life, is, if we always take the Account of a Future State.
State into our Schemes and Reasonings about the Concerns of this World; and form our Judgments about the Worth, or Emptiness of things here, according as they are, or are not of Use, in relation to what is to come after.

He who sojourns in a foreign Country, refers what he sees and hears Abroad, to the State of things at Home; with that View he makes all his Reflections, and Enquiries; and by that measure he judges of every thing which befalls himself, or others, in his Travels. This Pattern should be our Guide, in our present State of Pilgrimage; wherein we often misinterpret the Events of Providence, and make a wrong use of them, by attending to the Maxims of this Life only; and so thinking of the World, which we are now in, and of the Affairs of it, as if both That, and They, and We had no manner of Relation to another: Whereas, in truth, what we see is in order only to what we do not see; and both these States, therefore, must be join'd, and considered together, if we intend to re-
Fleet wisely and justly on present appearances: for as no Man knoweth Love, or Hatred; so neither can he discern Good, or Evil, purely by what is before him.

We, perhaps, when we see Vice remarkably Prosperous, or Virtue in deep Distress; when a Man, who is, and does Good to Mankind, happens to be cut off in the Vigour of his Strength, and in the midst of his innocent Enjoyments; whilst the wicked grow Old, yea are mighty in Power, and come to their Grave in a full Age, like as a shock of Corn cometh in, in his Season: We, I say, in such Cases, are ready to cry out of an unequal Management, and to blame the Divine Administration; whereas, if we consider'd, that there is another State after this, wherein all these seeming Irregularities may be set right; and that, in the mean time they are of use to distinguish the Sound from the False Believer, to exercise the Faith of good Men, and, by that Means, entitle them to a greater Reward; This one Consideration would
would make all our Murmurs cease, and all those fancy'd Difficulties vanish.

Many other Instances, like these, there are, wherein (I say) we shall never be able to give ourselves a Satisfactory Account of the Divine Conduct, as it appears to us at present, without drawing our Arguments and Reflections from a future State, and forming such a Scheme of things, as shall at once take in both Time and Eternity. We may, in the

Fourth place, be said to live like those that place their Hope in another World; when we have in a great measure conquer'd our Dread of Death, and our unreasonable Love of Life, and are even prepar'd, and willing to be dissolv'd, and to be with Christ, as soon as ever he thinks fit to call us. Till we have wrought ourselves up into this Degree of Christian Indifference, we are in Bondage; we cannot so well be said to have our Hope, as our Fear in another Life, while we are mighty loth and unwilling to part with This, for the sake of it.
Funeral of Mr. Bennet.

Not that it is in the Power of Human Nature, without extraordinary Degrees of Divine Grace, to look Death in the Face, unconcern'd; or to throw off Life with the same Ease, as one doth a Garment, upon going to Rest: These are Heroick heights of Virtue; attain'd but by few, and matter of strict Duty to none. However, it is possible for all of us to lessen our Natural Fears of this kind, by Religious Considerations; by a firm Belief of, and a frequent Meditation upon those Joys that shall be reveal'd, to raise ourselves up into a Contempt of present Satisfactions, and into a Resolution of submitting ourselves, if not joyfully, yet meekly, and calmly, to the Sentence of Death, whenever it shall please God to inflict it upon us. This, I say, is a very practicable Degree of Christian Magnanimity and Courage; and it is both the Duty and the Interest of every good Christian to attain it. Which we shall be the better enabled to do, if in the

Fifth and last place, We make a proper Use of such Opportunities as these, and
and of all other Seasons of Serious Reflection, which are afforded us, in order to fix in our Minds a lively and vigorous Sense of the things of another World. They are under the Disadvantage of being Distant; and, therefore, operate but faintly upon us. To remedy this Inconvenience, we must frequently revolve within ourselves their Certainty, and great Importance; so as to bring them near, and make them familiar to us; till they become a constant and ready Principle of Action, which we can have recourse to upon all Occasions.

If we really live under the Hope of future Happiness, we shall be apt to taste it by way of Anticipation and Fore-Thought; an Image of it will meet our Minds often, and stay for some time there, as all pleasing Expectations do; and that, in proportion to the Pleasure we take in them. I appeal to you, if it be not so in your Temporal Affairs. Hath any of you a great Interest at stake in a far-distant Part of the World? hath he ventured a good share of his Fortune thither?
and may reasonably hope for a vast and exceeding Return? His Thoughts will be often employ'd on this Subject; and, the nearer the time of his Expectation approacheth, the more he will think of it: for, where his Treasure is, there will his Heart also most certainly be. Now, our Spiritual Interests, and the great Concernments of a Future State would, doubtless, recur as often to our Minds, and affect them as deeply, if we were but as much in earnest in our Pursuit of them: and therefore, we may take it for granted, that we are not so dispos'd as we ought to be towards them, if we can forget them for any long time, or reflect on them with Indifference and Coldness.

That this may not be the case, it will, I say, be necessary for us to take Set times of meditating on what is future, and of making it by that means, as it were, present to us: It must be our solemn Business and Endeavour, at fit Seasons, to turn the stream of our Thoughts from Earthly, towards Divine Objects; to retire from the Hurry and Noise of this World,
A Sermon preach'd at the World, in order to entertain ourselves with the Prospect of another.

This is the proper Use we are particularly to make of the present sad Solmynity; and thus, therefore, I have endeavour'd to employ it. Nor will it be unsuitable to that Design, if I close these Reflections with some Account of the Person deceased, who really liv'd like one that had his Hope in another Life; a Life, which he hath now enter'd upon, having exchang'd Hope for Sight, Desire for Enjoyment.

I know, such Accounts are look'd upon as a Tribute, due to the Memory of those only who have moved in a high Sphere, and have out-shone the rest of the World by their Rank, as well as their Virtues. However, the Characters of Men placed in lower Stations of Life, tho' less usually insisted upon, are yet more useful; as being imitable by greater Numbers, and not so liable to be suspected of Flattery, or Design. Several of this Auditory were, perhaps, entire Strangers to the Person, whose Death we now lament; and the greatest
greatest part of you, who were not, had, for that Reason, so just an Esteem of him, that it will not be unwelcome to you, I presume, to be put in Mind of those good Qualities which you observ'd in him. And therefore, I shall, in as few Words as I can, comprize, what Twenty Years Experience hath enabled me justly to say of him.

He was a serious sincere Christian; of an Innocent, Irreproachable, nay Exemplary Life; which was led, not only at a great distance from any foul Vice, but also in the Even and Uniform Practice of many Virtues; such as were suitable to a Life of great Application and Business, such as became and adorn'd the State and Profession to which it pleas'd God to call him.

He highly valu'd, and heartily lov'd that Church wherein he was baptiz'd; and educated; of which he gave the best Proofs, by being a constant Frequenter of its Worship, and, in the latter Part of his Life, a never-failing Monthly Communicant; I add also, and by adhering steadily...
A Sermon preach'd at the

Sermon  

firmly to its Interest; two things which ought never to be separated!

Nor was his Attendance on Divine Offices a matter of Formality and Custom, but of Conscience; as appear'd by his compos'd and serious Behaviour, during the Service. It was such, as shew'd him to be in earnest, and truly affected with what he was doing.

His Religion did not spend itself all in Publick; the Private Duties of the Closet were equally his Care; with these he began each Morning, and to these he repair'd, as often as he entered upon any Business of Consequence, (I speak knowingly;) and his Family were every Evening summon'd by him to Common Devotions: and in these too, his Regard for the Publick Service of the Church appear'd; for they were express'd always in her Language.

Indeed, he was a very singular Instance of all those Domestic Virtues that relate to the good and discreet Government of a Family. He had great natural Prudence; which Experience had much improv'd; he
Funeral of Mr. Bennet.

he was of a sweet Temper; and a mighty Lover of Regularity and Order: and, by the happy Mixture of these good Qualities, manag'd all his Affairs (particularly those within doors) with the utmost Exactness; and yet, with as much Quiet and Ease, to himself, and others, as was possible.

Those about him grew insensibly Active and Industrious by his Example, and Encouragement; and he had such a gentle Method of reproving their Faults, that they were not so much afraid, as ashamed to repeat them. He took the surest way to be obey'd, by being lov'd, and respected; for he was free from any of those rough, ungovernable Passions, which hurry Men on, to say, and do very hard, or offensive things. He had indeed a certain Quickness of Apprehension, which inclin'd him a little to kindle into the first Motions of Anger, upon some particular Occasions: but this part of his Disposition he had so far conquer'd, that, for a long time before he dy'd, no one, who had occasion to receive his Orders, did, I believe,
A Sermon preach'd at the
SERM.
lieve, hear an intemperate, or harsh Word
proceed from him; or see any thing in
his Behaviour, that betray'd any misbe-
coming degree of inward Concern.

He took care to season the Minds of
his Servants with Religious Instructions;
and, for that end, did himself often read
useful Discourses to them, on the Lord's
Day, of which he was always a very strict
and solemn Observer. And what they
thus learn'd from him in one way, they
did not unlearn again, in another: for he
was a Man, not only sincerely Pious, but
of the nicest Sobriety and Temperance,
and remarkably punctual and just in all his
Dealings with others. I see many Authen-
tick Witnessses of this particular Branch
of his Character.

He abounded in all the truest Signs of
an affectionate Tenderness towards his
Wife and Children; and yet did so pru-
dently moderate and temper his Passions
of this kind, as that none of them got
the better of his Reason, or made him
wanting in any of the other Offices of
Life, which it behov'd, or became him
to
to perform: And therefore, tho' he appeared to relish these Blessings as much as any Man; yet he bore the Loss of them, when it happen'd, with great Composure and Evenness of Mind.

He did also in a very just and fitting manner, proportion his Respects to all others that were any ways related to him, either by Blood, or Affinity; and was very observant of some of them, even where he could not be determin'd by any Views of Interest, and had manifestly no other Obligations, but those of Duty and Decency, to sway him.

In what manner he liv'd with those who were of his Neighbourhood and Acquaintance, how obliging his Carriage was to them, what kind Offices he did, and was always ready to do them, I forbear particularly to say; not that I judge it a slight, but because I take it to be a confess'd Part of his Character, which even his Enemies (if there were any such) cannot but allow: for, however in Matters where his Judgment led him to oppose Men, on a publick Account, he would do it vigorously and heartily; yet...
the Opposition ended there, without souring his private Conversation; which was, (to use the Words of a great Writer) soft and easy, as his Principles were stubborn.

In a Word, whether we consider him as an Husband, a Parent, a Master, Relation, or Neighbour; his Character was, in all these Respects, highly fit to be recommended to Men; and, I verily think, as complete as any that ever fell under my Observation.

And all this Religion and Virtue sat easily, naturally, and gracefully upon him; without any of that Stiffness and Constraint, any of those forbidding Appearances, which sometimes disparage the Actions of Men sincerely Pious, and hinder real Goodness from spreading its Interest far, and wide, into the Hearts of Beholders.

There was not the least Tang of Religious (which is indeed the worst sort of) Affectation in any thing he said, or did; nor any Endeavours to recommend himself to others, by appearing to be even what he really was: He was faulty on the other side, being led, by an Excess of Modesty,
Modesty, to conceal (as much as might be) some of his chief Virtues; which therefore were scarce known to any but those who very nearly observ'd him, tho' every day of his Life almost was a Witness to the Practice of them.

I need not say, how perfect a Master he was of all the Business of that useful Profession, wherein he had engag'd himself: You know it well; and the great Success his Endeavours met with, sufficiently proves it. Nor could the Event well be otherwise: for his Natural Abilities were very good, and his Industry exceeding great, and the Evenness, and Probity of his Temper not inferior to either of them.

Besides, he had one peculiar Felicity, (which carried in it some Resemblance of a great Christian Perfection) that he was entirely contented and pleas'd with his Lot; loving his Employment for its own sake, (as he hath often said) and so, as to be willing to spend the rest of his Life in it, tho' he were not (if that could be suppos'd) to reap any farther Advantages from it.

Not but that the Powers of his Mind were
were equal to much greater Tasks; and therefore when, in his later Years, he was call'd up to some Publick Offices and Stations, he distinguish'd himself in all of them by his Penetration, and Dexterity in the Dispatch of that Business which belong'd to them, by a winning Behaviour, and some degree even of a smooth and popular Eloquence, which Nature gave him. But his own Inclinations were rather to confine himself to his own Business, and be serviceable to Religion and Learning, in the way, to which God's Providence had seem'd more particularly to direct him, and in which it had so remarkably bless'd him.

When Riches flow'd in upon him, they made no Change in his Mind, or Manner of Living. This may be imputed to an eager Desire of heaping up Wealth; but it was really owing to another Principle: He had a great Indifference to the Pleasures of Life, and an Aversion to the Pomps of it; and therefore his Appetites being no ways increas'd by his Fortune, he had no Occasion to enlarge the Scene of his Enjoyments.
He was so far from overvaluing any of the Appendages of Life, that the Thoughts even of Life itself did not seem to affect him. Of its Loss he spake often, in full Health, with great Unconcern; and, when his late Distemper attack'd him, (which from the beginning he judg'd Fatal) after the first Surprize of that sad Stroke was over, he submitted to it with great Meekness, and Resignation, as became a good Man, and a good Christian.

Tho' he had a long Illness, (considering the great Heat with which it rag'd) yet his Intervals of Sense being few, and short, left but little room for the Offices of Devotion; at which he was the less concern'd, because (as he himself then said) he had not been wanting in those Duties, while he had Strength to perform them. Indeed, on the Lord's Day which immediately preceded this Illness, he had receiv'd the Sacrament; and was, therefore, (we have Reason to believe) when the Master of the House soon afterwards came, prepar'd and ready to receive him.

As the Blessings of God upon his honest Industry had been great, so he was not
not without Intentions of making suitable
Returns to him, in Acts of Mercy and Charity. Something of this kind he hath
taken care of in his Will, drawn up at a
time, while his Family was as numerous
as it is now, and his Circumstances not so
plentiful. One part of the Benefactions,
there directed, was worthy of him; being
the Expression of a generous and grateful
Mind towards the Persons who had most
oblig'd him; and of a pious regard to the
Place of his Education. More he would
probably have done, had not the Disease,
of which he dy'd, seiz'd him with that
Violence, as to render him incapable of
Executing whatever of this kind his Heart
might have intended.

He is now gone, and his Works have
follow'd him: Let us imitate his Exam-
ple, that, when We also depart this Life
we may share his Heavenly Reward, and
be as well spoken of by those who sur-
vive Us!

Now to God the Father, the Son,
and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed
all Majesty, Might, and Glory,
now, and for ever. Amen.

A Sermon preach'd, &c.
A Standing Revelation, the best Means of Conviction.

A

SERMON

Preach'd before

Her MAJESTY

AT

St. JAMES's Chapel,

On Sunday, October 28, 1705. being the Festival of St. Simon and St. Jude.

LUKE xvi. 31.

If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the Dead.

THE Happiest of Mankind are often subject to this great Infirmity.

That, overlooking those solid Blessings which they already have, they set their Hearts
Hearts upon somewhat which they want; some untried Pleasure, or Advantage, which if they could but taste, if they could but obtain, they should then be certainly and completely blest. And yet, no sooner have they climbed that Hill, which thus determines their View at a distance, but a new Prospect is open’d to them, and they find themselves as far remov’d from the imaginary Point of Happiness, as ever.

In like manner, the Standing Evidences of the Truth of the Gospel, tho’ in themselves most firm, solid, and satisfying, yet make but faint Impressions on the Minds of many Christians; who, after all the old Miracles done by our Saviour and his Apostles, are still ready to demand new ones; to desire, that some Special Proof should be given, some Extraordinary Application made, to Them in particular: and then, they would resign all their Scruples, believe without Doubt, and obey without Reserve. Thus do the Ungodly reason with themselves, but not aright, as the Lips of Truth have assur’d
the best Means of Conviction.

assur'd us: For, If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, tho' one rose from the Dead.

The Assertion is our Saviour's, tho' uttered by him in the Person of Abraham, the Father of the Faithful; who, on the account of that Character, is very fitly introduced, in the Parable concerning the Rich Man and Lazarus, declaring, what Arguments and Motives are most likely to produce in Men that firm, unshaken Faith in God, of which he himself was so illustrious a Pattern.

The Parable was intended against the Voluptuaries of that Time, (such as One of the Apostles of this Day, St. Jude, describes throughout his Epistle;) Men, who notwithstanding they professed themselves Jews, liv'd like Heathens, disolute-ly, without regarding any of the Rules, or Restraints of Religion; made the best of this World, and had no Hopes, no Thoughts of another. Sensual Wits they were, who, 'tis probable, took Pleasure in ridiculing the Notion of a Life to come, and saying scornfully of it, that it was a Dark
Standing Revelation,

Dark invisible State, of which they knew nothing, and could not easily believe much, till they had some more Authentic Accounts of it, than as yet had been given them. Might they indeed receive News from thence, by an Hand that was to be rely'd on; would any of their old Companions in Vice, who had made the sad Experiment, be so kind as to return and certify them of what he had learnt, they should readily give up their Assent to so Commanding an Evidence, and suit their Practices to that Persuasion: but till they saw somewhat of this Nature done, they desir'd to be excus'd.

To confute these vain Reasonings and Pretences, our Saviour made use of that instructive and affecting Parable, which concludes with the Words I have read to you. I need not lay before you the several Circumstances of that Parable: it is sufficient, if I put you in mind, how, towards the Close of it, the Rich Man is represent-ed, lifting up his Eyes from the Place of Punishment allotted to him in the other World, discerning Abraham afar off, and Lazarus.
Lazarus together with him in Glory; and making this Request, among others, to the blessed Patriarch, that he would please to send Lazarus to his five Brethren, now alive, in order to testify unto them, lest they also (says he) come into this Place of Torment. A Request, very fitly address'd to Abraham, the Father of the Jewish Nation, on the Account both of his great Familiarity and Friendship * with God, which might enable him; and his known Character of Compassion and Tenderness †, which would incline him to perform it. Nevertheless, Abraham, instead of indulging the Supplicant in his Desire of new Evidence, refers him to That, which his Brethren already had; They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them: They have Moses and the Prophets, whom God, for my sake, and in Virtue of the Covenant made with Me, and my Seed, sent to their Forefathers, and by whom he reveal'd his Own Will, and their Duty in a more ample Manner, than it had been declar'd to any of my Descendants before them. This Stand-
Standing Revelation, which They (and which none but they, and the rest of my Seed) enjoy, was attested in the most Solemn, Authentick, and Credible Manner; and is sufficient to influence their Faith and Practice, if they do but attend to it: They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear Them. Not satisfied with this Answer, the tormented Person renews his Intercession, with the same Freedom that the Patriarch himself had once us’d in behalf of the Sodomites; representing farther to Abraham, That the Means of Conviction, which his Brethren enjoy’d, tho' sufficient, yet not having prevail’d, it would be great Charity to try Others; and that the Expedient now propos’d, could not fail of Success: Nay, Father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the Dead, they will repent. He thought so, but Abraham knew otherwise; and therefore shuts up the Discourse with this full and final Resolution of the Case, That, If they heard not Moses and the Prophets, neither would they be persuaded, tho’ one rose from the Dead.
The Meaning of which Words, s e r m, when cast into a General Proposition, is, that "They, who are not induc'd to Be-
lieve and Live as they ought to do, by " those Discoveries which God hath made," and those Commands which he hath gi-
given to them in Scripture; would stand " out against any Evidence, any Appli-
cation whatsoever; even that of a Mus-
fenger, sent Express from the other " World, to inform, and reclaim them.

This is, I confess, a very surprizing Truth, and not likely to be entertain'd readily, upon the first proposal. That I may therefore set it in as clear a Light as is possible, I shall endeavour, in what follows,

I. To State and Limit the due Extent of it.

II. To confirm the Truth, so stated, by various Arguments and Reflecti-
os. After which, I shall,

III. Deduce some Inferences from it.
As to the Extent of this Assertion, we may observe,

First, That it is evidently to be understood of such Persons only, as are placed in the same Circumstances with the five Brethren in the Parable; such, consequently, as have been born, where the True Religion is professed, and bred up in the Belief of it; have had all the early Prejudices of Education on the side of Truth, and all manner of Opportunities and Advantages towards acquainting themselves with the Grounds of it; and yet, notwithstanding all these Advantages, have shut their Eyes against it, and withstood its Force. For, as to others, who have liv'd under the guidance of Reason alone, without the Assistance of Supernatural Light, it is highly probable, that tho' Moses and the Prophets, [the Tenor of a Divine Revelation] when first propos'd to them, should not; yet Miracles, or a Message from the Dead, would persuade them; according to what is elsewhere laid down by our Saviour; That, If the mighty Works,
the best Means of Conviction.

Works, which were done in Chorazin and Bethsaida, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented in Sackcloth and Ashes.

Secondly, Neither is the Assertion to be rigorously extended to All those, who have been educated under the Influence of a Divine Revelation, and yet liv'd in Opposition to the Rules of it: for there is great Reason to believe, that there are many Persons, who through the Heat of their Lusts and Passions, through the Contagion of Ill Example, or too deep an Immersion in the Affairs of Life, swerve exceedingly from the Rules of their Holy Faith; and yet would, upon such an extraordinary Warning as is mention'd in the Text, be brought to comply with them. But this Truth is pointed chiefly, if not solely, upon Sinners of the first Rate, who have cast off all Regard for Piety and Goodness; have set up for a Life of Sensé, and are Wicked by Principle; for such likewise those Five Brethren were; they liv'd in the same Degree of Luxury and Uncharitableness, as their dead
dead Brother had done; they heard not Moses and the Prophets, believ'd nothing of Religion, of its Threatnings, or its Promises; look'd upon all Revelation as a Cheat, and all Pretenders to it, as Impostors. Of such as these we may suppose the Text to affirm, that even a Message from the Dead would not be sufficient to reclaim them. We may observe,

Thirdly, That even of these profligate Creatures themselves it is not said, That so astonishing a Scene would make no manner of Impression, would have no present Influence upon them; but only, That it would not produce a lasting Effect, nor work an entire Conversion. It is certain, that they would be very much roused and awaken'd by such a Sight; but they would not, however, be convinc'd, and reform'd; καὶ ἐκείνης ἡ ἀλήθεια, says the Original; an Expression of some force, which our English Translation doth not fully reach, and which plainly signifieth, that they would not be so far wrought upon, as to change their whole Mind, and Course of Life, and become New Creatures.

Regard
Regard being had to these several Restrictions, the Doctrine of the Text may, I think, be more fully represented to you after this Manner: That where Men have been brought up in the firm Belief of a Divine Revelation, and have afterwards shaken it off, have reason'd themselves not only into a Disbelief, but a Contempt of it, and given themselves up to commit Iniquity with Greediness; in such a case, the standing Ordinary Means of Conviction failing to influence them, it is not to be expected, that any extraordinary Means, of what kind soever, should be able to do it; no, not tho' One should come from the Dead, on purpose to warn them of their Danger. For, however such a Message might startle and amaze them at the first, might for a while put new Thoughts, new Resolutions into them; yet it would work no Total Change: They, who were absolute Infidels before such a Message, would, in all probability, continue Infidels still.

Vol. II. E Which
A Standing Revelation,

SERM. Which Truth, thus largely explain'd and stated, I proceed now, under my Second General Head, to confirm, by various Arguments and Reflections. And First, we will suppose, that such a Message from the Dead, as That, for which the Rich Man here intercedes, is really in itself an Argument of greater Strength and Force to persuade a Sinner out of the Error of his Ways, than any Standing Revelation, however so well attested and confirm'd: I will shew, nevertheless, that it would not be comply'd with. Because

First, It is not for want of Strength, that the Standing Ordinary Ways of Proof are rejected, but for want of Sincerity and a disinterested Mind in those to whom they are propos'd; and the same want of Sincerity, the same Adhesion to Vice, and Aversion from Goodness, will be equally a Reason for their rejecting any Proof whatsoever. The Evidence they had before, was enough, amply enough to convince them; but they were resolv'd not to be convinc'd: and to Those, who are resolv'd not to be convinc'd, all Motives, all
all Arguments are equal. He that shuts his Eyes against a small Light, on purpose to avoid the Sight of somewhat that displeases him, would (for the same reason) shut them also against the Sun itself; and not be brought to see that, which he had no mind to see, let it be plac'd in never so clear a Light, and never so near him. The Truth is, such a Man understands by his Will; and believes a Thing True, or False, merely as it agrees, or disagrees with a Violent Inclination: and therefore, whilst that Inclination lasts in its Strength, he discerns nothing of the different degrees of Evidence, nor distinguisheth at all between a Weak Motive and a Strong one. But,

duly, A Motive, however stronger in itself than Another, may yet make a weaker Impression, when employ'd, after that the Motive of less, tho' sufficient, Strength hath been already resifted. For the Mind doth, by every degree of affected Unbelief, contract more and more of a general Indisposition towards Believing: so that such a Proof, as would
have been closed with certainly at the first, shall be set aside easily afterwards, when a Man hath been us'd to dispute himself out of plain Truths, and to go against the Light of his own Understanding. 'Tis in Infidelity, as in a vicious Course of Life; a sturdy, hardened Sinner shall advance to the utmost pitch of Impiety with less Difficulty, less Reluctance of Mind, than perhaps he took the first Steps in Wickedness, whilst his Conscience was yet Vigilant and Tender. Should therefore the Evidence of one arising from the Dead, be in itself more powerful than that of the Standing Gospel-Proofs, yet, we see, it would operate as little, or less than they, upon a Person who had before hand rejected those Proofs. Nay, 3dly, The peculiar Strength of the Motive may of itself perhaps contribute to frustrate the Efficacy of it; rendring it liable to be suspected by him to whom it is addressed. He is conscious, how little he hath deserv'd so Extraordinary a Privilege; how much rather he hath deserv'd to have the Ordinary Means of Grace with-
withdrawn, which he hath so long baffled and defy'd: and he will, therefore, as soon as his first Surprize is over, justly begin to wonder, how such a Favour came to be bestowed on him; why God should, for his Sake, do what was never before done, since the Foundations of the World were laid; should reverse the Laws of Nature merely to produce an Effect, which tends rather to spread the Interests of Irreligion, than to stop the Growth of it; which encourages Men to be as vicious as they can, in order to qualify themselves for God's greatest Indulgences and Mercies: for that (he well knows) is his only Qualification. He will conclude therefore, That there must have been some Mistake, or Delusion in the Matter. It might be a mere Dream which he saw, the Imagery of a melancholick Fancy; such as now and then presents itself to musing, thoughtful Men, when their Spirits are low, and the Spleen hath gotten Possession of them; and such as they mistake at that Time for a Reality, tho' they are afterwards satisfy'd, that it had
had no Existence any where, but in their Own disorder'd Imagination.

Or, If he cannot help Believing, that such things he saw and heard, he may still have room to believe, That what this Airy Phantom said, is not absolutely to be rely'd on: for it might be one of those Ill-Natur'd Beings, who are at Enmity with Mankind, and do therefore take Pleasure in disturbing and perplexing their Minds, and filling them with vain and groundless Terrors. Or it might, after all, be one of his jocund Unbelieving Acquaintance [now alive,] dress'd up in such a Form, and acting such a Part, on purpose to get the Advantage of his Credulity, and to expose him.

But whoever, or whatever it was, 'tis not conceivable that it should be indeed that very Person, whose Shape and Voice it assum'd: for if there be any such thing as Hell, he is certainly tormented in the Flames of it. And while he is so, can it be imagin'd that he should either be e-rough at Ease, or have Concern and Compassion enough for his surviving Friends.
the best Means of Conviction.

II.

to contrive such Expedients for their Recovery? and by that means defeat himself of the Pleasure he may one day hope for in their Company? Damn'd Spirits do not, surely, use to entertain such charitable Designs: They must needs be all Envy, Despair, and Rage; and have so much of a Diabolical Nature in them, as to wish rather, that all Men should share, than endeavour that any should escape, their Torments.

For these and many other Reasons, which the Evil Spirit, who is ever ready to assist Men's Doubts on these Occasions, will be sure to infuse, he'll suspend his Judgment of this strange Event a while, till he hath consider'd farther of it. In the mean time, during this Suspence, the Heat of the Impression abates, and that of his Lufts and Passions returns; and then 'tis odds but the Scale turns at last on Nature's Side, and the Evidence of one or two Senses gives Way to the united Bent and Tendency of all the five. Especially, if it be consider'd,
4thly, How far these Suspicions of his will be improv'd and heighten'd by the Raillery and Laughter, he will be sure to meet with, on this Head, from his old Friends and Companions. We may imagine, what Reception they would give to such a Story, and the Teller of it; how many pleasant and gay Things they would say on this Occasion: which will have so much the keener Edge, in the present Case, because they are turn'd upon One, who, 'tis probable, hath taken the like Liberties before; hath himself laugh'd with them on this very Supposition as loudly, and ridicul'd such Idle Tales, as heartily as any Man. They will be sure, therefore, to put him in mind of his own waking Thoughts, e'er these Dreams had as yet made their Impression on his Fancy, and to encounter him with those Reasonings, and that Scorn, with which he us'd to encounter others, on the like Occasions; till they have made him ashamed first to Vouch the Truth of the Relation, and afterwards even to Credit it. For, when a Man is surrounded on all Sides with Oppo-

sition
**the best Means of Conviction.**

Situation and Contempt for believing, what serm. he himself would not have believ'd, upon the Relation of another; and what, for his Vices sake, he passionately wishes he may not have Reason to believe; 'tis not hard to imagine, how he may be brought to give up the clearest Evidence, and suffer himself to be disputed out of his Senses. But if all these Engines fail of doing the Work; yet,

**Lastly, Time, and a Succession of other Objects will bring it about.** Every day the Impression loses somewhat of its Force, and grows Weaker, till at length it comes to lie under the same Disadvantage with the Standing Proofs of the Gospel, that is, to be distant; and, accordingly, to operate also (as those, and all other distant things do) but faintly upon careless unawaken'd Minds. They, who attend sick Beds, will tell you, how often they have met with Cases not unlike this; wherein Men, upon the near Approach of Death, have been rouz'd up into such a lively Sense of their Guilt, such a passionate degree of Concern and Remorse, that, if ten thousand Ghosts had
A Standing Revelation,

II.

had appear'd to them, and Hell itself had been laid open flaming to their View, they scarce could have had a fuller Conviction, or a greater Dread of their Danger: and yet, no sooner had their Distemper left them, but their good Thoughts and Resolutions began to leave them too; till they had at last, perhaps, forgotten their first Fears and Agonies as much, as if they had never felt them; their solemn Vows and Promises as thoroughly, as if they had never made them. Thus, in all likelihood, would it be with a Libertine, who should have a Visit made to him from the other World: the first Horror and Astonishment it rais'd, would go off by degrees, as new Thoughts, new Diversions came on; it would be driven out by Business, or Pleasure, or the various Accidents of Life, that might afterwards befall him; till, at last, he came, perhaps, to reflect upon it, with as much Indifference, as if it were a Story only, which he had heard, or read, and which he himself was no ways concern'd in.

Hither-
Hitherto I have suppos'd, That the Evidence of one risen from the Dead, hath really the Advantage, in point of Force and Efficacy, of any Standing Revelation, how well soever attested and confirm'd; and, proceeding on that Supposition, I have endeavour'd to shew, That such Evidence, however in itself forcible, would certainly not be comply'd with. But the Truth is, and, upon a fair Balance of the Advantages on either Side, it will appear, That the common Standing Rules of the Gospel are a more probable and powerful Means of Conviction than any such Message, or Miracle: And that, 

First, For this plain Reason, Because they include in them that very kind of Evidence, which is suppos'd to be so powerful; and do, withal, afford us several other Additional Proofs, of great Force and Clearness.

Among many Arguments, by which the Truth of our Religion is made out to us, This is but One, That the Promulgators of it, Jesus Christ, and his Apostles, did that very thing which is requir'd to be
be done; raised Men and Women from the dead, not once only, but often, in an indisputable Manner, and before many Witnesses. St. Peter rais'd Dorcas: Our Saviour rais'd the Ruler's Daughter, the Widow's Son, and Lazarus; the first of these, when she had just expir'd; the second, as he was carried to the Grave on his Bier; and the third, after he had been some time buried. And having, by these gradual Advances, manifested his Divine Power; he at last exerted the highest, and most glorious Degree of it; and raised Himself also, by his own All-quicking Virtue, and according to his Own express Prediction. We did not indeed see these things done; but we have such authentick Accounts of them, that we can no more doubt of their Reality, than if we had actually seen them. For tho' no Evidence affects the Fancy so strongly as that of Sense; yet there is Other Evidence, which gives as full Satisfaction, and as clear a Conviction to our Reason; so that there are some distant Matters of Fact, of the Truth of which we are as certain, as
we are of what happens before our Eyes; the concurring Accounts of many such Witnesses, as were every way qualified to inform us, and could have no Interest in deceiving us, and seal'd the Truth of their Testimony with their Blood, rendering it (Morally, as we speak, or, as we might speak) Absolutely impossible that these things should be false. And what can we say more for the Evidence that comes by the Senses? for can any thing be more certain than That, which 'tis impossible should not be true? And of this nature are many of those miraculous Facts, upon which the Truth of our Religion is founded; particularly, that most important Miracle of all, the Resurrection of our Lord: It is so convincingly attested, by such Persons, with such Circumstances, that They, who give themselves leisure to consider and weigh the Testimony, at what Distance soever they are placed from the Fact itself, cannot help closing with it; nor can they entertain any more Doubt of the Resurrection, than they do of the Crucifixion of Jesus. And therefore, I say,
say, if this Miracle of Christ's Rising from the Dead heretofore be not sufficient to convince a resolv'd Libertine; neither would the Raising of one now from the Dead be sufficient for that Purpose; since it would only be, the doing that over again which hath been done already, and of the Truth of which (all things consider'd) we have as much Reason to be satisfied, as if we our selves had stood by and seen it.

Thus far the Old Standing Proofs of the Gospel, and the New Miracle demand-ed, are (in reality and right Reason) Equal; and should therefore (reasonably) have equal Influence and Effect. But there are also several other Accessory Proofs, by which the Truth of the Gospel was farther demonstrated. It was attested by Miracles of all sorts, done in great Variety and Number; by the visible centring of all the Old Prophecies in the Person of Christ, and by the Completion of those Prophecies since, which He himself utter'd; by the Holy and Unblemish'd Lives, the Exemplary Sufferings and Deaths of
the Publishers of this Religion, and by the S E R M.
surpassing Excellence of that Heavenly Doctrine which they publish'd; finally, by the miraculous Increase of the Professors of Christianity, without any visible Grounds and Causes, and contrary to all Human Probability and Appearance. Now, if the Proof of a Future State, by an immediate Appearance of one from the Dead be (in truth, and at the bottom) but equal, to that single Proof of Christianity, taken from our Lord's Resurrection; how much inferior must it be to these several Proofs United? And therefore, how little Probability is there, that He, who is not wrought upon by the one, would be convinc'd by the other? But I have not time to pursue this fruitful Head of Argument as far as it deserves; by displaying, first, the General Evidences of our Religion, in all their Force and Brightness, and then, comparing them with That of a particular Apparition; and, by this means, Calculating, as it were, the several Degrees of Credibility and Conviction, by which the One surpasseth the Other.
Serm. Such an Attempt would carry me beyond the Bounds of a single Discourse. I have Room only at present to suggest a General Reflection or two, which may contribute to illustrate this Point; and proceed therefore to observe,

Secondly, Another great Advantage which the Standing Proofs of the Gospel have over such an Extraordinary Appearance; that this hath all its Force at once, upon the first Impression, and is ever afterwards in a declining State; so that the longer it continues upon the Mind, and the oftner it is thought of, the more it loses: whereas Those, on the contrary, gain Strength and Ground upon us by Degrees; and the more they are consider'd and weigh'd, the more they are approv'd.

There is a like Difference between the ways in which these several Proofs operate, as there is between the several Impressions made upon thoughtful Minds by the Works of Art, and Nature. The Works of Art, which are extremely nice and curious, strike and surprize us most upon the first View;
View; but the better we are acquainted with them; the less we wonder at them: Whereas the Works of Nature will bear a Thousand Views, and Reviews, and will still appear new to us; the more frequently and narrowly we look into them; the more occasion we shall have to admire their fine and subtle Texture, their Beauty, and Use, and excellent Contrivance: The same we may say of the Standing Evidences of the Gospel; every time they are consider'd and enquir'd into, they gain upon sincere unbyass'd Minds, appear still more reasonable and satisfactory than before, and more worthy every way of that inimitable Power and Skill which wrought them: And, on that Account, they are, doubtless, better contriv'd to work a rational, a deep, and durable Conviction in us, than those astonishing Motives, which exert all their Force at once; upon the first Proposal. An Argument, that is some time working its way into the Understanding, will at last take the surer hold of it; as those Trees, which have the slowest Growth, are, for that Reason,
Serm. Reason, of the longest Continuance. To all which, we may add, in the

Third place, That, let the Evidence of such a particular Miracle be never so bright and clear, yet it is still but Particular; and must, therefore, want that kind of Force, that Degree of Influence, which accrues to a Standing General Proof, from its having been try'd and approv'd, and consented to by Men of all Ranks and Capacities, of all Tempers and Interests, of all Ages and Nations. A wise Man is then best satisfy'd with his own Reasonings and Persuasions, when he finds that wise and considering Men have in like Manner reason'd, and been in like Manner persuaded; that the same Argument, which weighs with him, has weigh'd with Thousands, and Ten thousand times ten thousands before him; and is such as hath borne down all Opposition, where-ever it hath been fairly propos'd, and calmly consider'd. Such a Reflection, tho' it carries nothing perfectly decisive in it, yet creates a mighty Confidence in his Breast, and strengthens him much in his Opinion. Where-
Whereas He, who is to be wrought upon by a special Miracle, hath no Helps, no Advantages of this kind toward clearing his Doubts, or supporting his Assurance. All the Force of the Motive lies entirely within itself; it receives no Collateral Strength from external Considerations; it wants those degrees of Credibility that spring from Authority, and concurring Opinions: which is one Reason why (as I told you) a Man is capable of being disputed out of the Truth and Reality of such a Matter of Fact, tho' he saw it with his Eyes.

This therefore is a farther Advantage, which the Standing Proofs of a Revelation have over any occasional Miracle; That, in the admitting such Proofs, we do but fall in with the General Sense and Persuasion of those among whom we converse: whereas we cannot affirm the Truth of such a Miracle, without incurring the Scorn and Derision; at least, not without running cross to the Belief and Apprehension, of the rest of Mankind; a Difficulty, which (as hath been already shewn) a mo-
A Standing Revelation,

II. desf and good Man is scarce able, but a
Man addicted to his Vices, is neither able
nor willing, for the meer sake of Truth,
to encounter.

Let us lay these several Reflections to-
gether, and we shall find, "That even a
Message from the other World is not an
Argument of such invincible Strength,
but it would be resifted by such as had
before-hand resifted the General Proofs
of the Gospel; and that our Saviour
therefore utter'd no Paradox, but a
great, a clear, and certain Truth, when
he said, That they who hear not Moses
and the Prophets, will not be persuad-
ed, though one rose from the Dead."
From which Truth it is now Time, as my

III. Third General Head directs, to deduce
the several Inferences, which I intended.
And,

First, We learn from hence, what is
the true Use and End of Miracles: They
are not private, but publick Proofs; not
Things to be done in a Corner, for the
sake of single Persons, but before Multi-
tudes,
tudes, and in the Face of the Sun. Again, SERM.
They are Signs to those who believe not, not to those who believe: I mean, that the Great, the Chief End of them is, to establish the Truth of a New Revelation in those Countries where, and at the Time when, it is first promulg’d and propagated; not to confirm Men in the Belief of it, after it is sufficiently establish’d. Miracles are the immediate Act of Omnipotence; and therefore, not to be employ’d, but where the Importance of the Occasion requires them: much less are they to be employ’d, where they are neither requisite, nor likely to succeed; as the Case is, where Persons, who are not convinc’d by the Old Miracles, demand New ones. It follows from hence,

Secondly, That we have great reason to look upon the high Pretenions which the Roman Church makes to Miracles, as groundless, and to reject her Vain and Fabulous Accounts of them. Half the Saints, which have place in her peculiar Calendar, were, if you will believe Her, converted by Miracles: Apparitions, Visions, and
and Intercourses of all kinds between the Dead and the Living, are the frequent and familiar Embellishments of those pious Romances, her Legends; which exceed the Scripture itself in Wonders, and do, indeed, by that Means, contradict the Doctrine and Design of it: for, where Moses and the Prophets are receiv’d, there, a continu’d Succession of Miracles is needless; and consequently, not to be expected, believ’d, or pretended. It may be a

Third Use of what hath been said, To take an Occasion from thence of Considering, how sure the Foundation of God standeth, [that Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, upon which the Church is built, Jesus Christ himself being the Head Corner-Stone, as the Collect for this Day speaks;] how very Strong and Irrefragable the first Evidences of Christianity needs must be, since they appear (both from Reason and Revelation) to be such, as that They who resisted them, would resist every thing besides them. But this is sufficiently understood from the whole Tenor.
Tenor of the preceding Argument: Which instructs us also, in the

_Fourth_ place, to condemn the Folly and Impiety of those Persons (for such there have been) who have obliged themselves to each other, to appear after Death, and give an Account of their Condition in another World; and the worse Use that hath been made of these Ill Contracts, when the surviving Party hath hardened himself in his Wickedness, upon the Other's Failure. It is stupidly foolish, thus to venture our Salvation upon an Experiment, which we know not whether God will suffer, and which, we have all the Reason imaginable to think, he will not suffer to take place. It is highly impious to resolve to persist in our Unbelief, till something more is done for our Conviction, than God hath thought fit should be done, for the Conviction of any Man in our Circumstances. An Apostle, indeed, once said, _Except I shall see in his Hands the Print of the Nails, and put my Finger into the Print of the Nails, and thrust my Hand into his Side, I will_
A Standing Revelation,

I will not believe; and God was pleased to stoop to his Request, and to plant Faith in his Heart by such an Experiment. But it was on the Account of the Publick Character he was to bear, as an Apostle; that is, a Witness of the Resurrection of Christ to the rest of the World; and it might therefore be fit, that he himself should, in a very particular and extraordinary Way, be satisfy'd of it; not merely for his Own sake, but for the sake of all Those who should hereafter believe in his Testimony. The manner of his Conviction was design'd, not as a peculiar Privilege to Him; but as a Standing Miracle, a lasting Argument for the Conviction of Others, to the very End of the World. Besides, though flow of Belief, he was at the Bottom honest and sincere; not led into those Doubts which he entertain'd, by his Lusts and Vices; not a Revolter from the Truth which he had once embrac'd: And They, therefore, have no Reason to expect to be favour'd as He was, who stand not possess'd of any One of those Qualifications that belong'd to
the best Means of Conviction.

II.

to Him, but are (generally speaking) the very Reverse of his Character.

Fifthly, From the same Truth we may also be taught to correct a Vain Thought, which we are sometimes apt to entertain: That, if it had been our Lot to converse with Christ and his Apostles, and to be Eye-Witnesses of their Miracles; we should, by such an Advantage, have been secur'd from any Degree of Doubt, or In-fidelity: Whereas certain it is, that They, who at this Distance from the first Rife of the Gospel, after weighing the several Evidences of it, waver in their Faith, would have waver'd though they had seen the first Promulgers of it work Wonders. Even that Sight itself did not hinder many, to whom the Gospel was first preach'd, from turning it into Lasciviousness, and denying the Lord Jesus, as St. Jude complains. Deceiv'd we are, if we think, that God hath not furnish'd every Age of the Church with sufficient Inducement to embrace the Faith; and the latest Ages, perhaps, with the strongest Inducements to it. Indeed, the Lustré of the Primitive Miracles is now wanting to us;
us: but then we are freed from several Inconveniences, under which the first Christians laboured; and we enjoy likewise several Advantages which they wanted. We have no Original Prejudices against the Gospel to subdue, as they had; for we have been educated in the Belief of it: We are not tempted, as they were, to revolt from it, by the Dread of Dangers and Death; for all manner of Encouragements attend Our Profession of it. The miraculous Success of the Apostles Preaching, and the Accomplishment of many of their Predictions, which to those early Christians were Matters of Faith only, are to Us Matters of Sight and Experience. And we, that live at the greatest Distance from the Age of the Apostles, have in this the Advantage of such as were much nearer to them: That even these last and worst of Times have produced the best Apologies for our Faith, the most Accurate, and Rational, and Unanswerable Accounts of the Truth of Christianity. To apply, therefore, the Words of Solomon to the present Case; Say not thou, What is the Cause that the
the best Means of Conviction.

Former Days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely of this thing.

The Last Inference, which the Doctrine deliver'd suggests to us, is, That we should be invited from thence to magnify and to adore the Divine Wisdom, which hath so order'd the first Proofs and Evidences of our Faith, that they will be equally satisfactory and convincing to the End of the World. I know (faith the Wise Man) that whatsoever God doth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it; and God doth it, that Man should fear before him. Accordingly, he hath propos'd a Standing Revelation, so well confirm'd by Miracles, once for all, that it should be needless to recur to them, ever afterwards, for the Conviction of any Man, who was born within the Pale of Christianity. This was the shortest, the fittest, and wisest Way that could have been taken; the best suited to the Majesty of God, and to the other Methods of his Providence; and the best accommodated also to the Nature, Capacities, and Interests of Men. It had been below him, by an immediate Interposition of
of his Omnipotence, to have been appealing every day to his Creatures for the Truth of his Religion; an Endless, and an Unbecoming Task, to be put upon offering Supernatural Proofs, for the Conviction of impious Men, as often as their Infidelity should be pleas'd to demand them! Not so doth he proceed in the Government of the Natural World: He made it, indeed, at the first, after a Miraculous and Incomprehensible manner; but he steers and directs the Affairs of it, ever since, by standing Rules and Laws, and by the Ordinary Ministry of Second Causes. With Equal Wisdom hath he temper'd the Conduct of the Moral World also: for tho' he usher'd in the Mosaic, and Christian Institutions, by a great Variety of amazing Signs and Wonders; yet, as soon as the Truth of those Revelations was thus illustriously manifested, and the Accounts of these things were committed to Writing, Miracles in great measure ceased; and the Appeal afterwards was to the written Word, [to the Law, and to the Testimony,] which supply'd the Room of them.

Indeed,
Indeed, Motives that address themselves coolly to our Reason, are fittest to be employed upon Reasonable Creatures: It is no ways congruous, that God should be always frightening and astonishing Men into an Acknowledgment of the Truth, who were made to be wrought upon by calm Evidence, and gentle Methods of Persuasion. Should such a Miracle as that which is mentioned in the Text, be indulg'd to One, Others would think themselves equally entitled to it; and, if indulg'd to many, it would no longer have the Effect of a Miracle, its Force and Influence would be lost by the Frequency of it. Or, supposing it to continue in its full Strength, how often soever repeated; yet the Faith it produc'd would not be so free and voluntary an Act, as That ought to be, to which are annex'd all the Glorious and Invaluable Privileges of Believing. In a word, Good men have no need of a Miracle; for they are convinc'd, without it: And it would be of dangerous Consequence to the Bad: for They, we find, would not, even with it, be convinc'd. And therefore, the Allowance
Standing Revelation, &c.

S E R M. ance of such a Favour to them, would serve only to render them more Obdurate and more Inexcusable; it would enhance their Guilt, and increase their Condemnation.

Let us then, from these, and such Considerations as these, be led to reverence the Infinite Wisdom and Goodness of God in all his Transactions with Men! Let us learn, not to dispute the Methods of his Providence; but humbly and implicitly to acquiesce in them, and to adore them. Let us satisfy ourselves, That every thing is certainly order'd by Him after the aptest, and best, and most becoming Manner, tho' our first Apprehensions should suggest otherwise to us; and that no Contrivance, no Policy, no Prudence whatsoever can, in any respect, deviate from his Scheme, without leaving us in a much worse Condition than it found us! For,

Great and marvellous are thy Works, Lord God Almighty! Just and True are all thy Ways, thou King of Saints!

To thee, (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost) be render'd, as is most due, all possible Honour, Adoration, and Praise, now, and for ever!
A SERMON
PREACH'D in the
GUILD-HALL Chapel,
LONDON, Sept. 28. 1706.
Being the Day of the
ELECTION
Of the Right Honourable the
LORD MAYOR.
To the Right Honourable
Sir THOMAS RAWLINSON,
Lord Mayor of the City of LONDON.

My Lord,

Q U I E T at Home, and Conquest Abroad, are two of the greatest Blessings that can happen to a People; and these have remarkably distinguished the Year of Your Lordship's Magistracy: which, as it hath been a continued Scene of Victories and Successes, so it began, and ended, without any of those unnatural Struggles for the Chair, which have so long and often disturb'd the Peace of this great City. That those Passions, which seem now to be somewhat calm'd, may be entirely laid asleep, and never more awaken'd: that the City may flourish in Trade and Wealth, and all Manner of outward Advantages; particularly, that it may never want such Magistrates to guide and govern it, as Your Lordship and your worthy Successor, is the sincere Wish, and hearty Prayer of,

My LORD,
Your most Obedient, Humble Servant,
FR. ATTERBURY.
If Job xxix. 14.

I put on Righteousness, and it clothed me; my Judgment was as a Robe, and a Diadem.

Job's Reflections on the flourishing Estate he had once enjoy'd, did at the same time afflict, and encourage him. Doubtless, it encreas'd the Smart of his present Sufferings, to compare them with his former Happiness: and yet a Remembrance of the good Use he had made of Prosperity, contributed to support his Mind under the heavy Weight of Adversity which then lay upon him. He had been a Person, not only of great Opulence, but Authority; a Chief Magistrate in the Place where he dwelt; as appears from several Passages in the Book which bears his Name: and he had (it seems) executed that high Office justly and honourably; with great Satisfaction to himself, and with the Universal Applause.
A Sermon preach'd at the

Sermon

plaus'd of his Country. To this Consideration therefore he retreats, in the midst of all his Pressures, with Comfort and Confidence; in this Thought, notwithstanding the sad Afflictions with which he was overwhelm'd, he mightily exults and triumphs. For hear, how he expresses himself on this Occasion, in the Verses next to that of the Text! I deliver'd the Poor that cry'd, says he; the Fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The Blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the Widow's Heart to sing for Joy. I was Eyes to the Blind, and Feet was I to the Lame; I was a Father to the Poor, and the Cause which I knew not, I searched out: and I brake the Jaws of the Wicked, and pluck'd the Spoil out of his Teeth. One would imagine these to be the Expressions of a Man, bless'd with Ease, and Affluence, and Power; not of one, who had been just stripp'd of all those Advantages, and plung'd in the deepest Miseries, and was now sitting Naked, upon a Dunghill! But the Spirit
of a Man will sustain his Infirmities; the Consciousness of Integrity, the Sense of a Life spent in doing Good will enable a Man to bear up under any Change of Circumstances; and, whatever his outward Condition may be, is such an inward Spring of Contentment and Pleasure, as cannot fail. This was that, which not only arm'd the Mind of Job with Firmness and Fortitude, but fill'd it also with those pleasing Reflections which the Words I have read to you, contain. Therein he particularly mentions, and values himself upon, the Compassion, and Readiness, and Zeal, with which he had apply'd himself to relieve the injur'd and afflicted; the Impartiality he had observ'd; the great Diligence he had us'd, and the fearless Courage he had shewn, in the Administration of Justice: He adds also, in the Words of the Text; I put on Righteousness, and it clothed me; my Judgment was as a Robe, and a Diadem; that is, my chief Delight, my greatest Honour, and Happiness lay in thus discharging the Duties of my Station; so
that, in Comparison of it, I undervalu'd all the Ensigns of Authority which belong'd to me, all the Pomp and Splendor of Life with which I was surrounded.

The Words therefore will afford us a proper Occasion of considering,

I. First, What a Publick Blessing a good Magistrate is: for it is on this Supposition, that the Reflections, which Job here makes to his own Comfort and Advantage, are built.

II. Secondly, The Regard that is justly paid the Magistrate, on this account, in those outward Marks of Distinction and Honour with which he is attended. These have their Uses, with respect both to Him, and to the Community over which he presides. However, he must remember, always, in the

III. Third place, That the Chief Honour of the Magistrate consists in maintaining the Dignity of his Character by suitable Actions,
ACTIONS, and in discharging the high TRUST SERM: that is repos'd in him, with Integrity, Wisdom, and Courage. Then doth he appear most Venerable, and every way Valuable, when, with upright Job, he can truly say, I put on Righteousness, and it clothed me; my Judgment was as a Robe, and a Diadem.

We may, I say, in the FIRST place, Take Occasion from hence to consider, What a Publick Blessing a good Magistrate is. The Virtues of private Persons, how bright and Exemplary soever, operate but on Few; on those only who are near enough to observe, and inclin'd to imitate them: their Sphere of Action is narrow, and their Influence is confin'd to it. But a just and wise Magistrate, is a Blessing as extensive as the Community to which he belongs; a Blessing, which includes all other Blessings whatsoever, that relate to this Life; secures to us the Possession, and enhances the Value of all of them; which renders the Condition of the Happiest among Men still
A Sermon preach'd at the

Serm. Still more happy, and the State of the Meanest less miserable, than it would otherwise be: and for the Enjoyment of which no one Man can well envy another; because all Men in their several Ranks, and according to their several proportions and degrees, do alike share in it.

Psal. 33:2. As the precious Ointment upon the Head, which ran down unto the Beard of Aaron, and went down from thence even to the Skirts of his Cloathing: Such, and so Universal are the Benefits which a good Ruler beflows; in like manner are they deriv'd from him, the Head, and gently diffus'd over the whole Body which he governs, refreshing every Part of it, as they descend, from the Highest to the Lowest. I shall not attempt to prove a Point, in itself so Evident; to us especially of this happy Island, who have the most convincing Argument for it, our own Experience; and are bless'd with a Reign, the Advantages of which are common to Prince and People, to the meanest Subjects, as well as to those of the highest Place and Dignity: All share in them,
and All therefore have Reason to bless God for them, and for the great Instrument of his Goodness, by which he bestows them.

However, as manifest a Truth as this is, it may deserve sometimes to be inculcated; because we are too apt, all of us, to forget it; and some Men have ventured to espouse such wild Opinions, as do, in effect, subvert and deny it.

The Benefits of a just and good Government to those who are so happy as to be under it, like Health to vigorous Bodies, or Fruitful Seasons in Temperate Climes, are such common and familiar Blessings, that they are seldom either valued or relish'd, as they ought to be. We sleep over our Happiness, Great as it is, and want to be rouz'd into a quick and thankful Sense of it, either by an actual Change of Circumstances, or by a Comparison of our own Case with that of other Men.

Few of us consider, how much we are indebted to Government itself, because few of us can, or do represent to our-
elves in lively colours, how wretched
the Condition of Mankind would, and
must be without it; how to That we
owe, not only the Safety of our Persons,
and the Propriety of our Possessions, but
our Improvement in the several Arts and
Advantages of Civil Life, and in all
Knowledge, both Human, and Divine;
even in the Knowledge of the Blessed
Nature, and Will of God himself, and
of the best Ways of serving, honouring,
and adoring him. We, who are us'd to
see Men acting under the Awe of Civil
Justice, cannot readily conceive, what
Wild and Savage Creatures they would
be, without it; and how much beholden
therefore, we are to that wise Contri-
vance, which makes use of our Fear to
quell our other Passions and Lufts, as
Beasts and Birds of Prey are employ'd to
hunt down those of their Kind. The In-
conveniences attending all, even the best
of Governments, we quickly see, and
feel, and are nicely sensible of the Share
that we bear in them; and, tho' these
be little in comparison of those mighty
Advances in...
Advantages that redound to us from thence, yet we muse so much on the one, that we are apt altogether to overlook, and forget the other.

Our Ingratitude in this respect, goes farther: for some there have been, who have disputed even against Magistracy itself, as an Unchristian Institution; or deny'd at least, that the Power of the Sword could, on any Account, be lawfully exercised by the Followers of a meek and suffering Jesus. And this hath been maintained, not only by warm Enthusiasts, but by cooler and more discerning Heads, even by some of those who style themselves Unitarians, and would be thought to reason better, and see farther into the Sense of the Scripture than any Men. I think, they have given no good Proof of either, in asserting this Extravagant and Pernicious Principle; for which, after all, they have no ground or colour, but a Passage or two of Scripture, miserably perverted, in opposition to many express Texts, and indeed to the whole Tenor of Divine Writ. Strange it is, that They, who,
who, in matters of Faith, reject the plainest Sense of Scripture, because it seems to disagree with what they call Reason; should, in this case, reject the plainest Reason in the World, because of a Text or two in Scripture, that may be thought to clash with it. But the true Reason of their flying to this strange Doctrine was, to be Even with the Magistrate; who, they found, was against Them; and they resolv'd therefore at any rate to be against Him. However, this Opinion (like some others, that have been since taken up by other Sectaries) was to last no longer than they were undermost. For so the Event actually prov'd, in Relation to the German Anabaptists: who no sooner got the Reins into their own Hands, than they alter'd their Minds in this Point; and tho' they held the Power of the Civil Sword to be altogether unlawful, whilst They were to be govern'd by it, yet they esteem'd it very Lawful, and very Convenient, when it came to Their turn to govern: The Earth; now, and the fulness thereof were the Lord's, and the Meek were.
were to inherit it. The Unitarians indeed never had, any of them, such an Opportunity of explaining themselves; should they have found one, it is very probable they would have made the same Use of it. Let us leave these absurd Tenets, whenever they revive, to be confuted by that Power which they thus affront and deny; and let us proceed to the Consideration of what I observ'd from the Text, in the

Second place, Concerning those outward Marks of Distinction and Splendor which are allotted to the Magistrate, and which the Robe and Diadem, expressly here mention'd by Job, may be supposed to comprehend.

The Practice of all Ages, and all Countries (whether Christian, or Heathen; Polite, or Barbarous) hath been, in this manner to do Honour to Those, who are invested with Publick Authority. The Reasons are obvious; I shall mention some of them. It was intended by this means,
First, to excite the Magistrate to a due degree of Vigilance, and Concern for the Publick Good: That He, being conscious of the true End for which these Encouragements were given, might study by all possible Ways to deserve them; and to excel the rest of Mankind as much in Worthy Deeds and Achievements, as he out-shines them in all other Advantages. The Honours, and the Burthens, of great Posts and Employs, as they were join'd together at the first, so were they designed never to be separated. The Magistrate was not made great, in order to afford him Opportunities of indulging himself in Sloth, and Vice; but in order to inspire him with Resolutions of living suitably to his high Profession and Calling; that, whatsoever things are Honest, whatsoever things are Just, whatsoever things are Lovely, whatsoever things are of good Report, if there be any Virtue, and if there be any Praise, he might be induced to think on these things, and to abound in the Practice of them. A

Second
Second Reason of these Marks of State and Dignity, which are annex'd to Magistracy, is, for the Security of the Magistrate's Person, in which the Publick Tranquillity and Safety are always involv'd. He, who will faithfully perform his Duty, in a Station of great Trust and Power, must needs incur the utter Enmity of many, and the high Displeasure of more; he must sometimes struggle with the Passions and Interests, resist the Applications, and even punish the Vices of Men potent in the Common-wealth, who will employ their ill-gotten Influence towards procuring Impunity, or extorting undue Favours, for themselves, or their Dependents. He must conquer all these Difficulties, and remove all these Hindrances out of the Way that leads to Justice; must dare even to break the Jaws of the Wicked, and to pluck the spoil out of his Teeth; i.e. to ravish the Prey from any mighty Oppressor, when he hath seiz'd, and is just ready to devour it. He is the Guardian of the Publick Quiet; appointed to restrain Violence, to quell Seditions and
and Tumults, and to preserve that Order and Peace which preserves the World. It is apparent, on these, and many other Accounts, what Hazards a good Magistrate runs; and therefore the Retinue of State which belongs to him, is such, as may at the same time be his Ornament and Defence: the Publick justly screening him from the Dangers which he is to incur for the sake of it. 

A Third plain Reason of the Publick Honours done to the Magistrate is, that he may not only be secure, but had also in due Estimation and Reverence by all those who are subject to him. 'Tis by Respect and Distance that Authority is upheld; and 'tis by the outward Marks and Ensigns of Honour that respect is secure'd, especially from Vulgar Minds, which do not enter into the true Reason of Things, but are govern'd by Appearances. 'Tis in the Civil Government, as in the Offices of Religion; which, were they stript of all the External Decencies of Worship, would not make a due Impression on the Minds of those who assist at them. But
Election of the Lord Mayor.

a discreet Use of proper and becoming Ceremonies, renders the Publick Service of the Church Solemn and Affecting; awes the Unbeliever, inspirits the Sluggish, and enflames even the Devout Worshipper. In like manner, the Solemnities that encompass the Magistrate, add Dignity to all his Actions, and Weight to all his Words and Opinions; producing such Effects, as Job, in that Chapter from whence my Text is taken, hath thus elegantly describ'd; When I went out, says he, to the Gate through the City, when I prepared my Seat in the Street; the Young Men saw me and hid themselves, and the Aged arose and stood up: Unto me Men gave ear and waited, and kept silence at my Counsel; after my words they spake not again, and my speech dropped upon them: And they waited for me, as for the Rain, and open'd their Mouth wide as for the latter Rain.

Finally, These external Marks of Honour are therefore appropriated to the Magistrate, that he might be invited from thence to Reverence Himself:
that he may be led to remember, *Whose Image and Superscription* he carries; not only that of the Community, over which he presides, and for which he acts, but the Image even of God himself, by whom *the Powers that be, are ordain'd*, and from whom they must ultimately derive their Authority. The Outward Splendor of his Office, is the Badge and Token of that Glorious and Sacred Character which he inwardly bears: and the one of these, therefore, ought constantly to put him in mind of the Other, and excite him to act up to it, throughout the whole Course of his Administration. He who thus esteems and reverences himself, will not fail to take the truest Methods towards procuring Esteem and Reverence from others; he will exercise himself with Pleasure, and without Weariness, in that God-like Employment of doing Good, which is assign'd him; and by reason of which even the Title of *God* is in Scripture bestowed on him: He will do nothing that is beneath his high Station, nor omit doing any thing which becomes it: He will not
not prostitute his Power to mean and undue Ends; nor stoop to little and low Arts of courting the Favour of the People, without doing them real Service: He will stand his Ground against all the Attacks that can be made upon his Probity; no Man's Power shall scare him from doing his Duty, no Man's Importunities shall weary him, no Man's Flattery shall bribe him, no By-Views of his own shall mislead him: He will arm himself perfectly in his Integrity: *Righteousness shall be the Girdle of his Loins, and Faithfulness the Girdle of his Reins.* He will know how to prize his Advantages, and to relish the Honours which he enjoys, as they are the Testimonies of Publick Esteem, and the Rewards of Merit: but he will not so far please himself with them, as to forget what I, under my

*Third, and last General Head, propos'd to consider; That the chief Honour of the Magistrate consists, in maintaining the Dignity of his Character by suitable Actions, and in discharging the*
high Trust that is reposed in him, with Integrity, Wisdom and Courage.

Some Magistrates are contented that their Places should adorn them: and Some also there are, who study to adorn their Places, and to reflect back again the Lustre they receive from thence; so that we may apply to them what was said of Simon the Son of Onias, That, when he put on the Robe of Honour, and was clothed with the Perfection of Glory, he made the Garment of Holiness honourable.

To many such Worthy Magistrates as these, who have thus reputably fill'd the Chief Seats of Power in this great City, I am now addressing my Discourse: and whom, therefore, if I detain with a short account of the pressling Obligations of this Sort which lie on the Magistrate, and of the best Means of discharging them; I shall not, I hope, be thought so much to prescribe Directions for the future, as to praise what is already past, and to give Honour to Those to whom Honour is justly due, for their Publick Services.
Election of the Lord Mayor.

To be very desirous of a good Name, and very careful to do every thing, that we innocently and prudently may, to obtain it, is so far from being a Fault, even in private Persons, that it is their great and indispensable Duty; but Magistrates and Ministers of Justice are in a peculiar manner obliged to it: for they have more Opportunities than other Men have, of purchasing publick Esteem by deserving well of Mankind; and such Opportunities always infer Obligations.

Reputation is the great Engine, by which those who are posse's'd of Power, must make that Power serviceable to the Ends and Uses of Government. The Rods and Axes of Princes, and their Deputies, may awe many into Obedience; but the Fame of their Goodness, and Justice, and other Virtues, will work on more; will make Men not only obedient, but willing to obey, and ready to come into every thing that is done, or design'd, for the Publick Advantage, by Those who (they are satisfy'd) sincerely mean it.
An Established Character spreads the Influence of such as move in a high Sphere, on all around, and beneath them; it reaches farther than their own Care and Providence, or that of their inferior Officers can possibly do: It acts for them, when they themselves cease to act, and renders their Administration both Prosperous and Easy.

Besides, the Actions of Men in high Stations, are all Conspicuous; and liable to be scann'd, and sifted. They cannot hide themselves from the Eyes of the World, as private Men can: Even those, who attend on their State and Dignity, and make up their Honourable Train, are, as it were, so many Spies, placed upon them by the Publick, to observe them nearly, and report their Character. Praise therefore or Blame, being the necessary Consequence of Every thing they do, they have more reason to act always, with an immediate Regard to the Opinion of the World, than other Men have; and to resolve to make all those Actions
Election of the Lord Mayor.

Actions worthy of Observation, which are sure to be observ'd.

Great Places are never well fill'd, but by Great Minds; and it is as natural to a Great Mind to seek Honour by a due discharge of an high Trust, as it is to little Men to make less Advantages of it.

On all these Accounts, Reputation becomes a signal, a very peculiar Blessing to Magistrates; and their Pursuit of it is not only allowable, but laudable: so it be carried on by Methods which are every way Innocent and Justifiable, and with a View of making a good Use of a good Character when establish'd; so That be not rested in, as an End, but only employ'd as a Means of doing still farther good, and as an Encouragement to proceed in doing it: In a word, so Honour be not sought after by the Violation of Conscience, or the Praise of Men preferr'd, in any respect, to the Praise of God.

Now, tho' all the several Branches of the Magistrate's Duty, when faithfully perform'd, and all those good Qualifications of Mind, which enable him to perform it,
it, do, in some Degree or other, tend to create a Publick Esteem of him; yet there are some points of Duty, some Qualifications, that have a more direct and immediate Influence to this purpose: They are such as follow.

A good Magistrate, who would endear himself to those whom he governs, must, above all things, be endued with a publick Spirit, that is, with such an excellent Temper of Mind, as sets him loose from all narrow selfish Views, and makes him bend all his Thoughts and Endeavours towards promoting the Common Good of the Society which is committed to his Care. The Welfare of That is the Chief Point which he is to carry always in his Eye, and by which he is to govern all his Counsels, Designs and Actions; directing his Zeal against, or for Persons and Things, in Proportion as they do, or do not interfere with it. To this good End he must sacrifice his Time, his Ease, and his private Advantages; and think all of them well spent, in obtaining it. No-thing certainly can better become a Per-
son, invested with a publick Character, than such a publick Spirit; nor is there any thing likely to procure him larger Returns of Esteem and Honour: The Common Acknowledgments of the Body will at length center in him, who appears sincerely to aim at the Common Benefit. Especially, if to this be added

An Impartial Distribution of Justice, without respect of Persons, Interests or Opinions. When Right is to be done, the good Magistrate will make no distinction of Small, or Great, Friend, or Enemy, Citizen, or Stranger, for the Judgment is God's; and he will look upon himself as pronouncing it in his head, and as accountable at his Bar for the Equity of it. The Scripture forbids even the Countenancing a Poor Man in his Cause; which is a popular Way of perverting Justice, that some Men have dealt in; tho' without that Success, which they propos'd to themselves in it. But the truly upright Judge will always countenance Right, and discountenance Wrong, whoever be the Injurer, or the
Sufferer. And he who steers his Course invariably by this Rule, takes the surest, as well as the honestest, way to make all Men to praise him.

Courtes[y and Condescension is another happy Quality, which never fails to make its way into the good Opinion, and into the very Hearts of those who are under the good Magistrate's Inspection: when he doth, as it were, lessen the Distance which there is between Him and Other Men, and by that means, allay the Envy which always attends an high Station; when he is Easy of Access, Affable, Patient to hear, and to search out the Cause that he knew not; when as a Roman Writer speaks*, not only his Door, but his very Countenance is open to all that have any Occasion to approach him.

Bounty also, and a generous Contempt of that in which too many Men place

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their Happiness, must come in to heighten his Character. There is scarce any Quality more truly Popular than this, or more suitable to the Publick Station, in which he shines. It includes Hospitality to the better Sort, and Charity to the Poor; two Virtues, that are never exercised so gracefully and well, as when they accompany Each other. Hospitality sometimes degenerates into Profuseness, and ends in Madness and Folly. When it doth so, it ill deserves the Name of a Virtue: even Parsimony itself, which fits but ill upon Persons of a publick Figure, is yet the more pardonable Excess of the two. It is as little the sign of a Wise, as of a Good Man, to suffer the Bounds of Temperance to be transgress'd, in order to purchase the false (tho' fashionable) Repute of a Generous Entertainer. But, in the Offices of Charity there is no Danger of Excess; the Exercise of them is always well-pleasing to God, and honourable among Men. *He hath dispersed, faith the Psalmist, he hath given to the Poor; his Horn shall be exalted with Honour.*

But
But of all good Qualities, That which
recommends and adorns the Magistrate
most, is his Care of Religion; which, as
it is the most valuable thing in the World,
so it gives the truest Value to Them, who
promote the Esteem and Practice of it,
by their Example, Authority, Influence,
and Encouragement: for, them that ho-
nour me, says God, will I honour; as on
the other hand, they that despise me shall
be lightly esteemed. This is the Magistrate's
peculiar Province, his most Glorious Em-
ployment; to give Countenance to Piety
and Virtue, and to rebuke Vice and Pro-
phaneness; to put the Laws of Men in
Execution against such as trample on the
Laws of God; and to protect Religion,
and All that belongs to it, from the daring
Insults of those who fit in the Seat of the
Scorn. And (give me leave to say, that)
there never was a time, when the Inter-
position of the Magistrate was more ne-
cessary to secure the Honour of Religion,
and uphold the Authority of those great
Principles of it, by which his own Au-
thority is best upheld. For we live in Evil
Days,
Election of the Lord Mayor.

Days, when the most important and con-
feß'd Truths, such as by the Witèst and
Best Men in all Ages have been rever'd,
are by Licentious Tongues question'd,
argued against, derided; and these things
not only whisper'd in Corners, but pro-
claimed upon the House-tops; own'd and
publish'd, in Defiance of the Common
Persuasion, the Common Reason, and
the Common Interest of Mankind, and
of All Authority, both Sacred and Civil.
Libertinism hath erected its Standard,
hath declared War against Religion, and
openly lifted Men of its Side and Party: a
general Looseness of Principles and Man-
ners, hath seiz'd on us like a Pestilence;
a Pestilence that walketh not in Dark-
ness, but wasteth at Noon-Day: The
Contagion of which hath spread itself
through all Ranks and Degrees of Men;
hath infected both the Camp, and the
Congregation: Who knows, what the
Zeal and Courage of a good Magistrate
might do towards stopping it? Let Phi-
nehas stand up and execute Judgment,
that so this Plague may be stayed.

God
God hath indeed bless'd the Arms of the best of Queens, taken up in Defence of the best of Causes, with unparallel'd Successes abroad: may she be alike Victorious at home, over Lewdness and Infidelity! over such as reverence not the Altars of God, and scorn those who minister at them! That so the Felicities of her Wonderful Reign may be complete, and we may have nothing left to wish for on Earth but the Continuance of it; nor have any thing more to fear from the ill Influence of our Vices, than we have now (God be thanked) from the Attempts of our Enemies!

Now to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be all Praise and Glory ascribed, from henceforth for evermore. Amen.
A

SERMON
Preach'd at St. PAUL's,
Before the Right Honourable
The Lord Mayor,
AND
The Court of Aldermen,
On Wednesday, April 9, 1707.
Being a Day of
Publick Humiliation,
Appointed by Authority.
Psalm xxx. 6, 7, 8.

In my Prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my Mountain to stand strong: Thou didst hide thy Face, and I was troubled. I cried to Thee, O Lord: and unto the Lord I made Supplication.

Or, as it is in the Translation now used in our Church:

In my Prosperity I said, I shall not be removed: Thou, Lord, of thy Goodness hast made my Hill so strong. Thou didst turn thy Face from me, and I was troubled. Then cried I unto Thee, O Lord, and gat me to my Lord right humbly.

Serm. The Collection of Psalms, which make a Part of the Daily Service of the Church, is on no account more valuable than this, That therein the Heart of
of Holy David (the Man after God's own Heart) is laid open and naked before us: The several Postures of his devout Soul in all Conditions and Circumstances of Life; his Hopes and Fears, his Desires and Aversions, his Joys and Griefs are there display'd with great Simplicity and Freedom: All his Infirmities and Defects are distinctly register'd; the false Judgments he made of things are own'd; and the Methods pointed out by which he rectify'd them. And these Accounts of himself are very instructive and useful to all such as seriously peruse and study them, and are desirous of improving themselves in Piety and Virtue, by the Means of so admirable a Pattern.

One great Instance of this kind we have in the Words of the Text; wherein the good Psalmist acknowledges and condemns the foolish Thoughts, which a Reflection on the prosperous State of his Affairs had sometimes occasion'd in him: In my Prosperity I said, (that is, vainly said) I shall never be moved; Thou, Lord, in thy Goodness, hadst made my Hill so strong!
A Fast Sermon preach'd

SERM. strong! or, according to the Reading of the LXX. which seems more significant, hast added Strength to my Dignity! He proceeds to shew, how God began to punish this vain Elation of Mind, by withdrawing his Favours: Thou didst turn thy Face from me, and I was troubled: And then, how he entitled himself to the continuance of the Divine Protection and Goodness, by Humiliation and Prayer: I cried unto Thee, O Lord, and gat me to my Lord right humbly.

Our Successes have been very great and surprising; and our Hearts, I fear, have been but too much lifted up by the Means of them. So that we have reason to humble ourselves before God (as we now do) by Fasting and Prayer; lest he should punish our Misuse of his Mercies, by stopping the Course of them.

I shall speak therefore not unsuitably either to the Design of these Words, or to the Occasion of this Assembly: If I consider,

I. What
before the Lord Mayor, &c.

I. What *Ill Effects* great *Prosperity* usually hath on the Minds of a People; tempting them to *say* within themselves, as the Psalmist did, in the like Case; *We shall never be moved; Thou, Lord, of thy Goodness hast made our Hill so strong.*

II. How *Vain, and Sinful,* these *Imaginations* are: For holy *David,* by his way of mentioning, plainly condemns them.

III. What the *Consequence* of them often is: They provoke God to *stop* the *Current* of his *Goodness* towards us: *He hideth his Face, and we are troubled.*

IV. In what manner we are to behave ourselves, in order to *secure* the *Continuance* of the *Divine Favour* and *Protection: We must cry unto the Lord, and get ourselves to our God right humbly.*
I. Good Men know very well, that we are here in a State of Discipline and Tryal; that we are to pass thro' things Temporal to things Eternal, and that nothing therefore can be reckon'd Good or Bad to us in this Life, any farther than it prepares, or indisposes us for the Enjoyments of another. And yet they over-look this great Truth in the Judgments they generally pass on the several States of Adversity and Prosperity. The Temptations and Difficulties, that attend the Former of these, they can easily see, and dread at a Distance; but they have no Apprehension, no Suspicions of the Dangerous Consequences of the Latter. And yet it is certain, that the Temptations of Prosperity are the most mischievous and fatal of the two; insinuating themselves after a gentle, but very powerful manner; so that we are but little aware of them, and less able to withstand them. Wise Agur therefore equally directs his Petition against both these Extremes: *Give me* (says he) *neither Poverty,*
before the Lord Mayor, &c.

vert, nor Riches; left (on the one Side) SERM. I be Poor and steal, or (on the other) I be full and deny thee, and say, who is the Lord? And, according to this Pattern, hath our Church taught us to pray that God would, not only in all time of our Tribulation, but in all time of our Wealth also, be pleas'd to deliver us.

Indeed, a State of great Prosperity and Abundance, as it exposes us to various Temptations, and furnishes us with all manner of Opportunities and Encouragements to Sin, so it is often prejudicial to us, on this account (particularly mention'd in the Text); that it swells the Mind with undue Thoughts and Opinions, renders us Secure and Careless, Proud, Vain, Self-sufficient; banishes from our Thoughts a lively Sense of Religion, and of our dependence on God; and puts us upon so eager a Pursuit of the Advantages of Life that are within our reach, or view, as to leave us neither Room, nor Inclination to reflect on the great Author and Bestower
of them. We do then, more than at any other time, lie open to the Impressions of Flattery; which we admit without Scruple, because we think we deserve it; and, that we may be sure not to want it, we take care to flatter ourselves with imaginary Scenes and Prospects of future Happiness: We like our present Circumstances well, and dream of no Change but for the better; not doubting but that to Morrow shall be as this Day, and much more abundant. We say, we shall die in our Nests, and multiply our Days as the Sand; that we shall never be removed, God in his Goodness having made our Hill so strong!

And this enchanting Power, which Prosperity hath over the Minds of private Persons, is more remarkable in Relation to great States and Kingdoms; where all Ranks and Orders of Men being equally concern'd in publick Blessings, equally join in spreading the Infection that attends them; and they mutually teach, and are taught that Lestion of vain Confidence and Security, which our Corrupt Nature,
Nature, unencourag'd by Example, is of itself but too apt to learn. A very prosperous People, flush'd with great Victories and Successes, are rarely known to confine their Joys within the Bounds of Moderation and Innocence; are seldom so Pious, so Humble, so Just, or so Provident as they ought to be, in order to perpetuate and increase their Happiness: Their Manners wax generally more and more Corrupt, in proportion as their Blessings abound; till their Vices perhaps give back all those Advantages which their Victories procur'd, and Prosperity itself becomes their Ruin.

Of this the People of Israel were a very signal and instructive Instance. As never any Nation upon Earth was bless'd with more frequent and visible Interpositions of Divine Providence in its behalf; so none ever made a worse Use of them: For no sooner were they at any time deliver'd out of the Hand of their Enemies, and establish'd in Peace and Plenty, but they grew Careless, Dissolute, and Prophane; and by misemploying the Advantages, which God
IIS

A Fast Sermon preach'd

SERM. God had thrown into their Lap, provok'd him (as far as in them lay) forthwith to withdraw them. Jesburem waxed fat, and kicked: Then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his Salvation. And therefore, Moses who had observ'd the Backslidings of this wanton People for Forty Years together in the Wilderness, when they were come to the Borders of the promis'd Land, and were now going to posses it, warns them, with the greatest Earnestness, of those dangerous Temptations to which Prosperity (he knew) would expose them.

Deut. viii. 12, 13, 14, 17.

Beware (says he) lest when thou hast Eaten, 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 thou hast is multiplied: Then thine Heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, that 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.

This
This was one perverse Effect of their sitting Safe and at Ease under their Vines and their Fig-trees; that they began to forget, from whence that Ease and Safety came, and to transfer all the Honour of it upon themselves, by sacrificing unto their own Nets, and burning Incense unto their Drags; a sort of Idolatry, as hateful to God as any other whatsoever.

Or, if they vouchsafed to give God the Praise of his Goodness, yet they did it only in order to boast the Interest they had in him: They were the peculiar Care of Heaven, the Nation which above all Nations he delighted to honour; their Mountain was strong, and should not be removed, no Harm should come nigh their Dwellings.

What secret Imaginations of this kind we have fondly entertain’d, upon our Successes, is best known to God and our own Hearts: Only this is apparent, that we have not since so behav’d ourselves towards God, as if we preserv’d upon our Minds a grateful Remembrance of his Mercies; that we have scarce manifested our
our Sense of them any otherwise than by the Formalities of a Thanksgiving; that whatever Ground we may have gotten upon our Enemies, we have gotten none upon our Vices, the worst Enemies of the two; but are even subdu'd and led Captive by the one, while we triumph so gloriously over the others. The Life and Power of Religion decays apace here at Home, while we are spreading the Honour of our Arms far and wide through foreign Nations: To second Causes we seem to trust, without depending (at least without expressing so devoutly as we ought to do our dependence) on the First.

Deut. iv. 6. It is sufficient that this great Nation is a wise and understanding People; that we have Counsel and Strength for the War; and where Counsel and Strength is, how can they choose but prevail? In a word, we so live, and so act, as if we thought our present Prosperity founded on such a Rock, as could no ways be shaken; as if we were perfectly secure of the final Issue and Event of things, however we may behave ourselves; and had no
before the Lord Mayor, &c.

no longer any occasion for the special Serm.

Providence of God to watch over us for IV.
good, to direct all our Steps, and bless our Endeavours. How Vain and Sinful such Imaginations are, is what I propos'd, in the

II. Place, to shew. Two things there are, that lie at the Bottom of this false Confidence: We think that our Successes are a plain Indication of the Divine Favour towards us; and that, because we have succeeded hitherto, we shall succeed always, even until our Eye hath seen its Desire upon our Enemies.

May the Event every way answer our Expectation! However, we shall not be e'er the less likely to meet with Success, if we do not expect it too Confidently; and therefore it may be of some use to us to consider, whether, and how far we may, from the present prosperous State of our Affairs, conclude that God is with us of a truth, and will go on still to heap greater Blessings upon us, how little Care forever we have taken, or shall take to deserve them.

Military
Military Successes do, above all others, elevate the Minds of a People that are bless'd with them; because the Providence of God is thought to be more immediately concern'd in producing them. Indeed, there are no Events which do either confess a Divine Interposition so evidently, or deserve it so well, as those of Battle: which as they are of the utmost Consequence, and have sometimes decided not only the Fate of particular Provinces or Kingdoms, but the Empire of the whole World; so do they depend often on such remote and seemingly disproportioned Causes, turn on such little unheeded Accidents, as it is not in the Power of the most sagacious and experienc'd among the Sons of Men to prevent or foresee. War is a direct Appeal to God for the Decision of some Dispute, which can by no other means be possibly determin'd: and therefore there is reason to believe, that the Issues of it may in a peculiar manner be directed and over-rul'd by Providence: upon which account God is stily'd so often in Scripture, the Lord of Hosts, the God of
of the Armies of Israel, the God mighty in Battle; and he is said there to have sent his Angels, on some extraordinary Occasions, to fight for his People; and the discomfiture and slaughter of great Hosts is expressly attributed to their unseen assistance.

However, the Warlike Successes carry in them often the Evidences of a Divine Interposition, yet are they no sure marks of the Divine Favour. If they were, the Goths, and Saracens, and other Savage Nations which over-ran Europe and Asia, would have entitled themselves to the Favour of God by their Bloody and Barbarous Conquests: and even that most Christian Enemy with whom we contend, must, on the account of those Inhuman Ravages, which he so long committed with Equal Injustice and Success, have been accounted the Darling of Providence. No, such Conquerors as these are not the Favourites, but Scourges of God, as One of them flyl'd himself; the Instruments of that Vengeance which Heaven hath determin'd to pour out on such Nations, as have
have fill'd up the Measure of their Iniquities, and are grown ripe for Excision: and as soon therefore as that Sentence is executed, these Rods, these Instruments of Divine Displeasure, are themselves thrown into the Fire. From mere Success therefore nothing can be concluded in Favour of any Nation, upon whom it is bestowed. That Point can only be determin'd by considering, Whether the Cause for which they are engag'd, be just, and the Means also just, which they employ towards supporting it; but above all, whether the Moral Deserts of a People be such, that their Successes may be look'd upon as the just Reward of their Virtues. To the two first of these Advantages we may, I think, fairly lay claim; I wish we had as good a Title to the latter, and then our Confidence would not be ill grounded.

Our Successes have indeed been the Consequences of a Just and Honourable, nay Necessary War; in which we engag'd, not out of Ambition, Revenge, or any other unjustifiable Motive, but for the Defence
Defence of all that was dear to us, in respect either to this World or another. IV.

The Haughty Monarch, whose Heart God at last by our means hath humbled, was grasping at Universal Empire, preparing Chains for the Necks of free States and Princes, and laying Schemes for suppressing the Ancient Liberties, and removing the Ancient Boundaries of Kingdoms. Nor was he satisfy'd in subduing Mens Bodies, unless he enslaved their Souls also, and made the pure Profession of the Gospel give way to Superstition and Idolatry, wherever he had Power enough to expel the one, and establish the other. Nay, he pretended to give Laws even to our Succession here at Home, and to impose a Prince upon us, who should execute the Designs he had form'd against our Civil and Religious Liberties. It was high Time therefore to appeal once more to the Decision of the Sword, which, as it was justly drawn by us, so can it scarce safely be sheath'd, till the Thumbs and great Toes of Adonibezek Judg. i. 6; be cut off; I mean, till the Power of the
the great Troubler of our Peace be so far par'd and reduc'd, as that we may be under no Apprehensions of it for the Future.

Nor have the Means, which we have made use of to attain this great and good End, been any ways unsuitable to it. A just and righteous War may be prosecut-ed after a very unjust and unrighteous Manner; by perfidious Breaches of our Word, by such Treacherous Practices as the Law of Arms itself (loose as it is) condemns; by inhuman Cruelties, by Assassinations; by Tyrannical Methods of forcing Money into our Coffers, and Men into our Service. These are the dishonour-able Ways, which He, who formerly profess'd to fight for his Glory, hath not of late disdain'd to make use of. Thanks be to God, that as we have had no need, so neither doth it appear that we had any Inclination to try them! In every step of this long and bloody Dispute, we have shew'd ourselves fair, nay, good natur'd and generous Adversaries; and have car-ried on even our Hostilities with all the Humanity
Humanity and Mercy of which they are capable. We have spilt no Blood but in the Heat of the Battle, or the Chase; and have made Captivity itself as easy to the unfortunate as was possible. We have been firm and faithful to our Allies, without declining any Difficulties or Dangers, any Expence of Blood or Treasure, to which we had engaged ourselves; and we have even exceeded our Engagements. We have not made use of Rapine and Oppression at home, to support the Burden of the War abroad, but have carried it on by the free Gifts of a Willing People; nor can it be said, that the Publick Service hath been robb'd of any Part of those Supplies which were intended for it. We have not pillag'd those Rich Neighbouring Provinces which we rescued: Victory itself hath not made us Insolent Masters or Friends; nor have we taken Advantage from thence to enlarge either our Territories or our Pretensions, or to gain any thing to ourselves beyond the Honour of restoring Quiet to the World, and every ones Rights to their Just Owners.
And thus far therefore we have reason to look upon our Successes, as the Blessings of God upon the good Methods we have taken to support a good Cause, and as Declarations of Heaven in our Favour. However, they cannot be entirely depended on as such, till we have farther consider'd, whether our Piety and Virtue have borne a due Proportion to our Successes, and laid the Foundation for them: for, unless this be the Case, tho' God hath bless'd a Righteous Cause, yet he hath not bless'd it for the sake of those who are concern'd in it; and the Blessings which are not imparted to us for our own Sake, can be no Evidences of the Divine Favour towards us.

Let us then lay our Hands upon our Hearts, and impartially enquire, What good Qualities we had to recommend ourselves to the Favour of God, at our Entrance on this long War, and how we have behav'd ourselves throughout the Course of it.

No sooner was our Deliverance from the illegal Attempts of a late Reign completed,
before the Lord Mayor, &c.

pleted, but we forgat our Danger and our Duty; forsook the God that had preserv'd us, and lightly esteemed the Rock of our Salvation. That Spirit of Religion and Seriousness, by which we had just before distinguish'd ourselves, vanish'd all at once; and a Spirit of Levity and Libertinism, of Infidelity and Profaneness start ed up in the Room of it: Our Churches, that a little while before had been crowded, were now in great Measure deserted, our Sacraments, which had been frequented with so much Zeal, were approach'd more sparingly; the Dispensers of holy Things, who, for their Work's Sake, had been so highly regarded and reverenced, were made a By-Word and a Reproach, as the filth of the World, and the off-scouring of all things. Nor could their Immortal Labours against Poverty, by which they had contributed to the common Security, as much at least as any other Order of Men in the Kingdom, screen them from that Contempt, which was then so liberally pour'd upon them. In proportion as our Zeal for Re-
Sermon

IV.

Religion decay'd, Our Corruptions and Vices increased; an universal Dissolution of Manners began to prevail, a professed Disregard to all fixed Principles, whether in Matters Divine, or Human.

At the same time we were crumbled into various Factions, and Parties; all aiming at By-interests, without any sincere regard for the Publick Good: Odious Names of Distinction, which had slept, while the Dread of Popery hung over us, were reviv'd; and our private Quarrels were carried on against each other with as great Bitterness and Malice, as if we had now no common Enemy to unite and employ us.

With this Temper of Mind we entred into the War; Were we altered any way for the better, during the Course of it? Did the Vicissitudes of good and bad Fortune, which we then experienc'd, affect us with due Degrees of Humility, or Thankfulness? Could God prevail with us by all the sorts of Experiments, which he try'd, to forfake our Sins and our Follies? Could he awe us by his Rod, or
melt us by his Goodness into Repentance? S E R M.

Alas! instead of that, we wax'd worse and worse every Day, both as to Religion, and Morals; till we left off even to study the outward Appearances of Piety and Virtue; and were not contented merely to be, but affected even to be thought; Loose and Lawless. Edicts against Immorality and Prophaneness issu'd, Laws against Oaths and Execrations were fram'd; and we trampled both upon the one and the other, with Contempt and Impunity.

Whilst a Foreign War devour'd our Strength, and drain'd our Treasures, still Luxury and the Expences of Life increas'd at Home; nor were they check'd even by our Disgraces and Misfortunes. Our National Humiliations were ridicul'd by impious Mock Feasts; wherein the execrable Murther of our Martyr'd Sovereign was annually commemorated with Circumstances of so much Indignity and Scorn; as cannot be spoken of with Decency, or reflect'd on without Horror. When we wept, on this Occasion, and chastened our Souls with Fasting, that was
was to our Reproach: They that sat in the Gate, (some even of the Men of Greatness, and Business, and Gravity)

Psal. lxix. 10, 12.

spake against us; and we were the Song of the Drunkards, of vain, idle, dissolute Companions. The House of God itself hath been prophan’d by Riots; abominable Impurities, not to be mention’d, have been openly and daringly practis’d:

Ifa. iii. 9. We have declared our Sin, as Sodom, and have not hid it. We have talk’d much of reforming Mens Manners; pray God, we meant it! If any Step of that kind hath been taken, it is only what the Zeal of some private Persons suggested; the Execution of that glorious Design hath not been put into the Hands of Those, who should be best inclin’d, as they are most concern’d to promote it.

The Fundamental Articles of our Faith have been oppugn’d from the Press; Mysteries have been derided; the Immortal- lity of the Soul hath been denied; the Christian Priesthood set at naught and vi- lified; and even the High Priest of our Profession, the Blessed Jesus himself, treated
before the Lord Mayor, &c.

SERM. IV.

treated by a Blasphemous Pen * with as much Scorn and Malice, as when he appear'd before the Bar of Pilate. Hath a Nation so used their Gods, which are yet no Gods? or so vilify'd the Persons that belong'd to their Worship and Service?

Since these are some of the Methods, by which we qualify'd ourselves for our Successes, these some of the Returns which we made to God, after obtaining them; can we reasonably presume, that we are in the Favour of God on the Account of them! Can we justly promise ourselves, that, because we have succeeded hitherto, in spite of all our Sins and Provocations, we shall Succeed always? or rest secure, that the Mercies we have receiv'd, great as they are, were meant only as Earnests and Pledges of still greater, which are to follow?

Thus indeed we seem to think, and thus the present happy Prospect of our Affairs, humanly speaking, may seem to pre-

* See a Passage In the Ax laid to the Root of Christia-

* See a Passage In the Ax laid to the Root of Christi-
nity, cited from a Book, entitled, The History of the

Growth of Deism.
mife. And yet the sudden and surprizing
Turns, we ourselves have felt, or seen,
should not, methinks, suffer us too for-
wardly to admit such Thoughts; which
may indeed, (if God should be tempted
from thence to rebuke our Vanity) con-
tribute to blast the fairest Hopes, but can
be of no use towards rendring them ef-
fecual. Too great a Confidence in Suc-
cess is the likeliest way to prevent it;
because it hinders us from exerting our
Strength to the utmost, and making the
best Use of the Advantages which we en-
joy. It renders us indulgent to our Lufts
and Vices, careless of approving and re-
commending ourselves to God by Religi-
ous Duties, and by that means, securing
the Continuance of his Goodness to us.
It is like the Conceit about Absolute Ele-
ction to Eternal Life; which some En-
thusiaists entertaining, have been thereby
made more remiss in the Practice of those
Virtues which alone could secure their
Title to Heaven.

Let us then lay aside these vain and sin-
ful Imaginations, left the Consequence of
them
them should be, in Our Case, what it was in King David's; God did hide his Face, and he was troubled.

This is the Third Point, to which I propos'd to speak. But 'tis an unwelcome Task, a Subject which I care not much to insist on; and which, after all, I trust in God, we may not be concern'd in: because it is (I am sure) still in our Power to secure to ourselves an Interest in the Divine Mercies that are yet to come, and to lengthen the Course of our present Prosperity; if we do but in good earnest betake ourselves to the use of those Means which are prescrib'd in the Text, Humiliation and Prayer. Then cried I unto Thee, O Lord, and gat me to my God right humbly.

IV. These are the Duties, which we profess, on this Solemn Day, to perform. If with a true Christian Lowliness of Heart, and a devout Fervency of Soul we perform them, we shall find, that they will turn to a greater account to us,
us, than all the Warlike Preparations in which we trust, than the Alliances of our Potent Friends, or even the Fears of our Disheartned Enemies; that they will fight for us better than a mighty Shield, and strong Spear. If we do indeed humble ourselves before God this Day, not merely by the Outward Solemnities of a Fast, but by afflicting our Souls (as well as Bodies) for our Sins, by emptying our Hearts of all those vain and swelling Thoughts, which Prosperity hath infused into them; by acknowledging ourselves unworthy of the least of God's Mercies, at the same time that we enjoy the greatest; by ascribing to Him, all the Glory of what is past, and by renouncing all reliance on the Arm of Flesh for the Future; by deploring the mighty Guilt of our Transgressions, and renewing sincere Vows of Obedience: If, I say, we do in this manner sanctify the present Fast, if we seek unto God thus betimes, and make our Supplication to the Almighty; surely he will now awake for us, and make the habitation
before the Lord Mayor, &c.

...tation of our Righteousness prosperous; and, though our beginning hath not been small, yet our latter End shall greatly increase. No Sight is so pleasing to God, no Service is so acceptable to him, as the Publick Humiliations of a thankful People, in the midst of their Successes and Victories. Mighty is the Efficacy of such solemn Intercessions, even to avert Judgments that are already denounc'd, (as appears from the Case of the Ninevites) how much more available then must they be, to secure the Continuance of Blessings, and to confirm and establish the Prosperity which God hath already given us?

Lactantius and St. Austin are not afraid to confirm by their Suffrage the Observation made by the Heathen Writers*, that the flourishing Estate of the Roman Empire was owing to the Religious Disposition of that People; by which they ascrib'd all their Successes to the Heavenly Powers they Worshipp'd, and still advanc'd in their Regard for Religion, as they advanc'd in Greatness.

Diis
Diis Te minorem quod geris, imperas;
that point of time, when their Affairs
said a Roman to his Country-men, at
were most prosperous: It was because
that point of time, when their Affairs
they carried themselves with a due Sub-
were most prosperous: It was because
mission to the Gods, that Mankind was
they carried themselves with a due Sub-
made subject to them. Hath the Revela-
mision to the Gods, that Mankind was
tion of the Gospel of Christ made any
made subject to them. Hath the Revela-
Change in the methods of God's dealing
tion of the Gospel of Christ made any
with Kingdoms and Nations? If not——
Change in the methods of God's dealing
and the Reverence, which these Heathens
with Kingdoms and Nations? If not——
express'd towards their false Deities, was
and the Reverence, which these Heathens
so highly rewarded, may not We Chris-
express'd towards their false Deities, was
Christians, when we thus offer up our De-
so highly rewarded, may not We Chris-
votions to the true God, expect also a
Christians, when we thus offer up our De-
Blessing upon them? We certainly may;
votions to the true God, expect also a
if they come not from the Lips, but the
Blessing upon them? We certainly may;
Heart; from an Heart fill'd with a grate-
if they come not from the Lips, but the
ful Sense of Mercies receiv'd, and firmly
Heart; from an Heart fill'd with a grate-
resolved to do every thing in its Power
ful Sense of Mercies receiv'd, and firmly
toward deserving New ones: from an
resolved to do every thing in its Power
toward deserving New ones: from an
Heart, so affected as good David's was
Heart, so affected as good David's was
(not when he said, In my Prosperity I
(not when he said, In my Prosperity I
shall never be moved; but) when he had
shall never be moved; but) when he had
learnt to secure and increase his Prosper-
learnt to secure and increase his Prosper-
ity, by an humble Behaviour towards
ity, by an humble Behaviour towards
God, and a dutifull Reliance on his Providence; and did, under these Conviuions, compose the following Hymn, to be us'd (as it should seem) in the Publick Service of the Church, on some solemn Day of Humiliation.  

Lord (faith he) my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty, neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. As mighty things as thou hast done for me, I have not been exalted, either in Heart, or Look, on that account; nor have busied my self in searching out the secret reasons of thy distributing Prosperity, and Adversity, in such a manner as best pleaseth thee. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a Child that is weaned of his Mother; I have imitated the Humble, Modest, and Tractable Temper of the Infant-State; Yeas, my Soul is even as a weaned Child, it is as resign'd to thy Guidance, as entirely dependent on thy Care and Goodness. Upon which it very naturally follows—— Let Israel (that is, every Israelite indeed, who can thus truly say of him(elf) trust in the Lord,
SERM. IV.  Lord, from henceforth, and for ever! for there can be no surer way to Success, than by disclaiming all Confidence in ourselves, and referring the Events of things to God with an implicit Affiance.

Come on then, let as many of us, as have not been tempted by our Prosperity to entertain vain Thoughts, or are now resolv'd to dismiss them, bow ourselves before God, both publickly and privately, imploring the Continuance of his Blessings on that Righteous Cause wherein we are engag'd, and on Those, who by their Counsels, Courage, or Conduct uphold and strengthen it; especially on our most Gracious QUEEN, whose Exemplary Piety and Virtues are its greatest Ornament and Advantage, its chief Support and Stay: Who, as She hath the Successes of David, so hath receiv'd them with the same Religious Humility He did; and hath, by that means, we trust, laid a Foundation for more; which (if our Vices hinder not) He in due time will bestow, who regardeth the Lowliness of his Handmaid.
before the Lord Mayor, &c.

maiden, but scattereth the Proud in

the Imagination of their Hearts: Who

putteth down the mighty from their

Seat; but hath exalted, (and will exalt)

the Humble and Meek.

To him, Father, Son, and Holy Spi-
rit, be ascrib'd all Dominion and
Praise, Now, and for Evermore.
Amen!
A SPITTAL-SERMON

PREACH'D at

ST. BRIDGET'S CHURCH,

Before the Right Honourable the

LORD MAYOR, &c.

On Easter-Tuesday, April 7, 1707.

ST. MATTH. XXV. 40.

Verily I say unto you; Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.

SERM. V.

ST. PAUL being brought unto the Areopagus, or highest Court in Athens, to give an Account of the Doctrine he had preach'd concerning Jesus and the Resurrection, fitly took that Occasion to imprint on the Minds of those
those Magistrates, before whom he stood, the Belief of a Future Judgment, and to shew, what Connexion there was between the Rising of Jesus from the Grave, and his Coming to judge the World. God, Acts xvii. said he, hath appointed a Day, in the which he will judge the World in Righteousness, by that Man—whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given Assurance unto all Men, in that he hath raised him from the Dead. The Rising of Jesus from the Dead, was an irresistible Evidence of the Truth of his Doctrine; and one part of his Doctrine was, That he would judge the World. By Rising from the Dead, he took Possession of his Kingdom, (all Power being then given unto him both in Heaven and in Earth) and was to reign, till all his Enemies were put under his Feet, that is, till Evil Men, and Evil Spirits were judged; which was the last and most illustrious Instance, wherein his Kingly Power was to be exercised: And then (and not till then) he was to deliver up his Kingdoms to the Father. On these, (but more especially
on the former of these Accounts, did God give Assurance unto all Men, that he would judge the World in Righteousness, by that Man whom he had ordained, in that he raised him from the Dead.

The Festival of our Lord's Resurrection we have already celebrated; and may now therefore turn our Thoughts not improperly to consider the chief Consequence of his Resurrection; a Judgment to come: That Branch of it especially, which relates to the Enquiries that our Judge will then make concerning our Obedience to his great Commandment of Charity; the enforcing of which, is the pious and peculiar Design of these Annual Assemblies.

In the account of that Solemnity, which our Blessed Saviour himself hath given us, we are told, that he will then say to them on his right hand; Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and
and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Amaz'd at this merciful Sentence, and no ways conscious of any such Deserts, these good and humble Persons are said to reply; Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or, when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? To which our Saviour makes this memorable and gracious Return; fit to be engraven in the Hearts, and to be forever sounding in the Ears of all industrious Promoters of Charity; Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto Me. True it is, Me in Person ye never reliev'd, supported, comforted; but, since ye perform'd these kind Offices to others (who belong'd to me) at my Command, and for My Sake; I take what you did to them [even to one of the least of them] as done to myself; and shall, under that Notion, now give you an exceeding Re-
S E R M. compence for it. *Come, therefore, ye bles-

v. sed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom

prepared for you from the Foundation of

the World!

I do not think, this Account is to be

understood literally, but with such Al-

lowances as are usually made in the Ex-

plication of our Saviour's Parables; which

hold, not in every particular Circum-

stance, but only as to the main *Scope

and *Drift of them. Now the general

Design of this Relation manifestly is, to

propose to us two *Considerations, which

are powerful Inducements to the Practice

of Charity: One, "That upon *this Head

" we shall chiefly be examin'd and try'd,

" at the great Day of Account;" The

other, "That Acts of Mercy done to the

" Poor shall then be accepted, and re-

" warded, as done to our Saviour himself.

Of these two Points, the former is suf-

ficiently imply'd throughout the Tenor of

our Lord's Discourse, wherein all the In-

stances mention'd relate to the single

Head of Charity: The latter is directly

affirm'd in very emphatical Words, and
A Spittal-Sermon.

with a solemn Preface, never us’d by our Saviour, but to give us warning of some remarkable Truth that is to follow. Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto Me.

The Words therefore afford proper Matter for our Devout Reflection, under the two following Heads of Enquiry:

First, Why, in the Account given of the Proceedings at the Day of Judgment, Acts of Mercy alone are mention’d?

Secondly, In what Sense, and for what Reasons it may be presum’d, that our Saviour will then Accept the Acts of Mercy we now do to his Poor Brethren (such he vouchsafes to call them) as done to Himself.

I. As to the first of these Enquiries, it is to be consider’d, That the external Acts of Mercy here mention’d, are suppos’d to include that Principle of Divine Love, or Charity, from whence they flow,
SERM. and from which alone they derive all their Worth and Excellence. 'Tis the inward Habit, or Grace of Charity, which recommends the outward Act; so that the least and lowest Instances of Goodness, springing from this Source, are in the sight of God of great Price: even a Cup of cold Water given to a thirsty Disciple, in the Name of Christ, shall not lose its reward. Whereas the most extraordinary and shining Acts of Charity, when separated from a Principle of Divine Love, are of no Value; for, if we bestow all our Goods to feed the Poor, and have not Charity, it profiteth us nothing. And therefore the

First, And most obvious Account of the distinguishing mention here made of Acts of Mercy, may be taken from the surpassing Dignity and Worth of that Divine Grace which produceth them; which St. Paul tells us, is preferable even to Faith and Hope: for the greatest of these Three is Charity.

I should not wander from my Point, if I took occasion here largely to explain the
the Grounds and Reasons of this Preference; since whatever Excellence there is in the Cause, or Principle, must derive a proportionable Excellence also on the Effect; and therefore, a full Display of those Grounds and Reasons would tend to satisfy our present Enquiry. But having other Matter to offer, which is of nearer and plainer Use, I shall mention them only without insisting upon them.

Charity then, (or a Love of God, which works by a Love of our Neighbour) is greater than Faith, or Hope, because it supposes these Graces to be previously exercised, and is indeed the Result and Reward of them. Faith steadfastly believes, Hope eagerly expects; but Love, which is the End and Consummation of both, enjoys.

It not only unites us to God, but it makes us like him too, and transforms us into a Divine Image? for God is Love: whereas Faith and Hope have no place in the supreme Mind; and consequently, we ourselves bear no Resemblance to God, when we abound in them.

Charity
Charity is more Extensive, as to its Object and Use, than either of the two other Graces, which center ultimately in ourselves; for we believe, and we hope for Our own sakes: But Love (which is a more disinterested Principle) carries us out of ourselves, into Desires and Endeavours of promoting the Interests of Other Beings.

Charity excels also in point of Duration, for it never faileth; it doth not end with this World, but goes along with us into the next, where it will be advanced and perfected: but Faith and Hope shall then totally fail; the one being changed into Sight, the other into Enjoyment.

And indeed, well hath God suited these Graces to the several States to which they belong. Faith and Hope, which are useful in this Life only, may in this Life be exercised to Perfection. We may have so vigorous and piercing a Faith, as can be out-done by no Evidence, but that of Sight; we may have so erect and lively an Hope, as can only be exceeded by Fruition,
tion, in which it is lost. But Love is endless in its Degrees, as it is in its Duration; and is fitted therefore to an Immortal State, where it may be exerted and improved to all Eternity.

2. And this remarkable Property of Love will suggest to us one Reason, why Acts of Charity shall be enquir'd after so particularly, at the Day of general Account; because Good Men are then to be consign'd over to another State, a State of everlasting Love and Charity: And therefore the chief Enquiry must then be, How they have abounded in those Graces which qualify them best for an Admission into that State, and for a due Relish of the Divine Pleasures of it; how they have practis'd Charity here, the Exercise of which must be their Duty, and their Happiness for ever. Heaven, and Hell, are the proper Regions of Love, and Hatred; Mercy, and Uncharitableness: Blessed Angels, and pure Souls, exercis'd in the Ministry of Love, are to possess the one; Devils, and damn'd Spirits, who are all Rage, Envy, and Malice,
lice, are to inhabit the other. When we stand therefore on the Brinks and Confines of those States, at the Day of Doom, we shall be examin'd, how fit we severally are for such Places, and such Company: according as that appears, our several Mansions shall be suitably assign'd to us; and Men and Angels, Good and Bad, even We ourselves shall, upon the issue of this single Article, acknowledge the Justice of the Sentence. Indeed

3dly, This single Article is sufficient to Absolve, or Condemn us: for it is the short Test, and sure Proof of Universal Goodness. The whole Duty of a Christian is nothing but Love, varied through the several Kinds, Acts, and Degrees of it. And Works of Mercy, are the most Natural and Genuine Off-spring of Love; so that from these a Good Man is denominated. The Scripture therefore frequently sums up our Duty in Charity; and, for that reason styles it the fulfilling of the Law, and the Bond of Perfection. Indeed where Charity is, (that is, where the Blessed Fruits of Charity, springing from
from a true Principle of Divine Love, serm. are) there no other Christian Grace or Perfection can be totally wanting; and where Charity is not, there may be the imperfect Resemblances of other Christian Graces and Virtues, but not those Graces and Virtues themselves: for such they cannot be, unless fed, and invigorated, and animated by a Principle of Universal Charity. So that our Saviour, by professing to examine us on this Head, brings Matters to a short Issue, a single Point, by which our Cause may be decided as effectually, as by larger Enquiries. It will furnish us with a

4th Reason of his Conduct in this Cause, if we consider, how great a stress he laid upon this Duty, while he was upon Earth; how earnestly he recommended it; in how exalted a degree of Perfection he prescrib'd the practice of it to us: so that he cannot but enquire, with a particular Concern, how we have comply'd with it.

It is his peculiar, his distinguishing Precept, the special Mark and Badge of our Dis.
Discipleship: *A new Commandment* (said he) *I give unto you, that ye love one another; by this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have love one to another.* And upon the Article therefore of our Obedience to this *New Commandment*, he himself will declare, whether we do, or do not belong to him. It was one of the last Injunctions he gave, and often repeated to his Disciples, in that Divine Exhortation he made to them just before he entered on the Bloody Scene of his Passion; 'twas the great Direction he left with them, when he himself was leaving the World. The first and chief Enquiry, therefore, when he returns to Judgment, will be, *What Weight his Dying Words have had with us?*

*5. The Nature of the Sentence he is to pronounce, the Rule of Judgment by which he will at the Last-day proceed, requires that a particular Regard be then had to our Observation of this Precept. We shall be judg'd by the Grace and Mercy of the Gospel, and not by the Rigours of unrelenting Justice. God will indeed Judge*
Judge the World in Righteousness, but Evangelical, not a Legal Righteousness; and by the Intervention of the Man Christ Jesus, who is the Saviour, as well as the Judge of the World; and as such, hath procur'd that pardoning Grace for us, which mitigates and tempers the severity of the Rule, and entitles us to the Favour and Mercy of our Judge. But what Title can he have to Mercy himself, who hath not exercis'd it towards Others? Blessed are the Merciful, for they shall obtain Mercy, in that Day when Mercy rejoiceth against Judgment: But, James ii. on the other hand, They shall have Judgment without Mercy, who have shewed no Mercy. The Power of Covering Sin, is in Scripture ascrib'd to no other Grace, or Virtue whatsoever, but Charity: when therefore the Multitude of our Sins is to be Judg'd and Punish'd, the fittest and kindest Enquiry that our Judge can make, is, What Deeds of Charity we have to alledge in Extenuation of our Punishment?

6. The Secret manner, in which Acts of Mercy often are, and ought to be perform'd,
form'd, requires this publick Manifestation of them at the great Day of Account. There are, I think, but three Duties, in the Performance of which God hath, after a peculiar manner, recommended Secrecy to us; Alms, Fasting, and Prayer. The two latter of these (as far as we are oblig'd to Secrecy in the Discharge of them) relate chiefly to Ourselves, and to our own Concerns: but the first regards our Neighbour alone, and cannot therefore be done altogether without a Witness. However, as far as the Nature of this Duty will admit of Privacy, our Saviour hath enjoin'd it; and in Terms of a particular Significancy and Force. For he knew that Good and Bountiful Minds were sometimes inclin'd to Osten-tation, and ready to cover it with a Pre-tence of inciting others by Their Example; and therefore checks this vanity in these remarkable Words: Take heed, says he, that ye do not your Alms before Men, to be seen of them.—That thou dost not sound a Trumpet before thee, as the Hypocrites do, that they may have Glory
Glory of Men: Verily, I say unto you, they have their Reward. But when thou dost Alms, let not thy Left Hand know what thy Right Hand doth. And that we might be encourag'd punctually to observe this Precept, by a Reward proportion'd to the Nature of the Duty, therefore he adds; And thy Father, which seeth in Secret, shall Himself reward thee openly; that is, in the Sight of Angels and Men, at the great Day of Retribution. For that this is his Meaning, may appear from a parallel Place in St. Luke, where the Reward promis'd to Charity, is thus express'd; And thou shalt be Recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just; at that time, when God shall judge the Secrets of Men by Christ Jesus; shall openly punish their secret Sins, and openly own and reward their secret Virtues; their Acts of Charity especially, which, as they were, in Obedience to his Command, perform'd Privately, so they shall now, according to his Promise, be Rewarded Openly. A Reward, every way congruous, and fitting! For it gives God and
and good Men the Glory, that would otherwise be lost, of many retir'd Graces and Virtues; which deserve so much the rather to be publish'd, because they declin'd Observation! It reproaches, and fills with Confusion, those unmerciful and wicked Men, who look'd upon all such conceal'd Instances of Goodness, as unprofitable Folly, as the casting of our Bread upon the Waters, which, they did not think, would thus be found after many Days. It proclaims the Triumphs of Humanity and Goodness in a proper Audience, even before the whole Race of Mankind, then Assembled. The Objects of Mercy themselves will be present, and will, with Pleasure, discover the Blessed Hands that reliev'd them; nor shall their Testimony be wanting, when the Judge of the World doth, as it were, Point and Appeal to them in the Throng, as Evidences of the Equity of that Sentence he is then about to pronounce: Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto Me.

And
And this furnishes us with yet one more Reason, why our Saviour lays such a particular Stress on Acts of Mercy; because he looks upon every one of them as a Personal Kindness done to Himself; ye have done it unto me! How this is to be understood, and upon what Account our Lord is pleas'd to express himself on this Occasion, with so wondrous a Degree of Condescension, is what I, upon my Second general Head, propos'd to shew.

II. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto Me. To me! that is, at my Instance, and for my Sake; to my Brethren, as such, on account of their Relation to me; and what is thus done in Obedience to my Commands, and with a peculiar Regard to my Person, I esteem a Personal Kindness, and will acknowledge and reward it accordingly: For, as he elsewhere speaks, Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a Cup of cold Water only, in the Name of a Disciple, [or, as belonging to Christ]
Christ] verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his Reward.

It is certain, that those good Men, who take such Pleasure in relieving the Mis-erable, for Christ’s Sake, would not have been less forward to minister unto Christ himself, if they had been blessed with an Opportunity of doing it. Now, what they were thus ready to have done, our Saviour reckons as done, and places to their Ac-

2 Cor. viii. 12.

Mark, xii. 42, 43.

Rom. iv. 17.

count. For if there be first a willing Mind, it is accepted according to that a Man hath, and not according to that a Man hath not. And this is the Ground of that favourable Decision of his, in behalf of the Poor Widow, who, while many, that were rich, cast much into the Treasury, threw in two Mites——Verily (said he) she hath cast in more than they All! i. e. if she had had as much as they all had, she would have cast in more than they all did; and God respects, not the Gift, but the bountiful Mind and Inten-
tion of the Giver; calling (in this Sense also) the things that are not, as if they were.

But
A Spittal-Sermon.

But there is yet a more strict and proper Sense, in which the Words of our Lord may be understood. He hath taken our Nature upon him, and united it to himself; and is, therefore, on the account of this Union and Alliance, some way interested in the Joys and Griefs of those who share the same Nature with him. For, according to the reasoning of the Divine Writer to the Hebrews, both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one [i. e. are all partakers of the same Flesh and Blood; as he afterwards explains himself;] for which Cause he is not ashamed to call them Brethren.

We are indeed his Brethren, as we are Men: but we are still more so, as we are Christians; that is, as Members of that Mystical Body, of which Christ Jesus is the Head. Now (as St. Paul argues concerning this Mystical Body) whether one Member suffer, all the Members suffer with it; or one Member be honour’d, all the Members rejoice with it: The Head especially, which is

Vol. II. M the
the Principle of Life, and Motion, and Sense to the rest; and from which all the Body by Joints and Bands having Nourishment ministred, and being knit together, increaseth with the Increase of God. They are still the same Apostle's Words; who is everywhere full of this Union and Sympathy between Christ and his Members; having receiv'd very strong Impressions of it at the Time of his Conversion, when he heard that Voice from Heaven, Saul, Saul, Why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. In like manner as Jesus is persecuted, when any of his poor Members suffer, he is reliev'd also, when they are reliev'd.---Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Indeed, our Saviour is represented every where in Scripture as the special Patron of the Poor and the Afflicted, and as laying their Interests to Heart (as it were) more nearly than those of any
any other of his Members. The Reserm, son of which is not obscurely intimated to us.

Our Saviour's Humiliation consisted not merely in taking Human Nature upon him, but Human Nature cloth'd with all the lowest and meanest Circumstances of it. He led a Life of great Poverty, Shame, and Trouble; not having where to lay his Head, or wherewithal to supply his own Wants, without the Benevolence of others, or a Miracle: He was despised and rejected of Men, a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief; so that the rest of the World hid, as it were, their Faces from him. Now, in the Epistle to the Hebrews we are told, that, by thus taking on him the Seed of Abraham, he became a merciful and faithful High-Priest; who could be touched with the feeling of our Infirmities, because he was in all Points tempted like as we are, and himself also compassed with Infirmity. If then, by taking upon himself Human Nature at large, he hath a
SERM. compassionate and tender Sense of the Infirmities of Mankind in general; he must needs, in a peculiar manner, feel, and commiserate the Infirmities of the Poor, in which he himself was so eminent a Sharer. To the rest of Mankind he was ally'd indeed by his Humanity; but to the Poor, even by the humble and suffering Circumstances of it: He was made in the likeness of Men; but most like the meanest among the Sons of Men. Wherefore he is not ashamed to call them Brethren, by way of Distinction; to publish their near Relation to Him; to recommend their Case particularly to Us; to espouse all their Interests; to take part in all their Afflictions; and even to acknowledge the good Offices we do them, as done to himself—- I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto Me.

I have dispatch'd the Argument in both its Branches, which I undertook to consider. The Use we are now to make
make of it, is Obvious and Easy; so Obvious, that I question not but you have prevented me in this Respect, and have all along, as I pass'd from Point to Point, apply'd it to your selves, to the enforcing of the great Duty of Charity, to the inflaming your Souls with an ardent Love of it, and a Resolution of practising it in such an exalted Degree, as becomes the true Disciples (nay the Friends and Brethren) of Jesus. Many excellent things are spoken of this Divine Grace, in Scripture; many high Encomiums are there given of it; many encouraging Promises are made to it: but I question, whether all of them taken together, carry more Life, and Force, and Warmth in them, than the Two affecting Considerations I have explain'd to you. The Wit of Man cannot contrive (for even the Wisdom of God hath not suggested) any more pressing Motives, more powerful Incentives to the Exercise of Charity, than these; That we shall be judg'd by it at the last dreadful Day; and that then, all the Acts of Mercy
Mercy we have done to the Poor, shall by our Merciful Judge be own'd, and rewarded, as Personal Kindnesses done to himself.

What can awaken us to do Good, if the Sound of the last Trumpet cannot? If a lively Sense and Anticipation of the great Scene of Judgment which shall then be unfolded, of the Process which shall be form'd, of the Scrutiny which shall be made, of the Sentence which shall be pronounced; if, I say, the bright Ideas of these Solemnities, which the Scripture had taken care to imprint upon our Minds, do not excite us to abound in the Labour of Love, whilst it is yet Day, ere the Night cometh, when no Man can work; Vain will be the Attempt of rouzing us into the Love and Practice of Goodness, by any less astonishing Methods; all other Applications and Motives whatsoever will be lost upon us; and we must even be suffered to sleep on in our Security, and take our Rest, till our Judgment, which lingereth not,
A Spittal-Sermon.

overtakes us, and our Damnation, which slumbereth not, lays hold of us.

Do we, in good earnest, believe the account of that Day's Transaction which our Lord hath given us? Let us shew our Faith by our Works, and pass the time of our sojourning here (as it will then be well for us we had passed it) in the unwearyed Exercise of Beneficence and Charity. Can we believe that God hath appointed a Day wherein he will Judge the World by the Man Christ Jesus; without believing also, that he will judge it in that very Manner, and with those very Circumstances, which the Judge himself hath revealed to us? And if so, how can we ever think of appearing at that awful Tribunal, without being able to give a ready Answer to the Questions which he shall then put to us, about the Poor and the Afflicted, the Hungry and the Naked, the Sick and the Imprisoned? What Confusion of Face shall we be under, when that Grand Inquest begins; When an Account of our Wealth, and our Opportunities of doing
ing Good is display'd, on the one Side, and a Particular of our Use, or Misuse of them is given in, on the other? And it shall appear, that the Good Things we have done, are few and little, in comparison of those we have received? How shall we then wish (to no purpose wish) that it might be allowed us to live over our Lives again, in order to fill every Minute of them with Charitable Offices, which, we find, will at that time be of so great Importance to us?

In vain shall we then plead, (tho' we could truly plead) that we have been frequent and devout Worshipers of God, Temperate and Sober in our Enjoyments, Just and Conscientious in our Dealings; in vain shall we attempt to justify our selves, as the rich young Man in the Gospel did, by appealing to the great Duties of the Law, and saying, All these have I kept from my Youth up; unless we can say also somewhat more for our selves, than He could; even that we have been liberal in our Distributions to the Poor, and well charg'd
charg'd that important Stewardship with which God hath entrusted us. One single Instance of Relief afforded to the Afflicted and the Miserable, one Cup of Cold Water given to a Disciple, that is, the smallest Act of Charity, done out of a sincere Principle of Goodness, shall then stand us in greater stead, and recommend us more effectually to the Favour of our Judge, than all our pretended Zeal for the Divine Honour, and the Advancement of Religion, than all the Flights and Fervors of Devotion, than all the Rigors and Severities of the Mortified State: nay, than whatever Christian Graces and Virtues we can suppose it possible to attain, without attaining true Christian Charity, i. e. such an ardent Love of God, as manifests itself in a proportionable Love of our Neighbour, and particularly, in those genuine Fruits of Love, with which Christian Mercy and Tenderness will be sure to Inspire us.

This is a Truth, which cannot be too often, or too earnestly inculcated, because
cause (important as it is) we are apt, extremely apt to overlook it, and to persuade our selves, that, if we do but observe the Rules of Moral Honesty in all our Transactions; if we wrong no Man, or make Restitution to those we have wrong’d; such a Righteous and Faultless Conduct will secure our Title to Happiness. We own, indeed, that extraordinary Acts of Charity are commendable, and shall have their Reward: But we think we can escape Hell, without performing them; and are humble enough to be contented with the lowest Station in Heaven. Human Judicatories, we observe, give Sentence only on Matters of Right and Wrong, but enquire not into Acts of Bounty and Beneficence; and we easily transfer this known Method of Proceeding from Earthly Tribunals to that of Heaven. To rectify a Mistake of so great Consequence as this, it was requisite to assure us, that, though the Forms and Solemnities of the Last Judgment, as they are described in the Gospel, may bear some Resemblance to those
those we are acquainted with here below, yet the Rule of Proceeding shall be very different: That we shall be Try'd at that Bar, not merely by our Righteousness, but moreover and chiefly by our Charity; That it will not avail us then to say, We have done no Evil, if we have done no Good; That however Virtues of Omission (if I may so speak) will not Save us, yet, that Sins of Omission will certainly Damn us. 'Tis because we have not given the Hungry, Meat; and the Thirsty, Drink; because we have not taken in the Stranger, and cloathed the Naked; because we have not visited the Sick, and those that are in Prison; that we shall be then included in that terrible Sentence, Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels! The Ignorance of those, who are Strangers to the Covenant of Christ, may be wink'd at, and their Future Happiness secure'd to them upon lower Terms: But it is Madness in Christians, after such a Declaration as this,
to flatter themselves with the Hopes of getting to Heaven, without abounding in the Offices of Charity. 'Twas chiefly to rouze Men up into a Sense of their Duty and Danger in this respect, that our Saviour utter'd the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. The Rich Man is not blame'd in the Parable, as having made use of any unlawful Means to amass Riches, as having thriven by Fraud and Injustice, or grown fat upon the Spoils of Rapine and Oppression: All that is there laid to his Charge, is, That he was clothed with Purple and fine Linen, and fare'd sumptuously every Day, without regarding the wretched Condition of Lazarus, who was laid at his Gate; and who is said indeed to have desired to feed of the Crumbs which fell from his Table, but is not said to have obtain'd what he desired. And even this want of Humanity to an Object so pityable and moving, did, it seems, deserve to be punished with Ever-lasting Torments. Hear, and tremble, all Ye who have this World's Good, and
and see your Brother have need, and shut up your Bowels of Compassion from him.

But I believe far better things of All, and know far better things of many, that compose this Audience; for I see here, the worthy Governors and Encouragers of those Publick and Useful Charities, which are a greater Ornament to this City, than all its Wealth and Splendor; and do more real Honour to the Reform'd Religion, which gave Birth to them, than redounds to the Church of Rome, from all those Monkish and superstitious Foundations, of which she vainly boasts, and with which she dazzles the Eyes of Ignorant Beholders.

We live at a Time, when Popery, which is so far shut out by our Laws, as not to be able to re-enter openly, is yet stealing privately in by the Back-Door of Atheism, and making many other secret and unperceived Advances upon us. Its Emisaries are very numerous, and very busy in Corners, to seduce
duce the Unwary. And among all the popular Pleas, which they employ to this Purpose, there is none more ensnaring (I speak what I know, by Experience) than the advantageous Representations they make of the Publick Charities, which abound in Their Communion. Many ways there are of exposing the Vanity of such Pretences: but I have found none more successful, than to direct the Persons, who are struck with the Specious Appearances of Charity in that Church, to the real and substantial Effects of it in ours; those noble Monuments of Glory to God, and Good Will to Men, which the Piety of our Protestant Ancestors rais'd; and which have since receiv'd as great Additions and Improvements, as the renowned City itself to which they belong. I mention them together, because I take the One of them to have sprung, in some Measure, from the Other; and the present prosperous Estate of this great Emporium to be owing, not more to the Industry of its Inhabitants, than to those shining Instances.
Instances of Charity in which they excel; there being no surer way towards increasing Riches, than by sharing them with the Poor and the Needy.

I have not room to give you a complete View of what hath been expended in such charitable Distributions within the Walls of this City, since the time of our Blessed Reformation, when these goodly Plants were first set, which have since, by due Watering and Culture, so wonderfully grown and flourished: You may guess at the prodigious Sum to which such an Estimate would amount, when you have heard, What hath been here done for the Poor by the five Hospitals and the Work-House, within the Compass of one Year, and towards the End of a Long, Expensive War; which, however it may have drain'd our Wealth in other Respects, yet hath (Thanks be to God) not exhausted, and scarce diminished our Charity. I shall give you a short Account of Two Reports, which were read at large to you Yesterday.
Here an Abstract of those Reports was read.

'Tis not necessary to plead very earnestly in behalf of these Charities; they speak sufficiently for themselves, by a silent, but powerful Eloquence, that is not to be withstood. There is such a Native Comeliness and Beauty in well-design'd Works of Beneficence, that they need only be shew'd, in order to charm all that behold them. Particularly These of which you have had an account, are such Wise, such Rational, such Beneficial Institutions, that it is impossible for a Good Man to hear them represented, without wishing them all manner of Success; and as impossible for one, that is both Rich, and Good, not to contribute to it. To relieve the helpless Poor; to make sturdy Vagrants relieve themselves; to hinder idle Hands from being mischievous to the Common-Wealth; nay, to employ them so, that they may be of publick Service; to restore Limbs to the Wounded,
Wounded, Health to the Sick, and Reason to the Distraught; to educate Children in an honest, pious, and laborious manner; and, by that Means, to sow a good Seed, of which perhaps another Age, and another Race of Men may reap the Benefit; These are Things of so evident Use, of so confess'd an Excellence, that it would be an Affront to Mens Understandings to go about to prove it.

Besides, the Vigilance of those who preside over these Charities, is so exemplary, their Conduct so irreproachable, that Persons dispos'd to do Good in these Instances, can entertain no Suspicions of the Misapplication of their Bounty; but are almost as sure, that what they give will be made use of to its proper End, as they are that the End itself is Good, for which they bestow it. It is a mighty Check to beneficent Tempers to consider, how often good Designs are frustrated by an ill Execution of them; and perverted to purposes, which, could the Donors themselves have foreseen, they would have been very loth to promote. But it
is the peculiar Felicity of Charitably-minded Persons in this Place, to have no Objections of that kind to struggle with. All they have to consider is, What Portion of their Wealth they design for the Uses of the Poor; which they may then cheerfully throw into one of these Publick Repositories; sure, that it will be as well employ'd as their Hearts can desire, by Hands well vers'd in the Labour of Love, and whose Pleasure it is to approve their own Beneficence to the Publick, by a careful Management and Distribution of other Mens Charity.

This gives Benefactors an Opportunity of doing their Alms, with that Self-deny-ing Secrecy, which our Lord recommends, and which greatly enhances the present Pleasure, and the Future Reward of them. For we may then safely conceal our good Deeds from the Publick View, when they run no hazard of being diverted to improper Ends, for want of our Own Inspection. Hence it is, that these Publick Charities have been all along supply'd, and fed by Private Springs; the Heads of which
which have sometimes been wholly un-
known. And I take it to be an Argu-
ment of God's peculiar Blessing upon
them, that the Expences of some of them
do always much exceed their certain An-
nual Income; but seldom, or never, their
Casual Supplies. I call them Casual,
in Compliance with the common Form
of Speaking; though I doubt not but that
they owe their Rise to a very particular
direction of Providence. The Overseers
of these Bounties seem to Me, like those
who live on the Banks of Nile; who
Plough up their Ground, and Sow their
Seed, under a confident Expectation,
that the Soil will in due time be Manur'd
by the overflowing of that River, though
they neither see, nor know the true
Cause of it.

May God touch the Hearts of all that
are able to contribute to such Works of
Mercy, and make them as willing as
they are able! In order to excite their
Christian Compassion, I need use no other
Motive than that which the Text suggests;
That the Lord Jesus will look upon what-
N 2
ever we do of this kind, as done to himself; In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me! Let us carry this Consideration always in our View, and endeavour to affect our Minds with a lively and vigorous Sense of it. We are apt sometimes to wish that it had been our Lot, to Live and Converse with Christ, to hear his Divine Discourses, and to observe his spotless Behaviour; and we please ourselves perhaps with thinking, how ready a Reception we should have given to him and his Doctrine; how forward we should have been in doing all publick Honours, and private Services, and in abounding in all the Offices of Humanity towards him. The Opportunity we wish for, we have: For, behold, he is with us to the End of the World, in the Persons of the Poor and Miserable. They are his Representatives, His Substitutes; deputed by him to receive our Bounty, in His Name, and in His Stead: And we may rest assur’d (for he is faithful who promised) that the Comforts and Sup-
Supports, which we extend to these his Poor Brethren, shall be as kindly Received, as highly Valued, as mightily Rewarded, as if He himself had been the Object of our Pious Liberality; and that we shall, on this account, be found, at the Day of Retribution, among those at his Right Hand, to whom he will say; *Come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Foundation of the World: For I was an hungry, and ye gave me Meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me in; Naked, and ye clothed me; I was Sick, and ye visited me; I was in Prison, and ye came unto me.*

God grant, that every one of us may, by thus shewing Mercy, intitle ourselves to the Mercy of Jesus!

*To Him, with the Father, and Blessed Spirit, be rendered all Majesty, Might and Dominion for Ever!* Amen.
Our Acquaintance with God,

An Acquaintance with GOD, the best Support under Afflictions.

A SERMON
Preach'd before the QUEEN
AT
St. JAMES'S,
October 31, 1708.

JOB xxii. 21.
'Acquaint now thy self with Him, and be at Peace.'

SERM. VI.

THE exceeding Corruption and Folly of Man is in nothing more manifest, than in his Aversion to entertain any Friendship or Familiarity with God; though he was fram'd for that very
very End, and endu'd with Faculties fit-
ted to attain it; tho' he stands, and can-
not but be sensible that he stands, in the
utmost want of it; tho' he be invited,
and encouraged to it, frequently, and
earnestly, by God himself; and tho' it
be his Chief Honour, Advantage, and
Happiness, as well as his Duty, to com-
ply with those Invitations.

In all Cases, where the Body is affect-
ed with Pain, or Sickness, we are for-
ward enough to look out for Remedies,
to listen greedily to every one that sug-
gests them, and upon the least hopes of
Success, from the Reports of others, im-
mediately to apply them. And yet, not-
withstanding that we find and feel our
Souls disorder'd and restless, toss'd and
disquieted by various Passions, distracted
between contrary Ends and Interests, ever
seeking Happiness in the Enjoyments
of this World, and ever missing what
they seek; notwithstanding that we are
assur'd from other Mens Experience, and
from our own inward Convictions, that
the only way of regulating these Dis-
orders
orders is, to call off our Minds from too close an Attention to the things of Sense, and to employ them often in a sweet Intercourse with our Maker, the Author of our Being, and Fountain of all our Ease and Happiness: yet are we strangely backward to lay hold of this safe, this only Method of Cure: We go on still nourishing the Distemper under which we groan, and choose rather to feel the Pain, than to apply the Remedy. Excellent therefore, was the Advice of Eliphaz to Job, when, in the midst of his great Troubles and Pressures, he thus bespoke him, _Acquaint thy self now with Him (i.e.) with God, and be at Peace: Take this Opportunity of improving thy Acquaintance with God, to which he always, but now especially invites thee; Make the true Use of those Afflictions which his Hand, mercifully severe, hath been pleas'd to lay upon thee; and be led by the Means of them, tho' thou haft endeavour'd to know and serve Him already, to know and serve Him still better; to desire, and love him more: Calm the Disorders
Disorders of thy Mind by Reflections on his Paternal Goodness and Tenderness; on the Wisdom, and Equity, and absolute Rectitude of all his Proceedings: Comfort thy self with such Thoughts at all times, but chiefly at that time, when all Earthly Comforts fail thee; Then do thou particularly retreat to these Considerations, and shelter thy self under them; 

---Acquaint now thy self with Him, and be at Peace.

The Words therefore will suggest Matter not unfit for our Devout Meditation, under the Three following Heads; wherein I shall consider,

I. What this Scripture-Phrase of acquainting our selves with God implies, and wherein the Duty recommended by it particularly consists.

II. How Reasonable, Necessary, and Desirable a Duty it is, as on many other Accounts, so especially on This, That it is the only True Way towards attaining a perfect Tranquillity and Rest of Mind,
Our Acquaintance with God,

Serm. --- Acquaint thy self with Him, AND BE AT PEACE. Which will lead me also to shew, in the

III. Place, That the most proper Season for such a Religious Exercise of our Thoughts is, when any Trouble or Calamity overtakes us, Acquaint thy self NOW with him.

I. We are to consider, What this Scripture-Phrase of Acquainting our selves with God, implies, and wherein the Duty recommended by it particularly consists. The Phrase it self occurs, I think, nowhere else in Holy Writ; however, the true meaning of it is very Obvious and Easy.

We are prone by Nature to engage our selves in too close and strict an Acquaintance with the Things of this World, which immediately and strongly strike our Senses; with the Business, the Pleasures, and the Amusements of it; we give our selves up too greedily to the Pursuit, and immerse our selves too
too deeply in the Enjoyment of them; and contrast at last such an Intimacy and Familiarity with them, as makes it difficult and irksome for us to call off our Minds to a better Employment, and to think intensely on any thing besides them. To check and correct this ill Tendency, it is requisite that we should acquaint our selves with God, that we should frequently disengage our Hearts from Earthly Pursuits, and fix them on Divine Things; that we should apply ourselves to study the Blessed Nature and Perfections of God, and to procure lively and vigorous Impressions of his perpetual Presence with us, and Inspection over us; that we should contemplate earnestly and reverently the Works of Nature and Grace, by which he manifests himself to us; the inscrutable Ways of his Providence, and all the wonderful Methods of his dealing with the Sons of Men: That we should inure ourselves to such Thoughts, till they have work'd up our Souls into that filial Awe and Love of Him, that humble
and implicit Dependence upon Him, which is the Root and Principle of all manner of Goodness; till we have made our Duty in this Respect, our Pleasure, and can address ourselves to Him, on all occasions, with Readiness and Delight; imparting all our Wants, and expressing all our Fears, and opening all our Griefs to Him, with that holy Freedom and Confidence to which the Saints and true Servants of God are entitled, having received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby they cry, Abba Father! In this Sense ought we to acquaint ourselves with God, to set him always before us, as the Scripture elsewhere speaks; to draw near to him, and to delight in approaching him.

But this is only a General Account of what our Acquaintance with God implies: It may be useful to mention some Particulars also, wherein it chiefly consists; and to say somewhat distinctly upon Each of them.

In order to begin, and improve Human Friendships, Five Things are principally requisite: Knowledge, Access, a Similitude
militude of Manners, an entire Confidence and Love: and by These also the Divine Friendship, of which we are treating, must be cemented, and upheld.

The first Step towards an Acquaintance with God, is, a due Knowledge of him: I mean not a Speculative Knowledge, built on abstracted Reasonings about his Nature and Essence; such as Philosophical Minds often busy themselves in, without reaping from thence any advantage towards regulating their Passions, or improving their Manners: But I mean a Practical Knowledge of those Attributes of his, which invite us nearly to approach him, and closely to unite ourselves to him; a thorough Sense, and Vital Experience of his Paternal Care over us, and Concern for us; of his unspotted Holiness, his inflexible Justice, his unerring Wisdom, and his diffusive Goodness; a Representation of him to ourselves, under those affecting Characters of a Creator, and a Redeemer, an Observer, and a Pattern, a Law-giver, and a Judge; which are aptest to incline our
Out Acquaintance with God,

our Wills, and to raise our Affections toward him, and either to awe, or allure us into a stricter Performance of every Branch of our Duty. These, and the like Moral, and Relative Perfections of the Deity, are most necessary, and most easy to be understood by us; upon the least Reflection and Enquiry we cannot miss of them; tho' the oftner, and more attentively we consider them, the better, and more perfectly still shall we know them.

The Acquaintance, thus begun, cannot continue, without frequent Access to him; without seeking his Face continually (as the good Psalmist's Phrase is) in all the Methods of Spiritual Address: in Contemplation, and Prayer; in his Word, and in his Ordinances; in the Publick Service of the Sanctuary, and in the Private Devotions of the Closet; and chiefly in the latter of these, which are, on several accounts, most useful towards promoting this holy Correspondence. By these Means, and in these Duties, is he to be approach'd, and found; and,
and notwithstanding our Infinite Distance, will draw near to Them who thus draw near to Him, and shew himself to be a God that is at Hand, and not afar off.

But in vain shall we approach him, unless we endeavour to be like him: A Similitude of Nature and Manners (in such a degree as we are capable of) must tie the holy Knot, and rivet the Friendship between us. Whomsoever we desire to approve, we labour also to conform ourselves to; to be not only almost, but altogether such as they are, if it be possible; that so They, seeing themselves in Us, may like Us, for the sake of themselves, and go out (as it were) to meet, and embrace their Own Image and Resemblance. Would we then be admitted into an Acquaintance with God? Let us study to resemble him; we must be partakers of a Divine Nature, in order to partake of this high Privilege and Alliance! For what Fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness? and what Communion hath Light with Darkness?

Yet
Yet farther, one Essential Ingredient in all true Friendships, is, a firm unshaken Reliance on him who is our Friend. Have we such towards God? Do we entirely Trust in him? Do our Souls lean on him, as a Child that is wean'd of his Mother? Do we resign ourselves, and our Affairs, absolutely to be dispos'd of by him? and think all our Concerns safer in his Hands, than in our own? and resolve to believe every thing to be best and fittest for us, which he sees best should befal us? Are we still under his Rod, without a Murmur? without Despondency of Mind, and without charging God foolishly? Do we unbofom all our Secrets to him, and neither endeavour, nor pretend to hide any thing that passeth in the depth of our Hearts from him? Do we enquire of him for his Advice and Assistance in every thing? and hearken to what our Lord God shall say to us, either by the inward Whispers of our Consciences, or the outward Ministry of his Word, or the awakening Calls of his Providence?
and give heed diligently to fulfil all the least Intimations of his good Pleasure, that are any ways made known to us? Then have we enter'd deep into, and advanced far in that holy Intimacy which the Text recommends: O well is it with us! Happy are we, and shall we be!

However, yet one thing more we lack to be perfect; Love, which is the fulfilling of this Law of Friendship, the surest Text, and most exalted Improvement of it.

Let us consider therefore, whether we do indeed love the Lord our God, with all our Heart, and with all our Soul, and with all our Mind, and with all our Strength: Whether our Approaches to Him are always Sweet and Refreshing; and we are uneasy, and impatient under any long discontinuance of our Conversation with him; and retire into our Closet from the Crowd, in order to meet Him whom our Soul loveth, with a Pleasure far exceeding theirs, who Chant to the Sound of the Viol, and are Joyful in the Strength of
SERM. of New Wine: Whether our Hearts burn within us, at the perusal of his Holy Word; and the Relish and Savour of it upon our Minds be such, as that, in comparison of it, all the most Exquisite Human Composures seem low and mean, flat and insipid to us? Whether we have an even and ever-burning Zeal for his Honour and Service; and are always contriving somewhat, and doing somewhat to promote His Interest, without any immediate regard to our Own? Whether we delight to make mention of His Name, and to make our Boaft in His Praise, even among those who fear Him not, and know Him not; and to render our Goodness and our Devotion Exemplary, in proportion to the Vices and the Irreligion of others? Finally, Whether our Love of Life, and our Complacency in the good Things of it, thickens every Day, and even our Dread of Death is in some Measure vanquish'd; and we do, whilst we are contemplating the Joys of another State, almost desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ and groan...
groan under those Earthly Clogs and S E R M:
Bars, that incumber and obstruct us in our flight towards Him, and hinder our Mind from exerting with freedom all its Faculties and Powers, on the Supreme Object of its Desires, Hopes, and Endeavours? When we perceive ourselves to be after this manner rooted and grounded in Love, and to abound in these genuine and blessed Fruits of it; behold! Then is our Spirit advance'd to the nearest degree of Union with the great Father of Spirits, of which it is capable on this side Heaven; and we are, indeed, (according to what is said of faithful Abraham in holy Writ) the Friends of God.

Thus have I shewn you, What it is to acquaint ourselves with God, and where-in this Acquaintance chiefly consists; to wit, in an intimate Knowledge of him, a frequency of Access to him, a Conformity and Likeness of Temper and Manners, an humble and implicit Reliance upon Him, and an ardent Affection of Soul towards Him. I proceed now, in the
Our Acquaintance with God,

SERM.

VI.

II. Place, to consider, How Reasonable, Desirable, and Necessary a thing it is, thus to acquaint ourselves with God, as, on many other Accounts, so particularly on this; That it is the only true Way towards attaining a perfect Tranquillity and Rest of Mind; Acquaint thy self with Him, AND BE AT PEACE.

Honour, Profit, and Pleasure, are the three great Idols, to which the Men of this World bow; and One, or All of which is generally aimed at, in every Human Friendship they make: and yet, tho' nothing can be more Honourable, Profitable, or Pleasing to us, than an acquaintance with God, we stand off from it, and will not be tempted even by these Motives, tho' appearing to us with the utmost Advantage to embrace it.

Can any thing improve, and purify, and exalt our Natures more than such a Conversation as this, wherein our Spirits, mounting on the Wings of Contemplation, Faith, and Love, ascend up to the first Principle, and Cause of all things, see,
fee, admire, and taste his surpassing Ex-serm.
cellence, and feel the Quickning Power and Influence of it, till we ourselves, thus with open Face beholding, as in a Glass, the Glory of the Lord, are changed (gradually, and insensibly changed) into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, from one degree of Perfection, and Likeness, to another? What an Honour is it to us, that God should admit us into such a blessed Participation of himself? that he should give us Minds capable of such an Intercourse with the Supreme, Universal Mind? and shall we be capable of it, without enjoying it?

In what Conversation can we spend our Thoughts and Time more profitably, than in this? to whom can we betake ourselves, with greater Expectations to succeed in our Addresses? Upon whom can we rely with more security and confidence? Is he not our most munificent Benefactor, our Wifest Counsellor, and most Potent Protector and Friend? both Able, and Willing to do every thing for us, that it becomes either us to ask, or O 3 him
S E R M. VI.

him to grant. Are not the Blessings both of this World, and the next, in his disposal? and is not his Favour and Good-will the only sure Title that we can plead to them? and shall we spend our time therefore in cultivating useless and perishing Acquaintances here below, to the neglecting that which is of the vafteft Concern to us, and upon which our Everlafting Welfare depends? shall we not rather say, with St. Peter, Lord, to whom fhall we go? thou haft the Words of Eternal Life.

O! the sweet Contentment, the Tranquillity, and profound Reft of Mind that He enjoys, who is a Friend of God, and to whom God [therefore] is a Friend; who hath gotten loose from all meaner Purfuits, and is regardless of all lower Advantages, that interfere with his great Design of Knowing, and Loving God, and being known, and beloved by him; who lives as in his Sight always, looks up to him in every Step of his Conduct, imitates him to the best of his Power, believes him without doubt, and obeys him without reserve; desires to do nothing but what
what is agreeable to his Will, and resolves to fear nothing beyond, or beside his Displeasure: In a Word, who hath resign'd all his Passions and Appetites to him; all his Facultics and Powers; and given up his Soul to be posses'd by him, without a Rival. Surely such an one hath within his Breast, that Divine Peace which passeth all Understanding; is inconceivable by those who are Strangers to it, and inutterable even by those upon whom it rests. In vain doth the scornful Voluptuary ask for an account of it, which can never be given him; for it hath no Alliance with any of the Pleasures of Sense, in which he delights; nor hath he any Ideas, by which the Perception of it may be conveyed to him. It may make the Prophet's challenge and say, To what will you liken me? and wherewithal will you compare me? This Peace is to be understood, only by being enjoy'd; and such an Acquaintance with God as the Text recommends, is the only Means of enjoying it. But I hasten, in the
III. And last Place, to shew, That the most proper Season for such a Religious Exercise of our Thoughts, is, when any sore Trouble or Calamity overtakes us, _Acquaint thy self NOW with him_, said Eliphaz to Job; that is, Now, when the wise Disposer of all things hath thought fit to pour out Affliction upon thee; then that Peace, or sweet Calm and Repose of Mind, which the Text mentions, is most needful for thee; and is always, and only to be had from the same Hand that wounded thee.

At such times our Soul is most tender and susceptible of Religious Impressions, most apt to seek God, to delight in approaching him, and conversing with him, and to relish all the Pleasures and Advantages of such a Spiritual Commerce. The kind, and chief Design of God, in all his severest Dispensations, is, to melt and soften our Hearts to such Degrees, as he finds necessary, in order to the good purposes of his Grace; and so to dispose and prepare them every way, as that they may
may become fit Mansions for his holy Spirit to dwell in; to wean us gently and gradually from our Complacence in earthly things, which we are too apt to rest in, though we are sure that we must one day part with them; to convince us of the Vanity of all the Satisfactions which this World affords, and to turn our Thoughts and Expectations towards the Joys of another.

We are, by Nature, indigent Creatures, uncapable of ourselves to content and satisfy ourselves; and therefore are ever looking abroad for somewhat to supply our Defects and compleat our Happiness. To this end, our Wills and Affections run out after every seeming Good here below; but return empty and unsatisfy'd always from the pursuit, and therefore cannot but suggest to us the thought, and possess us with the desire of some higher Good, which is their only adequate Object, and in which alone true Joys are to be found. But we have the most feeling Sense and Experience of this Truth, when the Hand of God lies heavy
heavy upon us: Then we plainly discern our own Insufficiency and Weakness, and yet see nothing about or near us, that can afford us any real Relief: and therefore we fly to Him, who only can, who is rich in Mercies, and mighty to save: both able and willing to stretch himself out to all our Wants, and to fill our Emptiness. Even they, who in their Prosperity forget God, do yet remember and turn to him when Adversity befals them: They, who, whilst the Course of things goes smoothly and happily on, and every Passion of theirs is entertain’d, every Wish is gratified, find no room for Thoughts of this kind: but are so taken up with enjoying the Blessings, as not to be at leisure to consider the great Author and Bestower of them; even these Persons do, in the Day of their Distress, take Refuge in Reflections on the Benignity and Goodness of God; and begin then to think of Him with some kind of Pleasure (tho’ allay’d with Doubts and Fears) when they can with Pleasure think of nothing besides him. How much
much more shall devout and blameless Souls, which have never been Strangers to these Considerations, retreat to them, in an Evil Hour, with Eagerness, and rest in them with the utmost Satisfaction and Delight? The Acquaintance, which they stand in need of for their Support, is not now first to be made: It has been contracted long ago, and wants only to be renew’d, and apply’d to particular Exigences and Occasions. Happy, extremely happy are they, who, by the means of a Virtuous Temper, and a Religious Education, have been train’d up in this Acquaintance from their very Youth, that Season of our Age, when the Friendships we enter into are most sincere and true, most passionate and tender, most firm and durable: whilst our Minds were as yet untainted with false Principles, and vicious Customs, and had not drunk in that Contagion from ill Company, which indisposes us for better, had not made that Friendship with the World, which is Enmity with God. Behold, then was the Day of Salvation, then
then was the accepted Time: when God most valu’d the Offer of our Hearts, and we could give them up to him most easily, and most entirely. And when once we have thus early, and thoroughly devoted ourselves to God, there are no Trials of our Virtue and Courage so sharp, no Evils so great, but that we can sustain and bear them: for God is our Hope and Strength, a very present Help in Time of Trouble: and therefore we resort to him, on such Occasions, with the utmost Readiness and Confidence, even as a Son doth to a beloved and loving Parent, or a Friend to the Friend of his Bosom, casting all our Care upon him, as knowing that He careth for us.

I have set God always before me (says good David:) He is on my Right Hand, therefore I shall not fall. And having set God always before him, what wonder is it, if he found the special Advantage of such a Practice, in the time of his Suffering and Sorrows? And therefore thus in another Place, professes of himself,----
When I am in Heaviness, I will think upon God!

No Man had ever study'd the several Arts of holy Living, with greater Care than he, no Man had more diligently practis'd them: His Delight was in the Law of God; and in that did he exercise himself Day and Night. He took heed to his Feet, and order'd all his Steps aright, that he might run the way of God's Commandments. And what, at last, was the great Expedient he pitch'd upon to secure himself in a Regular and Uniform Course of Virtue? even this,—To set God always before himself; to watch early and late; to remember him on his Bed, and to think on him when he was waking. He was the Man after God's own Heart; and this was the chief Method by which he became so: It was This that enabled him to fulfil the Publick Character of a Religious, Just, and Merciful Prince, and a Father of his People; and that aw'd him in his Retirements, when the Eyes of Men were far from him: It was This that gave Life and Wings to his Devotions; that carry'd
Our Acquaintance with God,

SERM. carry'd him through various Difficulties and Temptations; that supported him under all his Troubles and Afflictions.—

When I am in Heaviness, (said he) I will think upon God; when my Heart is vexed, I will complain to him.

He might have thought on many other Things, which are usually look'd upon as reliefs to afflicted Minds: He might have endeavoured to raise himself by reflecting on the happy Circumstances of his Royal State, on his Power, and Wealth, and Worldly Splendor; on the Love and Reverence that was paid him by his Subjects, on his Fame, that was gone out into all Lands, and on the Fear of Him that was fallen upon all Nations; on his potent and numerous Alliances, his signal Successes and Triumphs. But he renounces all these weak and insufficient Supports, and betakes himself to That, which was worth them all, and which alone could Administer true Comfort to him. When I am in Heaviness, I will think upon God.

And how can the pious Sons and Daughters of Afflictions better employ them—
themselves, than in looking up to him SERM. that hath bruised them, and possessing their Souls in Patience, under the same Thought, with which this good Prince quieted his Griefs, because it is Thy Hand, and Thou, Lord, hast done it? What Comfort and Composedness of Mind must it afford them, to consider, that these are the Chastisements of a kind Father, who means them for our good, and doth not willingly afflict, or grieve the Children of Men, but even in his Wrath thinketh upon Mercy: and will with the Temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it?

Let us imitate the Pattern, which this Royal Sufferer hath set us: Let us follow this Excellent Guide; by laying hold of the Remedy, which he found so successful, in the Day of Visitation. Let us, throughout the whole Course of our Lives, take care to make the Thoughts of God so present, familiar, and comfortable to us here, that we may not be afraid of appearing Face to Face before him hereafter. Let us so inure our Minds to
Our Acquaintance with God, &c.

Serm. to those faint Views of him, which we can attain to in this Life, that we may be found worthy to be admitted into the Blessed Vision of him in the next, when in his Presence there will be Fulness of Joy, and at his Right Hand Pleasures for evermore.

To Him, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; Three Persons, and One God, be ascribed by Us, and all Men, all possible Adoration and Praise, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, Now, and for Evermore. Amen.
A SERMON
Preach'd before the
RIGHT HONOURABLE the
LORD MAYOR, &c.
AT
St. BRIDGEB'T's,
On Tuesday in Easter-Week, April 26, 1709.
To the Right Honourable

Sir Charles Duncombe,
Lord Mayor of London.

My Lord,

I send this Sermon, now Printed, to Your Lordship, at whose earnest and repeated Desire I Preach'd it; for whom I profess myself, on many Accounts, to have a particular Regard; and whom I shall at all times be ready, in all Christian Services, to obey.

Illness and other Reasons, with which it is unnecessary to trouble the World, or Your Lordship, have so long retarded the Publication of this Discourse, that it may seem less proper, and seasonable, in
in One or Two Passages of it: Those I mean, where a near Prospect of Peace is mention'd. For it hath pleas'd God, since it was Preach'd, to remove that great Blessing farther from us, and place it more out of Sight; not I hope without a merciful Intention of giving us, in his good Time, what we have not now ask'd in such a Solemn Manner as became us; and of enhancing the Value of the Gift, by the Delay of it. I am sure, how long soever we may wait for it, it will be bestowed much sooner than we shall deserve it.

My Lord,

The Subject of this Discourse is Charity; and the Design of it is to stir up the Minds of those, whom God's good Providence hath bless'd with great Abundance; and, by that Means, with a Power of Blessing many others. On this Account (without other Considerations) I could not have pitch'd on a Name, to which I might have inscribed it more properly than that of your Lordship. I
offer it to You, my Lord, with all the Respect that becomes me; and with hearty
Wishes, that the earthly Felicities you possess, may, by your wise and good Use
of them, lead to the Enjoyment of those which are Eternal. I am

Your Lordship's

Most Obedient humble Servant,

June 11,
1709.

Francis Atterbury.
LUKE X. 32.

He came, and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

These Words are Part of our Savour's Parable, concerning the Traveller, that fell among Thieves; who stripped, and wounded him, and left him half dead. It happened that some Passengers soon afterwards came that Way, and among the rest, a Levite; who hearing the Groans of the wounded Person, or, perhaps, having an obscure View of him at a Distance, came nearer to inform himself more particularly of the Matter: And, when he had done so, stay'd not to assist, or comfort that miserable Man; but retir'd immediately, and pursued his Journey. He came, and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. It seems to be intimtated in these Words, that this Passenger felt some degree of Concern, at the sight of so moving an Object, and therefore withdrew himself.
himself in haste, as not being willing to indulge it. Doubtless, he was not void of all Compassion, nor wholly ignorant of his Duty in such a Case, but he made a shift to excuse himself from the Necessity of performing it. "His Journey might require the utmost Haste, and why should he interrupt it to no Purpose? For he could be of no Use to the wounded Person, nor had any manner of Skill in Surgery: It was possible, that the same Band of Robbers might light upon him also, if he stay'd longer in that Place; or, perhaps, there might be a Feint, a Contrivance in the Matter, to draw him into some secret Ambush." By such Pretences as these he seems to have satisfy'd himself, and stifled the Sentiments, which Natural Pity and Religion could not but suggest to him: He came, and looked on the stripped and wounded Traveller, and passed by on the other side. A lively Image, this, of the Indifference and Neglect, with which too many of us too often look on real Objects of Charity; and of the Excuses, by which we
A Spittal-Sermon.

we endeavour to justify such Neglects, and to deceive ourselves into an Opinion, that they are not culpable; It shall be my Business, in what follows, to consider the Pleas, that are commonly made use of to this Purpose, and to shew the Insufficiency, and Weakness of them. For, indeed, These are the most ordinary, and most effectual Impediments to the Exercise of Charity. 'Tis not, because we are ignorant of the Important Nature of this Duty, and of the great Stress that is laid upon it in Scripture; of the Motives which invite, and of the Obligations which bind us to the Performance of it: I say, it is not on any of these Accounts, that we neglect the Practice of Charity; but because we look upon ourselves, as exempted from the General Rule, by virtue of some false Pleas and Pretences, which we set up; and which I shall now, therefore, particularly enumerate, and examine: not without an Eye, all along, on those excellent Institutions of Charity, which it is the peculiar Design of
this Annual Solemnity to promote, and encourage.

I. And the first and chief Plea, under which Men generally take Shelter, is that of Inability. "Their Circumstances will not permit them to become Benefactors; the Publick Weight of Taxes, the General Decay of Traffick, and some particular Losses they have felt, lie heavy upon them; their Families, and their Creditors, do of Right lay Claim to all they possess; and it would be an Injury to both, should they otherwise dispose of it. The Care of the Poor is not committed to Them, but to the Rich, and Prosperous, and Childless." Now it is true, that from These the most bountiful Supplies are expected; These are the great Springs, that chiefly feed the general Current of Charity; for to whom much is given, of them shall be much required. However, there is still a Proportion due even from Those, who are not bless'd with their Affluence; and, before we can excuse ourselves from pay-
ing it, it will behove us to consider———

Whether there be no unnecessary Ex-

pences, that we support; such as are un-
suitable to our Circumstances, and the 
Duties of our Rank and Station do not 
require; whether we were too Mag-
nificent and Sumptuous in our Table 
and Attendance; in our Attire and Fur-
niture; in our Houses and Gardens of 
Pleasure: Whether we do not squander 
away some Part of our Fortune at Play, 
or indulge some costly Vice, which eats 
up all we have to spare from the rea-
sonable Conveniencies of Life, and the just 
Demands of our Family. For, if any 
of these be the Case, we have no Right 
to plead Inability, in respect of Works of 
Mercy, which our Faults, and our Fol-
lies only hinder us from promoting; but 
ought immediately to retrench those su-
perfluous Expences, in order to qualify 
ourselves for the Exercise of Charity.

The Publick Burthens, tho' they may 
be a good Reason for our not expending 
so much in Charity, as perhaps we might 
otherwise do, yet will not justify us in 
giving
Serm. giving Nothing; especially if, as those Burthens increase, we take care to improve in our Frugality and Diligence; Virtues, which always become us, but more particularly in Times of War, and Publick Expence; however a dissolute People, whom God (in spite of all their Vanities and Vices) has bless'd with Success, may at present disregard them.

Our private Losses and Misfortunes may indeed unqualify us for Charity: But it were worth our while, seriously to reflect, whether they might not originally be in some measure owing to the want of it; I mean, whether such Losses may not have been inflicted by God, as a just Punishment of our former Avarice and Unmercifulness, when we had it more in our Power than now, (and yet had it as little in our Will) to be Charitable. And if so, can we take a furer or nearer Way towards repairing those Losses, than by betaking ourselves to the Practice of that Duty, the Omission of which occasion'd them? For the Lips of Truth have said; *He that giveth unto the
the Poor, shall not lack. The Liberal Soul shall be made Fat; and he that watereth, shall be watered also himself.

Our Children and Families have indeed a Right to inherit our Fortunes; but not altogether in Exclusion to the Poor, who have also a Right (even God's Right) to partake of them. As therefore we ought not to defraud our Children, for the sake of the Poor; so neither ought we to rob the Poor of their Share, for the sake of our Children: For this is a kind of Sacrilege, and may prove an eating Canker, and a consuming Moth in the Estate that we leave them. Have thy Children a due Sense of Religion? They will be pleas'd, that thou hast made a Pious Disposal of such a Part of thy Fortunes, as will sanctify and secure the rest to them: Are they Ungracious and Dissolute? Thou hast the less Reason in thy Charitable Distributions to regard them; who, perhaps, when thou art gone, will be the most forward to tax thy needless Parsimony, and will spend in Riot, what was say'd by Uncharitableness.
A Spittal-Sermon.

S E R M. VII.

Out of a tender Concern, therefore, for the Welfare of thy Family, that very Concern, which makes thee shut thy Hand to the Poor, open it, and scatter among them a proper Portion of the good Things of Life; and be not Faithless but Believing, that Thou, and They shall be Blessed in thy Deed: for there is that Scattereth, and yet Increases; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to Poverty.

As to the Excuse drawn from the Demand of Creditors, if it be real, it is unanswerable: For no Alms can be given, but out of what is properly our Own; and nothing is our Own, but what remains to us, after all our just Debts are satisfy'd. However, there is one sort of Debt, which, to whomsoever it is Owing, can only be Paid to the Poor; I mean, when, in the Course of our Dealing, we have either done Wrong ignorantly, or have afterwards forgotten the Wrong, which we at first knowingly did; or have not within our Memory, or Reach, the Persons to whom we did it. In such Cases

Prov. xi. 24.
Cases, all the Reparation we are capable of making, is, to bestow what was thus gotten by Injustice, on proper Objects of Charity. Which is agreeable to the good Pattern set by Zaccheus; Behold, Lord, says he, the half of my Goods I give to the Poor, and if I have taken any thing from any Man——I restore him four-fold. He resolves to make Personal Restitution, where the Wrong can be discovered, and the wronged Person reach’d; and where they cannot, to make the best Amends in his Power, by substituting the Poor in the Room of the injur’d Party. An Example, worthy to be imitated by all those who are Conscious, or Jealous, that some unlawful Gain may (like the Nail betwixt the Joinings of the Stones) have stuck fast to them, between buying and selling. The best way of satisfying that Debt (which deserves to be consider’d as well as other Debts) is, by casting a Sin-Offering (as it were) into some of these Publick Funds and Receptacles of Charity; which are not more useful to the Poor, than to the Rich of this great Ci-
ty: for if they afford the One Relief, they give the Other also (what they sometimes may, in order to the Quiet of their Consciences, equally want) an happy Opportunity of bestowing it.

Hitherto of the first Excuse for Uncharitableness, drawn from pretended Inability; which I have consider'd the more largely, in its several Branches, because it is, of all others, the most General and Prevailing Illusion: I proceed now to reckon up other Pleas and Pretences; which, not being of equal weight, shall be handled more briefly. For,

II. There are those that plead Unsettled Times, and an Ill Prospect of Affairs (whether wrongly, or rightly, is not the Case; but there are those that plead these things) as Impediments to the Exercise of Charity. For, in such an uncertain World, who knows, but that he may want to Morrow what he gives to Day? Who knows, what the Fate of these Publick Charities may be, which are now so fair and flourishing?
A Spittal-Sermon.

But, if this be a good Objection, it will at All Times equally hinder us from abounding in the Offices of Charity; since there is no Time, when we may not entertain such Conjectures as these, and alarm ourselves with such Fears and Forebodings. *He that observeth the Wind, shall not sow; and he that regardeth the Clouds, shall not reap,* says the Wise man, in this very Case, and of these very Pretences: He that too curiously observes the Face of the Heavens, and the Signs of the times, will be often withheld from doing what is absolutely necessary to be done in the present Moment; and, by missing his Seed-Time, will lose the Hopes of his Harvest. And therefore the Counsel there given by the same Pen is, *In the Morning sow thy Seed, and in the Evening withhold not thy Hand: for thou knowest not, whether shall prosper, either this or that; or whether they both shall be alike good.* Neglect no Opportunity of doing Good, nor check thy Desire of doing it, by a vain Fear of what may happen to thy self, or to Others, after thou hast done it.
It is not for thee to know the Times and the Seasons, which the Father hath put in his Power. This only thou knowest, that the present Season, whatever it be, is a Season of Beneficence. Do thy Duty in it, and leave the Event to Providence: for whether thy Work prosper, or not; Thou thy self shalt surely prosper for the sake of it, and not miss of thy Reward. The Blessed Jesus went about doing good, under all the discouraging Circumstances imaginable. Let us imitate his Example; and repress our Curiosity as to the Issues of things, by carrying ever in our Ears the Reproof he gave to the over-inquisitive Disciple, What is that to thee? follow thou me. If we will not impart the good Things of Life to others, till we are satisfied that we shall never want them ourselves; we must wholly shut up our Hands, and harden our Hearts towards the Poor: For no Man, not even the most Wealthy, and Great, and Powerful among the Sons of Men, is exempt from the Chances of Human Life, and the Vicissitudes of Fortune. If we will not
encourage Publick Works of Beneficence, till we are secure, that no Storm shall overturn, what we help to build; there is no Room for any Exhortations to Charity, since there is no guarding against such Hazards and Accidents. However (blessed be God!) those Charities which we now meet to promote, do, of all others, the least lye open to such Exceptions, and Surmifes. For they are not New-fangled Devices of Yesterday, whereof we have had no Knowledge, no Experience; but are (most of them) as old as the Reformation itself, and have flourish'd together with it, and by it: so that, after above an Age and an half's Trial of them, we can judge surely of their useful Nature and Tendency, and safely prophesy their Continuance. They have stood the Test of all Times and Revolutions; even of such as scarce spar'd any thing that was truly Sacred and Venerable. When Sacrilegious and Rebellious Hands had rais'd the Church, even to the Foundation thereof, and laid the Honour of the Crown low in the Dust; yet still, struck with a Reverence
SERM. VII.

Verence for these awful Charities, they suffer'd them to stand undiminish'd, un-touch'd, amidst the common Ruins: and what the Malice and Frenzy of that Time spar'd, we have Reason to hope, may continue for ever: But

III. There are many Men sensible enoufgh of their Obligations to Charity, and resolv'd, some time or other, to discharge them: but they desire to be excus'd from that Duty for the present, and put it off, perhaps, to a Will, and a Death-Bed, and think it sufficient, if they begin to do Good in the World, any time before they leave it. A very fatal Error! and very fruitful of ill Consequences! For a Death-Bed Charity is no better, in its kind, than a Death-Bed Repentance; which ought not indeed to be neglected (because it is the best thing we can do in those Circumstances,) but yet cannot be rely'd on. Seldom do Either of these proceed from a Principle of Goodness; nor are they owing to a Love of Virtue, but to a Fear of Punishment. However,
God forbid that I should condemn, or dis-courage either of them, any farther than is requisite to awaken us into an earlier Sense of our Duty, and of the Dangers with which such Delays are attended! Indeed, when a Man has liv'd in the Practice of Charity, he may also die in it with Comfort. But of what great Worth can that Sacrifice be, which we never had the Heart to offer, till it was going to be snatch'd out of our Hands? If we part with That only which we can keep no longer, what Thank have we? Whatsoever we employ in Charitable Uses, during our Lives, is given away from ourselves; what we bequeath at our Deaths, is given from others only; our nearest Relations, and Friends, who else, would enjoy it. Besides, how many Testamentary Charities have been defeated, by the Negligence, or Fraud of Executors? By the Suppression of a Will! The Subornation of Witnesses; or the corrupt Sentence of a Judge? How preposterous is it; never to set about Works of Charity, whilst we ourselves can see Q. 2 them
them perform'd; and then only to intend the doing them, when it will be in the Power of another to frustrate this good Intention? Nay, but be Thou thy own Executor, in such Cases, as much as is possible. Inure thy self betimes to the Love and Practice of good Deeds: for the longer thou deferrest to be acquainted with them, the less every Day Thou wilt find thy self dispos'd to them. Age itself, that weakens all other Passions and Desires, adds to our Unnatural Love of Money; and makes us then most fondly hug and retain the good Things of Life, when we have the least Prospect, ourselves, of enjoying them. He only, who hath had an early Relish of the Pleasures of Benevolence, will then be persuaded to abound in it; will be ready to give, glad to distribute. Wherefore teach thy self this Lesson, while it is to be taught; and begin this very Day to practice it, by setting apart something out of thy Stock, for the Use of some One of these Excellent Charities, which require Supplies from Day to Day: and why then, if thou art not unable,
unable, and dost ever intend, shouldst thou at all defer, to bestow them? Again,

IV. It is alledg'd, that the increase of Charity tends often to the increasing and multiplying the Poor; and by that means, proves a Mischief to the Commonwealth, instead of a Support and Benefit. And it must be allow'd, that, with regard to our private Distributions of Charity, there may be some truth in the Observation. The Proneness of good Men to commife-rate Want, in whatsoever shape it appears, and from whatever Cause it may spring; their easiness to relieve Cheats and Vagabonds, and to be wrought upon by the Importunities of clamorous Beggars, are doubtless one reason why our Poor are so numerous; and encourage many to depend upon the Merciful for their Support, who might otherwise seek it from their own Industry and Labour. And therefore, of the Charity which we this way bestow, much I fear is misapply'd; and I would far rather be an Advocate for the Retrenchment, than the Increase of it.
it. But in our Publick Charities, (such particularly, as adorn this great City, and beautify this Solemnity) there is no danger of Excess; no room to fear, lest, by the overflowing Bounty of Benefactors, they should ever swell beyond the Necessities of Those, who have a real Occasion for them. For they are not like the Charitable Foundations in the Church of Rome, whose Number, Wealth, and dazling Splendor, exceeds all the Demands, and the Design of Charity, and raises Envy rather than Compassion, in the Breasts of Beholders. These are indeed superfluous Charities; Conveniences to private Persons, but of no real Advantage to the Publick: instead of being Receptacles for the truly Poor, they tempt Men to pretend Poverty, in order to share the Advantages of them. The Charitable Institutions, for which I plead, are of another Nature and Tendency; calculated, not for Oftentation, but Use; to answer the chief Ends of Human Life, and the necessary Wants of Human Nature: and the more therefore they are enlarg'd,
enlarg'd, the more useful still will they be; nor can the Liberal Hand ever be too Liberal in supplying them. At least, that cannot happen, till some Ages hence; when, therefore, it will be time enough to enter on such a Consideration. The

Vth and Last Thing (I shall mention) by which we are apt to excuse our Backwardness to good Works, is, the Ill Success that hath been observed to attend well-design'd Charities; with relation both to the Objects, on which they are plac'd, and the Hands, through which they are convey'd. The first do often prove unworthy of our Bounty, and the latter may sometimes divert and misapply it. But what then? Shall we be discouraged from any Attempt of doing good, by the Possibility of our failing in it? How many of the best Things, that were ever done for the World, would, at this rate, have been left unattempted? Our Part is, to chuse out the most deserving Objects, and the most likely to answer
answer the Ends of our Charity; and when that is done, all is done that lies in our Power: the rest must be left to Providence. What we bestow on these Occasions, is given by us, not as unto Men, but as unto God; for his Sake, and in obedience to his Commands. And with him the Value of our Gift depends not on the Success of it: For it is true, in this Sense also, what the Apostle affirms, That, if there be first a willing Mind, it is accepted, according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not—according to that a Man hath, i.e. a sincere Intention of doing good; and not according to that he hath not in his Power, the effectual Accomplishment of that Intention. Shall We repine at a little misplac'd Charity, We, who could no way foresee the Effect; when an All knowing, All-wise Being, (whom it is our Duty, and our Happiness, to imitate) showers down every Day his Benefits on the Unthankful and Undeserving? For he maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth
sendeth Rain on the Just and on the Unjust. He hath blessed Us, even Us, the most Sinful and Ungrateful People in the World, with Victory and Triumphs, and a near prospect of Peace, beyond not only our Deserts, but our very Hopes, and without any Probability of our employing these Blessings to the good Purposes for which they were intended----I mean, the Advancement of His Glory, and the Salvation of our Own Souls. Be Mat. v. 48.

ye, therefore, merciful, as your heavenly Father also is merciful; even to Objects, that may perhaps prove unworthy of your Bounty, and never answer the Design of it. And yet this I must say, in behalf of several of those Ways of Well-doing, which are now recommended to you, that they are, of all others, most likely to attain their End, and to bring forth Fruit; Those, I more particularly mean, which relate to the Education of Poor Children. For the force of Education is so great, that, by the means of it, we may mould the Minds and Manners of the Young into what Shape, what Form almost
almost we please; and give them the Impressions of such Habits, as shall ever afterwards remain: And therefore in the promoting of this sort of Charity, we act under the pleasing View, and indeed, under the utmost Assurance of Success; if a due care be but taken by those, who have the Conduct of our Bounty. And it is a certain Proof, that such a care hath always been taken by the Worthy Governors of these, and the Rest of the City Charities; that they have thriven, and prosper'd gradually from their Infancy down to this very Day: as they could never have done, if the Integrity, and Prudence, and Godly Zeal of those, by whom they were administered, had not been as conspicuous all along, as the Excellence and Usefulness of the Charities themselves. To this wise Management it is owing, that the Stream of Benevolence, which at first was not great, hath, by several Rivulets, which have since fallen into it, in its Course, wonderfully enlarg'd its Current, and grown wider and deeper still, the farther it hath flow'd.

Even,
Even at this Day there are not wanting Some, who, struck with the Beauty and Usefulness of these Charities, and observing the Care and Fidelity with which they are directed, break through all the Difficulties and Obstructions that now lie in the Way towards advancing them. Notwithstanding the General Decay of Traffick, and the growing weight of Taxes, and the many Rival Charities which have been lately erected; notwithstanding an Universal Dissolution of Manners under which we groan; notwithstanding the prevalence of Infidelity and Prophaneness, and of that Irreligious Scorn, with which good Men, and good Designs are now publickly treated; yet still I say there are Some, who please themselves in patronizing and encouraging these useful Designs, and in rendring them every day more Useful, and more Amiable. May God continue the Zeal of such Persons, and increase their Number!

It will, I am persuaded, conduce to this End, to have a true Account of the present State and Wants of the several Foun-
Here the REPORT was read.

You have heard, what the present Condition and Exigencies of these several Charities are, and I doubt not but you are dispos'd and resolv'd, according to your several Abilities, to do somewhat towards the Supply of them. Your own merciful Temper, and the Application I have already made, of what has been offer'd under each particular Head of Discourse, might render a solemn and form'd Exhortation needless. You are thoroughly acquainted with the Extensive Nature and Influence of these Admirable Designs, and possesst with a true Sense of their Beauty and Usefulness: You have a near and daily Experience of the Uprightness, Wisdom, and Frugality with which they are conducted; the pityable Persons, reliev'd in these several Ways, are constantly under your Eye, and Observation; and therefore I do, in their behalf,
behalf, appeal to your own Knowledge, and very Senses, which persuade more powerfully than any Arguments: If the moving Objects themselves, with which you familiarly converse, be not Eloquent enough to raise Compassion, mere Words, I fear, will scarce be effectual. However, for the sake of those, who have not such affecting Opportunities, and yet may be well-inclin'd to Works of Mercy; somewhat I shall say of the several Instances of Charity, to which the Report (now read to you) refers.

There is a Variety in the Tempers even of good Men, with relation to the different Impressions they receive from different Objects of Charity. Some Persons are more easily and sensibly touch'd by one sort of Objects, and some by another: But there is no Man, who, in the variety of Charities now propos'd, may not meet with that which is best suited to his Inclination, and which of all others he would most desire to promote and cherish. For here are the Wants of grown Men, and Children; of the Soldier, the Seaman,
man, and the Artificer; of the Diseas'd, the Maim'd, and the Wounded; of Distracted Persons, and condemn'd Criminals; of sturdy wandring Beggars, and loose disorderly Livers; nay, of those who counterfeit Wants of all kinds, while they really want nothing but due Correction and hard Labour; at one view represented to you. And surely, scarce any Man, who hath an Heart capable of Tenderness, can come and look on all these sad Spectacles at once; and then pass by on the Other side, without extending a merciful Hand to relieve any of them.

Some may delight in building for the Use of the Poor; others in Feeding, and Cloathing them, and in taking Care that Manual Arts be taught them: Some, in providing Physick, Discipline, or Exercise for their Bodies; others, in procuring the Improvement of their Minds by useful Knowledge: Some may please themselves in redressing the Mischiefs occasion'd by the wicked Poor; others, in preventing those Mischiefs, by securing the
the Innocence of Children, and by imparting to them the unvaluable Blessing of a virtuous and pious Education: Finally, Some may place their chief Satisfaction in giving secretly what is to be distributed; Others, in being the open and avow'd Instruments of making and inspecting such Distributions. And whoever is particularly dispos'd to any one or more of these Methods of Beneficence, may, (I say) within the Compass of those different Schemes of Charity, which have been propos'd, find room enough to exercise his Christian Compassion. To go over them particularly—

Haft thou been educated in the Fear of God, and a strict Practice of Virtue? Was thy tender Age fenc'd and guarded every way from Infection by the Care of wise Parents and Masters? And shall not a grateful Relish of thy own great Felicity, in that Respect, render thee ready and Eager to procure the same Happiness for Others, who equally need it? Shall it not make thee
A Spittal-Sermon.

the common Guardian, as it were, of VII. Poor Orphans, whose Minds are left as unclothed and naked altogether, as their Bodies; and who are expos'd to all the Temptations of Ignorance, Want, and Idleness?

Art thou a true Lover of thy Country? Zealous for its Religious and Civil Interests; and a cheerful Contributor to all those Publick Expences which have been thought necessary to secure them, against the Attempts of the common Enemy and Oppressor; is the near prospect of all the Blessings of Peace welcome and desirable to thee? and wilt thou not bear a tender Regard to all those, who have lost their Health and their Limbs in the rough Service of War, to secure these Blessings to thee? Canst thou see any one of them lye by the Way, as it were, stripped, and wounded, and half-dead; and yet pass by on the other side, without doing as much for thy Friend, as that good Samaritan did for his Enemy, when he had Compassion on him, and went to
Spittal-Sermon, 

In Oil and Wine, and brought him to an 

Inn (or House of Common Reception; for the Word, Παραμέτρος, signifies) and took care of him?

Have thy reasoning Faculties been eclips'd at any Time by some accidental Stroke? by the mad Joys of Wine, or the Excess of Religious Melancholy? by a Fit of an Apoplexy, or the Rage of a burning Fever? and hast Thou, upon thy Recovery, been made sensible, to what a wretched State that Calamity reduc'd thee? and what a sad Spectacle, to all thy Friends and Acquaintance, it render'd thee? And shall not this Affliction, which thou hast felt thy self, or perhaps observ'd in others, who were near and dear to thee; shall it not lead thee to Commiserate all Thöse, who labour under a settled Distraction? who are shut out from all the Pleasures and Advantages of Human Commerce, and even degraded from the Rank of Reasonable Creatures? Wilt thou not make Their Case Thine? and take Pity upon Them?
SERM. who cannot take Pity upon themselves?

VII.

Wilt thou not contribute, to the best of thy Power, either towards restoring the defac'd Image of God upon their Souls; or (if that cannot be done) towards supporting them, for a while, under a Charitable Confinement, where human Nature may be rescu'd from that Contempt, to which such Objects expose it?

Once more; Hast thou suffered at any time by Vagabonds and Pilferers? hath the Knowledge, or Opinion of thy Wealth expos'd thee to the Attempts of more dangerous and bloody Villains? have thy unquiet Slumbers been interrupted by the Apprehension of nightly Assaults, such as have terrify'd, and perhaps ruin'd some of thy unfortunate Neighbours? Learn from hence duly to esteem and promote those useful Charities, which remove such Pefts of human Society into Prisons and Work-Houses, and train up Youth in the Ways of Diligence, who would otherwise take the same desperate Courses: which reform the Stubborn by Correction, and the Idle by hard Labour; and would, if carry'd
A Spittal-Sermon.

carry'd to that Perfection of which they
are capable, go a great way towards
making Life more comfortable than now
it is, and Property it self more valu-
able.

These are the several Ways of Bene-
icence, which you are now call'd upon
to Practise. Many Arguments might be
urged, to induce you to it: but I am sen-
sible I detain You too long; and there-
fore shall use but One; however such
an one as is equal to many, and can-
not but have great Weight with all that
call themselves Christians. It is this----
That our Blessed Saviour went before
us, in the Practice of every One of these
Four Instances of well-doing, which I
have now recommended to You.

His Compassion and Benignity towards
little Children; is observ'd by all the Ev-
gelists; and with such Circumstances
as shew, that he laid great Stress upon
this kind of Charity, and did, in a pe-
culiar manner, recommend it to all his
Followers. For, when his Disciples re-
buked those who brought Young Children
unto
unto him; he was displeas'd, and said
unto them, Suffer the little Children to
come unto me, and forbid them not; for
of such is the Kingdom of God. Verily
I say unto you; Whosoever shall not re-
ceive the Kingdom of God, as a little
Child, he shall not enter therein. And
he took them up in his Arms, put his
Hands upon them, and blessed them. It
was impossible for him to have shew'd a
greater Tenderness and Concern for the
Infant-State, than by what he said, and
did, on this Occasion. And, lest we
should still be apt to disdain such hum-
ble Offices, and not to think them of
Importance sufficient to employ our
Thoughts; he farther assures us, that the
Care of these Little ones is committed
to ministring Spirits, who attend con-
tinually on this very Thing——I say un-
to you, that in Heaven their Angels do
always behold the Face of my Father
which is in Heaven. And we cannot
surely think it beneath us, to share with
those glorious Beings, in such an Ad-
ministration!
As to the Cure of the Diseas'd, the Maim'd, and the Infirm, it was his familiar and every Day's Employment; I must work the Works of him that sent me (says he, in relation to these very Cures) whilst it is Day; The Night cometh, when no Man can work: and therefore the very last Miracle he did, before his Day of working expir'd, and he left this World, was the healing the Ear of the high Priest's Servant, whom St. Peter had wounded.

His Compassion towards the Distracted and Lunatick, appears in divers Instances: for Such many of those Demoniacks seem to have been, whom he heal'd in great Numbers. The Descriptions which the Evangelists give of these wretched Objects, and of the several Symptoms with which their Maladies were attended, are very particular and moving, and shew, that both our Blessed Lord, and the Holy Pen-Men of his Story, were deeply affected with them. Hear the Account, given by St. Mark, of one Instance of this kind; the Man with an unclean Spirit.
Serm. whose Name was Legion! He had his
dwelling among the Tombs, and no Man
could bind him, no not with Chains;
because he had been often bound with
Fetters and Chains; and the Chains had
been plucked asunder by him, and the Fet-
ters broken in pieces; neither could any
Man tame him. And always, night and
day, he was in the Mountains, and in
the Tombs, crying, and cutting himself
with Stones. Our Saviour took Pity on
him; and we find him soon afterwards
sitting at Jesus Feet, cloathed, and in
his right mind.

Nay, he himself was pleas'd to set us
a Pattern also of that severe Charity,
which consists in Corporal Punishment
and Correction. For, when he saw the
outward Court of the Temple profan'd
by ungodly Merchandise; He, who was
Meekness and Mildness it self, made a
Scourge of small Cords, and drove these
buyers and sellers out of the Temple, and
overthrew their Tables. This he is ex-
pressly said to have done, at two several
Passovers; and with so remarkable a De-
gree
gree of Holy Warmth and Indignation, as made his Disciples apply to him what the Psalmist had said, *The Zeal of thine House hath eaten me up!* Ye see, Brethren, what a Divine Warrant you have, for abounding in all those Offices of Charity, which are this day propos'd to you; and which the Saviour of the World did not himself in Person disdain to exercise. *If therefore there be any Consolation in Christ, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowship of the Spirit, if any Bowels and Mercies; fulfil ye the Work, to which ye are invited and appointed; Look not every Man on his own Things, but every Man also on the things of another!* Let this Mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who did (as you have heard) in every Instance, what you are exhorted to do; and by so doing, *left us an Example, that we should follow his steps!* Let us look up to him, not only as the Author and Finisher of our Faith, but as the perfect Rule and Measure of our Obedience; remembering, and applying, those few,
few, but Emphatical Words, with which he concludes the Parable of the good Samaritan, from whence my Text is taken; Go thou, and do likewise. Which God of his infinite Mercy grant, &c.
A SERMON
Preach'd before the Sons of the Clergy, AT Their Anniversary-Meeting, IN THE CHURCH OF ST. PAUL.
Decemb. 6. 1709.
To the Worshipful

Mr. John Tenison,  Mr. John Markham,
Mr. John Scott,    Mr. Benajab Barret,
Mr. Thomas Fulkes, Mr. John Bosville,
Dr. Humphry Colmer, Mr. George Plaxton,
Dr. John Freind,   Mr. Joseph Sherwood,
Mr. Anthony Webster, Mr. Augustin Martin.

STEWARDS

For the Late

FEAST

OF THE

Sons of the Clergy.

Gentlemen,

YOU desir'd me to preach, and print this Sermon: I comply'd with You in both these Requests; tho' I had just Objections to both of them. Permit me now, in my Turn, to ask one thing of You; against which, I think, there lies no Objection;
jection: That, as you have, with some Trouble and Expence, supported our Anniversary Meeting: so You would continue always to countenance it by Your Presence, and heartily to favour the honest and pious Design of it. There are, I believe, Two hundred Persons now living, who have gone before You in the Stewardship. If all these be as earnest and sollicitous to promote this Charity, when out of that Office, as they were, when in it, we need not doubt, but that it will spread and enlarge itself every Year, more and more; as, God be thanked, it hath lately done, notwithstanding the great Discouragements under which it labours, by reason of the Publick Taxes, and its many new Rivals in the same Labour of Love; but chiefly, by reason of the growing Wickedness of Those, who, being Enemies to the Clergy, and to the Religion of Christ, must needs be Enemies to this particular Charity.

In composing this Discourse, I purposely declin'd all Offensive and Displeasing Truths,
Truths, as unseasonable at a Time peculiarly dedicated to the Exercise of Charity; not as in themselves misbecoming the Preachers of the Gospel: For I have learnt from One, who well knew and practis’d every Art of Spiritual Prudence, so as to become all things to all Men, in order to save some; that there are also Times, when we must be instant in preaching the Word, tho’ out of Season; and when They, who please Men, are no longer the Servants of Christ; Times, when that holy Παρθένος, so much spoken of in Scripture, is necessary; even that undaunted Firmness of Mind, and Freedom of Speech, by which the Doctrine of the Gospel was disseminated at first, and must still be maintain’d. When such Opportunities offer themselves, God, I hope, will enable all Those, who wait at his Altar, to discharge a good Conscience, with equal Wisdom and Courage.

I have added, here and there in the Margins of the following Sheets, some Passages
Passages from St. Chrysostome; because they are not only very apposite, but express'd also with great Life and Beauty. And I had Hopes, by the Means of them, to excite those of my Brethren, who are newly enter'd into the Ministry, carefully to peruse that Excellent Treatise, from which they are taken; a Treatise, which, next to the Sacred Pages themselves, and the Offices of Ordination prescribed by our Church, is, I am persuaded, of the greatest Use to give us true Impressions of the Dignity, and Duties of the Priesthood, and to warn us into Resolutions of acting in every case, as becomes our Sacred Character. I cannot but express my Satisfaction, that a Learned Hand hath lately taken this Useful Piece out of St. Chrysostome's Works, and publish'd it in a separate Volume.

Excuse me, Gentlemen, for mixing things of this Nature in an Address to You; which was design'd only to acquaint the World, Who are answerable for the Public-
DEDICATION.

Publication of this Sermon; and to assure You, after the most proper manner, that I am

Your very affectionate

And most Humble Servant,

Dec. 23,

1709.

FRANCIS ATTERBURY.
Romans xi. 6.

---If the first Fruit be Holy, the Lump is also Holy; and if the Root be Holy, so are the Branches.

The Jews, as they were the most remarkable People upon Earth, in many respects, so particularly in this; that they preserv'd the Pedigrees of their several Tribes and Families, with a more scrupulous and religious Exactness, than any other Nation in the World.

This Care was infus'd into them, and many ways cultivated by God himself, in order to ascertain the Descent of the Messiah, when he came, and to prove that he was, as the Prophets had foretold he should be, of the Tribe of Judah, and of the Lineage of David.

That Tribe indeed was most concern'd on this Account, to preserve their Genealogy entire. However, other Tribes there were, (for instance, Ephraim) which, though
though not entitled to this distinguishing Honour, yet set up their Pretences to it; and all of them, even without such a particular Claim, had great reason to glory in their common Descent from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the peculiar Favours of Heaven, to whom the Promise of the Blessed Seed was severally made. All of them therefore studiously cherish'd the Memory of their honourable Extraction, and carefully preserv'd the Evidences of it.

The Example of St. Paul is a Proof, that their Zeal in this case was laudable. For even he himself, who was the Apostle of the Gentiles, in those very Epistles which he wrote to the Gentile-Converts (particularly to those of Rome; the proudest part of the Heathen World, and who had entertain'd the most contemptuous Opinion of the Jews) fails not to magnify the great Privilege of his Birth, and highly to value himself upon it. Twice we find him, not only boasting of his Parentage, as an Israelite at large, but particularizing his Descent from the Tribe
of Benjamin*: He often and amply declares the great Advantage, † which belongs to the Seed of Abraham, as such; to whom (as he speaks §) pertaineth the Adoption, and the Glory, and the Covenants, and the Giving of the Law, and the Service of God, and the Promises; whose are the Fathers, and of whom, as concerning the Flesh, Christ came. And tho’, as concerning the Gospel, they were he says, now Enemies thro’ Unbelief, yet still he affirms, that, as touching the Election, or as the Elect People of God; they are beloved for the Fathers’ sakes. And on this Foundation he builds an Argument of great Importance; for the general Conversion of the Jews to the Faith of Christ, when once the Fulness of the Gentiles was come in: Then, he says, God would provoke the Jews to Emulation; so that They, seeing the universal Reception of the Gospel by the Heathens, should be induc’d; at length, to believe in Christ, as Abraham did, and, following his Faith, should likewise share his Reward: for, if the First-Fruit be holy,
holy, the Lump is also holy; and if the Root be holy, so are the Branches.

By the First-Fruit, and the Root, in these words, we are to understand the three great Progenitors of the Jews, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; chiefly the First of them, who, being eminently Holy, and Dear to God, should derive a Blessing to his Posterity on that account, and prevail at last, to have Them also accepted as Holy, and installed in the Favour of God. For, as the whole Lump, or Mass of Corn, under the Law, was hallow'd by the Heave-Offering * of the First-Fruits dedicated to God; as the Branches partake of the Vigour and Virtues of the Root from which they spring; so the great Body of the Jews are accepted in Abraham, and sanctify'd by their Descent from him. They cannot, therefore, be finally rejected; but shall, in God's good time, be admitted to partake of all the Privileges and Benefits, which belong to that Sacred Alliance.

And this they shall attain to, partly in Virtue of the Promise made by God, when

* Num. xv. 20. where the Words φαραώ and ἀράχη αὐτοί δέ are by the Apostle, are likewise employed.
when he enter'd into the Covenant with Abraham; and partly also, in Virtue of those Principles of Piety and Goodness, which they derived from their Ancestors, and from the holy Law of God, committed to their Custody; Principles, which tho' they might be obscur'd and buried for a time, yet would afterwards spring up, and bring forth Fruit; qualifying the Heirs of Promise for those Blessings, to which God had ordain'd them.

All this I apprehend to be within the Intention of the Apostle's Discourse. For the Holiness he speaks of, may be taken in a twofold Sense; either for that External and Relative Holiness; which belongs to Persons, or things, offer'd to God, and appropriated particularly to his Honour and Service; or for those Internal Graces and Qualities of Mind, which sanctify our Natures, and render us habitually holy. Both these St. Paul seems to point at, in the Words before us; and hath therefore purposely (if I mistake not) illustrated his Argument by two such Instances, as refer distinctly to Each
SERM. of them: For the Holiness of the first
VIII. Fruits and the Lump, is an Holiness
merely of Institution, Outward, and No-

minal; whereas, by the Holiness of the
Root, and the Branches, is to be under-
stood an Holiness of Nature, Inherent,
and Real. So that the Apostle's Mean-
ing in this Passage, may after this man-
ner be more clearly represented, and ful-
ly express'd: "That the Holiness of the
" Patriarchs should, in both Senses of
" that Word, extend itself to their Pro-
" geny, and should one day visibly rest
" on all the Tribes of Israel: who, as
" by Virtue of their relation to Abraham,
" they were still nearly related to God,
" and particularly dear to him; so should
" they likewise inherit, and, in God's
" appointed time, exert the Faith and
" Virtues of Abraham; and, by that
" means, render themselves every way
" Objects of the Divine Favour and Be-
" nediction:" for if the First-Fruit be
" holy, the Lump is also holy; and if the
" Root be holy, so are the Branches.

The
before the Sons of the Clergy.

The Words therefore that I have chosen, will afford me a very natural Occasion of discoursing (in a way suitable to the Design of this Annual Assembly) concerning the great Advantages and Blessings to which the Sons of the Clergy are entitled, as the holy Posterity of holy Parents: Especially, if it can be shewn, that the Apostle's way of reasoning was not confin'd to the Oeconomy and Nation of the Jews, but is of equal force also under the Christian Dispensation. And of this I need produce no other Proof than that single Passage of the same Apostle, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians; where he pronounces vii. 14., the Children of such Parents as were, One of them a Christian, and the other an Unbeliever, to be clean and holy, on the account of the Faith and Holiness even of one of those Parents. For the unbelieving Husband (says he) is sanctify'd by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is sanctify'd by the Husband: else were your Children Unclean; but now are they Holy. By the Holiness of the
Children, here mentioned, I understand the near Relation in which they stood to God, as born from a Believing Parent, and the Right which, on that account, they had to be admitted into the Christian Covenant by Baptism. But however this Holiness be understood, 'tis very plain, that it implies some peculiar Advantage, some extraordinary Privilege, which belong'd to these Children; and as plain, that they were entitled to that Advantage and Privilege (whatever it was) on the account of their Parentage. And therefore the Reasoning made use of by St. Paul in the Text, holds equally with regard to Jews and Christians; and will accordingly furnish us with proper and pertinent Matter for our ensuing Meditations.

Men and Brethren, Children of the holy Stock, sacred to God by Descent, not only from Christian Parents at large, but from Christian Priests also; who were, in an higher degree than others, holy to the Lord, even as the Levites among the Jews had greater Sanctity than
than the rest of the Tribes; to You, in a particular manner, appertaineth this Scripture, and the comfortable Assurance given in it, that *if the First-Fruit be holy, the Lump is also holy; if the Root be holy, so are the Branches.* Permit me therefore to apply it, after the same manner that I have explain'd it, by considering,

I. The great Privilege, Honour, and Advantage of our Descent from the Christian Priesthood.

II. The Obligations we are under of adorning our Sacred Parentage by an answerable Sanctity of Life and Manners; and of distinguishing ourselves as much by an Inherent and Habitual, as we are already distinguish'd by an External and Relative Holiness.

III. The Blessings, we may justly expect will befall us, as they have already, I doubt not, befallen us, on both these Accounts.
A Sermon Preach'd

I. The Priesthood hath in all Nations and all Religions, been held highly venerable; chiefly in that Nation which God selected to himself, and that Religion, which he prescrib'd to them. Now, the Levitical Priesthood was only Typical of the Christian; which is so much more holy and honourable than That, as the Institution of Christ is more excellent than that of Moses. If therefore the present Ministration Be more glorious than the former, the Ministers more Holy; some Advantage must needs redound to the Offspring from the Dignity of the Parents. Marriage, and a Bed undefiled, is honourable in all Men, and the Christian Priesthood is of all others most honourable; and therefore a Descent from the Marriage-Beds of those, who were vested with this Character, cannot but be Honourable.

I am sensible, we live in a Time, no ways favourable to these Pretensions; a Time, when our Order, which ought highly to be esteemed in Love, for its Works
before the Sons of the Clergy.

Works Sake, is, on that very account, disregarded; when we are so far from being encourag'd to speak of our Profession in those high Terms of Respect wherewith the Faithful of the first Ages, and even good Princes and Emperors themselves, always treated it, that the usual Titles of Distinction, which belong to us, are turn'd into Terms of Derision and Reproach, and every Way is taken by Profane Men, towards rendring us cheap and contemptible; when the Divine Authority of our Mission, and the Powers vested in us by the High Priest of our Profession, Christ Jesus, are publickly disputed and deny'd, and the sacred Rights of the Christian Church are scornfully trampled on in Print, under an hypocritical Pretence of maintaining them.

However, let not these Indignities discourage us from asserting the just Privileges and Pre-eminence of our holy Function and Character: Let us rather imitate the courageous Example of St. Paul, who chose then to magnify his Office, when ill Men conspir'd to lessen it. Shall
Shall the Sons of Belial set themselves to decry our Order, and by that means to disgrace our Birth? and shall not the Sons of Levi vindicate both by speaking the Truth in Christ, though they may be thought to speak as it were foolishly in the Confidence of boasting?

If then Others may be allow'd to glory in their Birth, why may not We? whose Parents were called by God to attend on him at his Altar? were entrusted with the Dispensation of his Sacraments, with the Ministry of Reconciliation, with the Power of Binding and Loosing? were set apart to take heed to the Flock of Christ, over which the Holy Ghost made them Overseers, and to feed the Church of God, which he purchased with his own Blood? to hold forth the word of Life, to speak, to exhort, and to rebuke with all Authority? If any Station, any Employment upon Earth be honourable, Their's was; and their Posterity therefore have no reason to blush at the Memory of such an Original.
before the Sons of the Clergy.

The Fountain of all Temporal Honour is the Crown; but the Fountain of the Regal Power and Dignity itself, is God:

From whom also our Fathers according to the Flesh receiv'd their Priestly Authority and Character, by the Intervention of Men, in like manner authoriz'd by God for that holy purpose; and under Him, and Them, were the Ministers of his Spiritual Kingdom; wherein We, their Descendants (and many of us call'd to the like Administration) do rejoice, yea and will rejoice.

If those, who stand before Earthly Princes, in the nearest degree of Approach, who are the immediate Representatives of their Persons, Dispensers of their Favours, and Conveyers of their Will to others, do, on that very account, challenge high Honours to themselves, and reflect some part of their Lustre on their Children and Families: Shall not They, who bear the like Relation to Christ in his Spiritual Kingdom, and discharge the like Offices under him, and of whom it may be as truly said, as it was
was of the Tribe of Levi, that God hath separated them from the Congregation, in order to bring them near to himself; shall not they also deserve Honour from Men on the account of their high Station and Trust; and derive some small Share to those who descend from them?

If ample Powers granted by the Rulers of this World, add Dignity to the Persons entrusted with those Powers; behold the Importance and Extent of the Sacerdotal Commission. As my Father hath sent me, even so send I You. Whosoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever Sins ye retain, they are retained.

If Antiquity, and a long Tract of Time enobles Families, Those, from whom You come, can trace their Spiritual Pedigree up even to Him, who was the Founder of the Church of the first-born, and of whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is nam'd. Let Others justify their Mission, as they can: We judge not those without; but are sure, we
we can justify that of our Fathers, by an uninterrupted Succession, from Christ himself; a Succession, which hath already continued longer than the Aaronical Priesthood, and will, we doubt not, still continue, till the Church Militant, and Time itself, shall be no more.

But our farther boast is, Brethren, that we have our Rise, as from the Clergy of Christ; so particularly from those of the Church of England; a Clergy, that for Soundness of Doctrine, and Depth of Learning, for Purity of Religion, and Integrity of Life, for a Zeal in things pertaining to God, that is, according to Knowledge, and yet duly temper'd with Candour and Prudence (which is the true Notion of that much talk'd of, much misunderstood Virtue, Moderation) I say, a Clergy, that on these, and many other Accounts, is not exceeded, if to be paralleled, in the Christian World.

Ye are the Sons of a Clergy, whose undissembled and unlimited Veneration for the Holy Scriptures hath not hindered them from paying an Inferior, but pro-
S E R M. profound Regard to the best Interpreters of Scripture, the Primitive Writers; in whose Works as none have been more conversant than they, so none have made a better use of them towards reviving a Spirit of primitive Piety in Themselves and Others. And their Searches and Endeavours of this kind have been blessed with a remarkable Success. For, as to the earliest and most valuable Remains of pure Antiquity (such as those of Barnabas, and Clement, and Ignatius, and Polycarp) I may safely venture to say, that the Members of this Church have done more towards either bringing them to Light, or freeing them from Corruption, or illustrating their Doctrine, or asserting their Authority, than the Members of any Church, or indeed of all the Churches in the World.

Ye are the Sons of a Clergy, who, by this Rule of God's Word, thus interpreted, reform'd from Popery in such a manner, as happily to preserve the Mean between the two Extremes, in Doctrine, Worship, and Government; and who
before the Sons of the Clergy. perfected this Reformation by quiet and orderly Methods, free from those Confusions and Tumults that elsewhere attended it: So that our Temple, like that of Solomon, was built without the Noise of Axes or Hammers.

And as they shut out Popery in the most effectual manner, by only paring off those Corruptions it had grafted on pure and genuine Christianity; so did they stand boldly in the Breach, when it meditated a Return, and for ever silenced the Champions of that baffled Cause, by their immortal and unanswerable Writings: So that You, their Sons, were at the Altar itself (if I may so speak) initiated by your Fathers, as the great Carthaginian was by His, into an hereditary Aversion from Rome; which I doubt not will ever last, and will ever preserve you against all her open Assaults, or her secret and undermining Approaches.

Ye are the Sons of a Clergy, distinguish'd by their Zeal for the Rights of the Crown, and for their Reverence towards those that wear it, and famous for suf-
suffering always together with it, and for it: Immoveably firm to their Duty, when they could have no prospect of Reward; when they might have lost their Integrity with Advantage, and could scarce with Safety retain it when they saw Majesty oppress'd and sinking, and the Fury and Madness of the People prevailing against it; and they looked, and there was none to help; and they wondered that there was none to uphold.

Finally, Ye are the Sons of a Clergy, who are the farthest remov'd of any, from all possible Suspicion of designing to enslave the Understandings, or Consciences of Men; who bring all their Doctrines fairly to the Light, and invite Men with freedom to examine them; who have been the best Advocates in the World for the use (the due use) of Reason in Religion; as knowing the Religion they profess to be such, that the more exactly it is sifted by Reason, (pure, unbiass'd Reason) the more reasonable still it will be found.
of this holy Root, Ye are the Branches; from this excellent Order of Men Ye spring; happy in your Extraction, on many accounts, but chiefly in This, that it deriv'd to you the inestimable Advantages of an honest, sober, and religious Education; that, by the means of it, the first Impressions made upon your tender Minds, were on the side of Virtue and Goodness, that you had the earliest and best Opportunities of knowing God and your Duty, and were led into the immediate Practice of what you knew; that from Children You were acquainted with the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto Salvation, and bred up every way in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord. A Blessing, which next to that of Life itself, is the greatest that Man can bestow; and without which even Life itself would often prove rather a Curse than a Blessing, to those on whom it is bestowed.

Let others then value themselves upon their Birth: We, I am sure, have great reason to thank God for Ours; and to express
express our Thanks by openly owning our Parentage, and paying our Common Devotions to God among the Numerous Attendants on this day's Solemnity.----

A Solemnity, which I doubt not but St. Paul himself, if sensible of things below, is now pleas'd to see, and thinks this Holy Place, that bears his Name, never better employ'd than on such Occasions as these, which tend to promote the Honour of the Christian Priesthood, and the fervent Exercise of Charity; two Arguments on which He, in his Epistles, dwells often, and often delights to dwell.

As our Birth therefore does Honour to Us, so is it One way, in which we also do Honour to our Birth, if we countenance such Meetings by our Presence, and promote the great Ends of them by our Example; if we take these Opportunities of praetising, and thereby recommending and instilling Brotherly Kindness; considering one another, to provoke unto Love, and to Good Works; not forsaking the Assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is. Should any
any little Difference of Sentiments happen, any Personal Prejudices obtain among
the Members of the same holy Community, let them not hinder us from uniting
to procure the common Good of it, and from pursuing, with joint Hands and
Hearts, the unexceptionable Design of this pious and wise Institution. If our Jeru-
salem be in Other respects unhappily divided, yet in This respect at least, let it
be as a City that is at Unity in itself; 

whither the Tribes go up, even the Tribes of the Lord, to testify unto Israel, to
give Thanks to the Name of the Lord: And let every one of us be ready, on
such Occasions, to exhort Himself, and Others, in the Language of good David,

---- I was glad when they said unto me,

We will go into the House of the Lord. 

Our Feet shall stand in thy Gates, O Jeru-
salem. For my Brethren and Compa-
nions sake, I will wish thee Prosperity!
yea, because of the House of the Lord
our God, I will seek to do thee good. Let
there be no Spots in these our Feasts of
Charity; nothing that may fully the

T 2 Bright-
Serm. Brightness, and damp the Cheerfulness of this Day's Solemnity: but let us flock to it, like Brethren, and like Christians, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any Man have a Quarrel against any; and adding to the External Exercise, the inward Temper and Spirit also of that Divine Grace, which is kind, envieth not, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, but is easy to be intreated, thinketh no Evil, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Thus if we think, and thus act, we shall indeed shew ourselves to be every way worthy of our Descent, and duly mindful, not only of the Advantage we receive from thence, but of the Obligations also which are on that account incumbent upon us; even the Obligations of adorning our sacred Parentage by an answerable Sanity of Behaviour, and of distinguishing ourselves as much by an Inherent and Habitual, as we are already distinguish'd by an External and Relative...
before the Sons of the Clergy.

Relative Holiness. This was what I, in Serm. the Second place, propos'd to consider.

II. We stand in the nearest Relation to them, who stood in the nearest Relation to God, and who were on that account, oblig'd to be holy even as He is holy: to imitate every way as far as human Infirmity would suffer them, the Apostle, and High-Priest of their Profession, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners. Some share of their Obligations descends to Us; who, partaking of the Root and Fatness of the Olive Tree, whereof we boast to be the Branches, ought also to produce the Fruits of it.

The Sons of Servants do in a peculiar manner belong to Him, whose Servants their Fathers were: at his Will, and in his Interests, they ought entirely to be. We therefore being born of Parents, who were employ'd in the holy Functions of God's Family, the Church, and were dedicated to his immediate Service; ought to look upon ourselves as
SERM. VIII. particularly devoted to the Honour and Interests of their and our great Master: The Cause of Religion and Goodness (which is the Cause of God) is Ours by Descent, and we are doubly bound to espouse it.

As our Advantages towards practising and promoting Piety and Virtue, were greater than those of other Men; so will our Excuse be less, if we neglect to make use of them. We cannot plead, in Abatement of our Guilt, that we were ignorant of our Duty, under the Possession of Ill Habits, and the Bias of a wrong Education: In all these Instances, the Providence of God remarkably favoured us: Early were our Minds tinctured with a distinguishing Sense of Good and Evil; early were the Seeds of a Divine Love, and holy Fear of offending, sown in our Hearts. If therefore our Improvements be not answerable to such Beginnings, if we fall away after tasting of the Heavenly Gift, and the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come; how Criminal must such a Deception be,
and how terrible the Condemnation with SERM.
which it is attended?

* St. Chrysostome, in his admirable Treatise of the Priesthood, observes, not only that the Expiation, appointed for the Sin of the High-Priest, was equal to that which was prescrib'd for the whole Congregation; but that even the Children of Priests (such, whose Sex permitted them not to minister at the Altar) were, by the Levitical Law, to be punished more severely than any other Offenders in the same kind were: Not, says he, that the Offences were, in their own Nature, unequal; but those committed by the Children of Priests were aggra-

* Dei."
A Sermon Preach'd

SERM. vated, διὰ τὸ Πατρικὸν αἵματα, by the
VIII. Dignity of their Parents. The very Re-
lation which those Children bore to the
Priesthood, contributed to enhance their
Guilt, and increase their Punishment.

Rom. xii. I beseech You therefore, Brethren, by
the Mercies of God, that ye present your
Bodies and Souls a living Sacrifice, Holy,
Acceptable unto God, which is your Rea-
sonable Service. Whatsoever things are
true, whatsoever things are honest, what-
soever things are just, whatsoever things
are pure, whatsoever things are lovely,
whatsoever things are of good report; if
there be any Virtue, if there be any Praise,
think on these things. Those things
which Ye have both learned, and receiv-
ed, and heard, and seen, do.----Remem-
bring them which have had the Rule
over you, (both as your Natural and Spi-
ritual Parents) whose Faith follow, con-
sidering the End of their Conversation.

Many are the Enemies of the Priest-
hood, and of You, for the sake of it.
They are diligent to observe whatever
may either nearly or remotely blemish
it;
before the Sons of the Clergy.

it; and ready to impute to the Order itself, the faulty Conduct of those who owe their Birth and Education to it; that so they may wound Religion through the Sides of its most profess'd Servants and Followers. Let not any of us furnish their Malice with Objections, or give an Edge to the Weapons which they use against us, by so living as misbecomes our holy Stock. The Sacred Office can never be hurt by their Sayings, if it be not first reproach'd by our Doings. Since the Eyes of Men are upon us, since they mark all our Steps, and watch our Haltings, let a Sense of their Insidious Vigilance excite us so to behave ourselves in all the Offices of Life, and in all the Duties of our several Stations, that They, who seek Occasion, may not only not find Occasion against us, but may find also what they do not seek, even a Conviction of the mighty Power of Christianity towards regulating the Passions, and sanctifying the Natures of Men. So shall we defeat their Malice, and draw Good out of Evil; so shall we best
best put in practice that noble Instance

of Charity, that Divine Lesson of loving

Enemies, which our Religion hath taught

us; so shall we most nearly trace the

Example, which he, of whose Retinue

and Household we are, hath set us, of

blessing them that curse us, and doing

good to them that despitefully use us.

It might be expected, that among the

Sons of the Clergy themselves, not One

of this Character should ever be found.

But they are not all Israel, that are of

Israel; neither because they are the Seed

of Abraham, are they all Children. There

is a Generation that curseth their Father,

and doth not bless their Mother. Ye are

clean, (said our blessed Lord, even of the

Apostles) but not all, for he knew who

should betray him. When such Instances

happen of Men, sprung from the Loins

of Levi, and yet Enemies to the Tribe,

their Rage and Malice is usually exceed-

ing great; and it is natural that it should

be so: For a revolted Christian is worse

than a mere Heathen; and those among

Christians, who have been best educated

and
and principled in their Youth, if they once break through such Restraints, grow wicked in Proportion to their former Advantages; waxing worse and worse; deceiving, and being deceived; till, by the just Judgment of God, they arrive at the utmost pitch of Impiety. God be thanked, such Apostates are few, and do always, sooner or later, meet with the just Reward of their Apostacy, in this Life, a General Detestation!

Let us turn our Eyes from such displeasing Objects, and proceed, in the

III\textsuperscript{d} and last place, to take a View of the Blessings, which have attended the Sons of a married Clergy; and will, I doubt not, still attend them, if they live answerable to their holy Birth and Education.

From the Dawn of the Reformation to this Day, it is easy to observe the various and visible Interpositions of God's Providence, in behalf of those who waited at his Altar, and their Children and Descendants. Kings have been rais'd up to be their
of their Nursing-Fathers, and Queens to be their Nursing-Mothers; under whose Shadow and Encouragement they have rested and prosper'd. While the Monarchy flourish'd, these faithful Servants of God and the King wanted not a Protector; when it sunk, they fell for a time; when it rose, they reviv'd with it. God put it into the Heart of one of our Princes, towards the Close of her Reign, to give a Check to that Sacrilege, which had been but too much wink'd at, in the former Parts of it. Her Successor pass'd a Law, which prevented absolutely all future Alienations of the Church Revenues. The Royal Martyr took some excellent Steps towards making a more equal Distribution of those Revenues between the present Possessors, and such as were to succeed them. His Son, a Gracious Prince, pity'd the Wants, which the Great Rebellion had caus'd or increas'd among the Widows and Children of Clergymen; and, in order to provide a Supply for their present and future Necessities, erected that Corporation of Charity, to which the
before the Sons of the Clergy.

the Persons, composing this Assembly, generally belong; some as the happy Objects, others as the worthy Directors of it, or generous Benefactors to it; All I hope, as hearty Well-wishers, Encouragers, and Friends. But to Her present Majesty we owe the greatest Shower of Royal Bounty, that ever fell from the Throne: even a gracious Rain, which, by her means, God sent on his Inheritance, and refresh'd it when it was weary. Her Blessings have prevail'd above the Blessings of her Progenitors; and have, we trust, the Foundation of yet more, and greater, which God, in his good time will bestow, when we have qualify'd ourselves for them by a Right Use of those we already enjoy.

Only let us not murmur, if he now and then stop the Current of his Mercies, if he hide his face, as it were, for a moment, and suffer Evil, and not Good, to lay hold of us. Both are in his Power, and he dispenses both with equal Wisdom and Tenderness; and both shall alike turn to the Advantage of those, who
who have the Skill to make use of them.

Wherefore, in the Day of Prosperity, be Joyful; but in the Day of Adversity, Consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that Man should find nothing after him; to the end that Man, not knowing what shall happen next, or how soon it may happen, should neither be too much elated by the one, nor dejected by the other. God hath indeed, sometimes chastened us with the Rod of Men, and with the Stripes of the Children of Men; but his Mercy hath not departed away from us. The Lord will never leave off his Mercy, neither shall any of his Works perish; neither will he abhor the Posterity of his Elect: and the Seed of them that love him, he will not take away.

Be Ye not therefore wearied and faint in your Minds. The Order to which you belong, and even the Establishment on which it subsists, have often been struck at, but in vain; still every Blow that was aim'd at Them, mis'd of its Effect, and produc'd Events contrary to the Intention
tention of those who directed it. Many remarkable Instances of this kind there have been; the time would fail me, should I attempt to number them: But one there is, which ought not to be pass'd over, because it will administer Reflections of a very encouraging Nature, and very apposite to the Design of this present Solemnity.

When Marriage, at the Reformation, was first allow'd to the Clergy of this Kingdom, there is no doubt, but that some who then sat at the Helm, and gave no good Proofs of any real Regard for Religion, intended it as a Politick Device to lessen their Interest, and keep them low in the World. And yet so has God order'd Matters, that even from hence many signal Advantages have re-dounded to our Church; some of which I shall so far presume upon your Patience, as to lay before You.

And first, several Temptations, under which the Popish Clergy lay, towards embracing an Interest distinct from that of their Country, are by this means effectually
ally remov'd; and all uneasy Jealousies of our Riches, Greatness, Power, and Union, are in good measure abated. And this, in Times, when even the diminish'd Revenues and Privileges of the Church are look'd upon with a suspicious Eye, is some Advantage to her; as it gives her leave to enjoy those poor Remains of Ancient Piety, which she possesses, without that Envy and Ill-will which would otherwise attend them. Little Reason there is (God knows) to envy her on this account: for notwithstanding the large Incomes annex'd to some few of her Preferments, I will be bold to say, and do not doubt but to prove, that this Church, in proportion to the Numbers of its Clergy, hath in the whole, as little to subsist on, as almost any even of those Protestant Churches, which are thought to be most meanly provided for. However, since this Little is by some thought too much, and vain Jealousies of our Strength and Power are, on this account, entertained or pretended; 'tis well that these Apprehensions are qualify'd by a Sense
Sense of our Marriage Circumstances, 

which even They, who are pleas'd to think us under no other Tye to the true Interest of our Country, will allow to be an effectual Curb upon us. They who marry, give Hostages to the Publick, that they will not attempt the Ruin, or disturb the Peace of it; since in the Publick Safety and Tranquillity, that also of their Wives and Children, that is, of their Nearest and Dearest Relations, is involv'd, according to those remarkable Words of the Prophet Jeremy, directed to the Jews in Babylon.----Take ye Jer. xxix.

Wives, says he, and beget Sons and Daughters, and take Wives for your Sons, and give your Daughters to Husbands, that they may bear Sons and Daughters, that ye may be increased there, and not diminish'd: And seek the Peace of the City, whither I have caused you to be carried.----For in the Peace thereof shall ye have Peace.

By this Means also the foul Impurities, that reign'd among the unmarried, especially the Monkish Clergy, and the...
scandalous Reflections which fell upon the whole Order on that account, have been prevented. 'Tis true, these Enormities have been thought more and greater than they really were. 'Twas the Interest of those, who thirsted after the Possessions of the Clergy, to represent the Possessors in as vile Colours as they could; and many of those poor People were, doubtless, frighten'd, and betray'd into false and disadvantageous Confessions; the general Prejudices of the Time falling in with these Accounts, and procuring them an Universal Reception; and our Historians taking them afterwards upon Trust, as their Credulity, Laziness, or Partiality led them. However after all the Abatements that can be made, there was too much Truth in some of these Representations; so much as brought the whole Function into Disgrace; and made the Offering of the Lord to be abhor'd. And it is plain, that the Cure of this Evil is one of those many Blessings, which have arisen to our Religion, and Church, from a married Clergy.
Another is, that great numbers of men descended from them, have been distributed into all arts and professions, all ranks and orders of men amongst us; and have, by the blessing of God upon their industry, thriven so well, and rais'd themselves so high in the world, as to become in times of difficulty, a protection and a safeguard to that altar at which their ancestors minister'd. And I question not, but that there are many here this day, who will have the same success in the world, and will make the same use of it. We may say to our country-men, as Tertullian, in his apology, did to the Romans, Hesterni sumus, & vestra omnia implevimus, Urbes, Insulas, Castella, Municipia, Conciliabula, Castra ipsa, Tribus, Decurias, Palatium, Senatum, Forum. [c. 37.] We the sons of the clergy, are but of yesterday, as it were; and yet the country, the city, the court, the army, the fleet, the bar, the bench, and the senate house itself, hath had, and still hath a large share of us: men often famous, often highly useful.
Useful in their Generations; Useful in their Publick and in their Private Capacities; Useful to their Country, and Useful to the Church; being an Honour and a Support to that Order from which they descended. The Lot of the Sons of the Clergy in this case, is like that of the Sons of Levi, of whom it was said

Gen. xlit. — I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel. This Dispersion of that particular Tribe among the rest of the Tribes, was intended as their Punishment, but prov'd in the Event, and in many Respects a great Blessing, both to them and to the whole Jewish Community.

Again, even the Secular Cares and Avocations which accompany Marriage, have not been without their Advantages; inasmuch as the Clergy have by this Means, been generally furnish'd with some measure of Skill in the common Affairs of Life, have gain'd some Insight into Men and Things, and a competent Knowledge of (what is call'd) the World: A Knowledge to which most of the Order, while under the Obligations of Celibacy.
before the Sons of the Clergy.

libacy, were great Strangers. And of this kind of Knowledge they have made admirable Use in their Profession, towards guiding and saving Souls; for it has enabled them to preach to their Flocks after the most rational and convincing, the most apt and sensible manner, *rightly dividing the Word of Truth,* like Workmen that needed not to be ashamed; and so explaining and applying the General Precepts of Morality contain'd in the Gospel, as that the Consciences of those to whom they address'd their Doctrine, should readily bear Witness of the Truth, and feel the Power of it. 'Tis, perhaps, for this Reason, among others, that our practical Divinity is allow'd to excel; and to be as sound and affecting, as that of our Popish Neighbours is flat and unedifying. For he that preaches to Man, should understand what is in Man, to such a degree as is requisite to qualify him for the Task: And that Skill can scarce be duly attain'd by an Ascetic in his Solitudes, or a Monk in his Cloister. I speak the Sense of St. Chrysostome; who as
SERM. great a Lover and Recommender of the 
Solitary State as he was, declares it to be no proper School for those, who are 
to be Leaders of Christ’s Flock, and the 
Guides of Souls *; and thinks such Persons best qualified for the Pastoral Charge, 
who to Innocence of Life have joined 
so much Worldly Experience and Prudence, as may enable them in the Course 
of their Ministry, to address themselves 
to Men in a way suited to their several 
Exigencies and Tempers, to their various 
Ranks, Conditions and Characters †. I need
need not say, what Advantages, in this respect, belong to a married Clergy, particularly to those of the Church of England.

Nay farther, the married State of Parochial Pastors hath given them the Opportunity of setting a more exact, and universal Pattern of Holy Living to the People committed to their Charge, and of teaching them how to carry themselves in their several Relations of Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, by Domestic Patterns, as well as by Public Instructions. By this Means, they have, without question, adorn'd the Gospel, glorify'd God, and benefited Men, much more than they could have done in the devoutest and strictest Celibacy. And
their Usefulness in this respect to others hath not been without some Advantage to themselves; it hath rais'd the Credit of the Order, and promoted the Réverence that is justly due to it.

Let me add one Instance more, wherein the Marriage of the Clergy hath redounded to their Honour; inasmuch as it affords a remarkable Argument of God's particular Providence towards them and their Families. For, considering the chargeable Methods of their Education, their numerous Issue, and small Income; considering the Expences incumbent upon them, in point of Hospitality, and Charity, and the Proportion (the at least equal Proportion) they bear in the Publick Burthens and Taxes; it is next to a Miracle, that no more of their Children should want, and that so many of them should be in such prosperous Circumstances, as we have good Reason to think there are, even from this Day's solemn Appearance. Happy art Thou, O Israel. O People saved by the Lord, the Shield of thy Help, and who is the Sword of
before the Sons of the Clergy.

of thy Excellency! and thine Enemies shall be found Lyars unto thee. No Weapon that is form'd against thee, shall prosper; and every Tongue, that shall rise against thee in Judgment, Thou shalt condemn. This is the Heritage of the Servants of the Lord, and their Righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord.

However, still one Inconvenience there is, with which the Marriage of the Clergy is too visibly attended, the Poverty of some of them; an Inconvenience which is, as you have heard, ballanced and out-weigh'd by many signal Advantages; and which we are so far from dissembling, that we meet this Day, to do every one of us somewhat (as God hath enabled, and shall incline us) towards removing it. This is the only specious Objection which our Romish Adversaries urge against the Doctrine and Practice of this Church, in the Point of Celibacy; the only Matter of just Reproach, wherein they visibly triumph. Since other Arguments have, by our Excellent Writers, been wrested out of the Enemy's Hands, pity it is, that
This; that we should not be able to justify our Reformation in every respect, and to make this Church, like the true Spouse of Christ, *a glorious Church, having neither Spot, nor Wrinkle, nor any such thing*, that may blemish her Lustre, deform her Beauty, and expose her to any degree of that ungodly Scorn, with which proud and irreligious Minds are ever ready to pursue her. We are not indeed, of our selves, sufficient for this Work: However, more may be done by us towards it, than at first we are apt to imagine; if we set about it in good earnest, and employ our united Strength upon it; if we encourage it by our Examples, and Persuasions, and by placing the Motives to this particular sort of Beneficence, in a proper Light before Those, who wish well to Religion, have much to bestow in Charity, and Hearts ever open and ready to bestow it.

It is said of our Blessed Saviour, (whose Advent we now celebrate) that he came *Eating and Drinking*, and that he went *about*
before the Sons of the Clergy.

about doing good. I join these two parts of his Character, because He himself often exerted them together, and made use of the One, as affording him fit Opportunities to abound in the Other. He disdain'd not to appear at great Tables, and Festival Entertainments, that he might more illustriously manifest his Divine Charity to the Souls and Bodies of Men. Let us, this Day, imitate his Example in both these Respects; and whilst we are enjoying the good things of Life, let us remember Those that want even the Necessaries and first Conveniences of it: And remember them, as We ourselves should have desired to be remembred, had it been our sad Lot to subsist on other Men's Charity. They are not Common Objects, for which I plead; nor are You only under the Ordinary Ties of Humanity and Charity to relieve them. Their Fathers and Yours were Fellow-servants to the same Heavenly Master, while they liv'd; nor is that Relation dissolv'd by their Death, but ought still to operate among their surviving Children. And blessed
blessed be He of the Lord, whoever among you hath not left (and shall not leave) off his Kindness to the Living, and to the Dead; but for the sake of the Dead, shall continue to do good to the Living!

May God awaken the Minds of all those of this Body, whom his Providence has blessed with Abundance, to consider the Obligations they are under, of ministring to the Necessities of their poor Brethren! May he open their Ears to the Cries of the Orphan and Widow, who are Members of the same common Family, though mean ones, and have a Right to be supported out of the Incomes of it, as the poor Jews had to gather the Gleanings of the Rich Men's Harvest!

There are indeed many excellent Institutions of Charity lately set up, and which deserve all manner of Encouragement; particularly those which relate to the careful and pious Education of poor Children. An Admirable Design! which hath met with a deserv'd Success! and may it still go on prospering to prosper!

But
But give me leave to say, that, while so many Orphans and Widows of Clergy-men are destitute even of Food and Raiment, the Eyes of the Sons of the Clergy should chiefly be turn’d on these Objects, and the greatest Share of their Charity should flow in this Channel. 'Tis determined by the great Preacher of Charity, St. Paul, that Domestic Instances of Beneficence should take place of those that are Foreign. _As we have Opportunity_ (says he) _let us do Good unto all Men; especially unto Them, that are of the Household of Faith._ And again, in those Emphatical Words, ——— _If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own House, (the Words are ἵνα τις, and ἵνα κρίνεται, and signify such as have an immediate Relation to us, or Dependance upon us) he hath deny’d the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel._ An heavy Charge, but a true one! for Infidels always walk’d by this Rule, and according as Men stood more or less nearly related to them, by Natural or Political Ties, made them more or less
the Objects of their Compassion and Bounty. And thus, therefore, speaks a Wise Heathen; Optime Societas Homium Conjunctorq; servabitur, si, ut quisq; erit conjunctissimus, ita in eum Benignitatis plurimum conferetur. There is a Mixture of Charity and Justice, in this Proceeding; and the One of these serves to heighten and beautify the Other.

The Abundance of many of those, before whom I stand, is, I doubt not, owing to the Church; I do not mean to the Revenues of it; (for the Instances of great Fortunes rais'd from thence, since the Reformation, are but Few; and God forbid there should be many!) but to the pious Care, that their good Fathers, more nearly sensible of their Obligations in this Respect than common Parents, took of their Education; and to the religious, thriving Principles, which they instill'd into them; and, perhaps, to the immediate Blessing of God, upon their honest Industry and Labour, on the account of the very Stock from which they came. Into that Church, therefore, should their
their Abundance, when it flows over, regularly empty itself, and refresh the Bowels of some of their poor Brethren. 

All the Rivers (says Solomon) run into the Sea: unto the Place from whence the Rivers came, thither they return again. Let us govern our Charitable Distributions by this Pattern, which Nature hath set us, and maintain, in like manner, a mutual Circulation of Benefits and Returns!

So will this excellent Charity make larger and quicker Advances, than it hath hitherto done; so will it recommend itself to others, who are not of our Body, and who, how well soever dispos’d they may be towards the Order, do not think they are concern’d to take more Care of us, than we take of ourselves; so will the only plausible Objection of the Church of Rome against a married Clergy, in due time, vanish, when another Generation of Men shall see this Charity, in Conjunction with the Royal Bounty, extending itself to the Wants of as many as have need of it.

Which
SERM. Which that it may do, God of his Infinite Mercy grant, thro' Jesus Christ our Saviour; To whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be rendered all Might, Majesty, and Dominion, now and for ever.
CONCIO
AD
CLERUM
LONDINENSEM,
Habita in
Ecclesia S. ELPHEGI,
MAII XVII. A.D. MDCCIX.

Vol. II. X Reve-
Reverendis in Christo Fratribus,

Sionensis Collegii Sociis, atque Ecclesiariurn Londinensium Pastoribus.

Collegii nostri Fundatori hoc erat propositum, quod & supremis Tabulis testatum reliquit, ut, celebratis frequentius Cleri Conventibus, permisistis; Consiliis, & Evangelicae Doctrinae Veritati, & mutuo inter Fratres Amori optime consuleretur. Huic Institutut out satisficeret, a Me quidem hac Concione tentatum est; a Vobis autem effectum, cum, quam Ego, haustam e Sacris Literis de Regum Jure in Subditos Sententiam defendendam susceperim, eadem & Vos, fraternis animis usquequaq; consentientes habuerim. Retulit enim mihi, qui tum Coetui nostro pra-
sidebat, Vir Integerrimus, traditam a me e suggesto Doctrinam & comprobasse Vos, & ut in publicum exiret, uno ore postulavisse: quorum alterum cum, Ecclesiae nostrae, & Reipublicae causa, mihi esset gratissimum, alteri certe non erat repugnandum.

Habete itaque, Viri præstantissimi, quam expetivistis, Concordem; ea parte etiam quâ prîns manca erat, autem atque absolutam: quæ enim, a pagina 20 usque ad 41, Uncis includuntur, cum Orationibus, intra Horæ minus spatium contrabendæ, inseri non possent, ut jam Edite accedere, curavi. Hæc autem, tanquam Judicio vestro atq; Testimoniio munita, Lectori minime exhibeo: eodem tamen filo, quo ea quæ audivistis, contexta cum sint, iisdem plane fundamentis subnixa; cætera qui probaverint, ne hæc improbent, non est magnopere extimescendum.

Faxit Deus, quæ afferuntur a nobis, ut stabiliendæ Pauli Doctrinae, ut tueniendæ Regum Dignitati, Paciæ, publicæ conservandæ, ut deniq; tollendis iis, quæ, in re omnium exploratissima, non absq;
Christiani nominis labes, nunc gliscent, Controversis, aliquatenus serviant! Adisti-usmodi certe Lites sedandas Vestra omnium, Fratres, Consensio, ac communis sollicitudo, & valuit semper, & valebit plurimum: præsertim, cum Venerandi admodum in Christo Patris nostri, Episcopi Londinensis, Curis atq; Consilia respondat. Quæ cum ita sint, Hortatio non est necessaria; Gratulatione magis utendum est. Liceat ita; mihi verbis Ignatianis Vos affari—To ὑμῶν ἀξιοῦσιν ὑμῶν Præseotigemov, τῇ Θεῷ ἀξίου, ἐτὰς συνήμεοι τῇ Ἐπισκόπῃ, ὡς χειρὶ πιστε. Διὰ τοῦτο, ἐν τῷ ὑμῶν ὑμῶν, ἐπι συμφονία ἐμάτῃ χεῖς ἀδετόν.

Ut ita semper in rebus ad Deum pertinentibus sentiatis, ita Christianam Veritatem tueamini, Concordiam foveatis, precatur

Conservus vester in Domino

nostro, Christo Jesu,

Franciscus Atterbury.
Rom. xiii. i.

Omnis Anima Potestatibus sublimioribus subdita sit.

CONVENIMUS hodierno die, SERM. IX.

Fratres in Christo Reverendi, Verbum Dei, dicturus Ego, Vos audituri; quod contra decuit forte sse ab uno aliquo e venerando hoc Compresbyterorum coetu dici, a me audiri. Verum cum id moneris mihi, a Viro optimo gravissimoq; demandatum, statuissem non defugere; nihil potius faciendum duxi, quam ut Officia Civium erga Principes, quatenus ea Sacris Literis tradita sunt ac descripta, Vobis exponerem. Ecquis enim in Theologiâ, quae mores spectat, Locus feracior atq; uberior? Ecquod Officii genus honestius sanetiüfsve?

X 3     Ecquod
SERM. Ecquod Argumentum dicendi, auribus Christianis dignius, aut acceptius? quodque cum majori vel Reipublicae, vel Ecclesiae emolumento tractari potuit? His præterimi Temporibus, quibus Opiniones de Regum Potestate per vim coercendâ passim in vulgus spargi, passim ab imperitis arripi videmus; ita ut, si revivisceret denuo Paulus, non minori nunc studio à Nobis, ut opinor, contenderet, quàm quo olim Ramanis præceperit, ut Omnis Anima Potestatibus sublimioribus subjicta sit.

Præcipites observare, colere, yereri; iisq; justa imperantibus omnino parere, injusta præcipientibus non repugnare; hæc erant, quà inter præcipuæ Doctrinæ Christianæ Capita, quà quidem Vitæ bene a-gendæ inservirent, Discipulis suis tradisse constat primos Evangelii doctores; idq; variis ac gravibus de causis; ad-duxtos siclicet, partim argumenti ipsius pondere atq; utilitate, partim præsentione quâdam jam tum impendentium malorum, quibus, vel jubente, vel annuente Magistratu, affligendi essent Christiani; quibusq;
quibusq; ne nimiûm obniterentur, ne ob- S E R M.
siferent, Apostolicis iustiæmodi monitis,
Tanquam fræno aliquo, erant maturè co-
hicendi.

IN T E R cos, qui Christianæ sec addi-
X. erant Disciplinæ, non defuere quidam,
gente Judæi, qui palàm profiterentur, Ma-
gistratibus Etnicis nihil quicquam juris
esse in Populum Dei. Nonnullorum etiam
in mentibus insederat prava quædam de
Libertate Evangelicâ Opinio, cujus vi ac
virtute eximi se planè putabant ab omni
Imperio humano. His Erroribus occurren-
dum erat; strenue autem totisq; viribus
propulsandæ, quæ Christiano nomine haud
meritò impingebantur Calumniæ, ob ex-
citatas aliquando iis in locis, ubi Christi
Doctrina tum spargi coeperat, Turbas atq;
Seditiones. Intererat, inquam, Religio-
nis Christianæ, has Maculas, quibus aspergi
videretur, elui penitus; has etiam Opi-
niones, utcunq; ineptas, ne fortè radices
aliæs agerent, ex hominum animis evelli.
Mirandum itaq; non est, si, in hâc re mul-
tam operam insumerent Apostoli; præ-
cipue Petrus, Paulusque, quos ipsos vio-
lati
Serm. lati aliquando erga Magistratum officii IX. reos esse constabat. Hic quippe summum Pontificem (ipsum Reipublicae Judaicae, quâ per Romanos licuit, Moderatorem) jam tum de Tribunali jus populo dicentem, convitio incesserat; ille summum Pontificis Famulo, quiprehendendi Christi causâ unà cum cæteris à dominō missus est, vim apertam intulerat, aurémq; gladio amputârat. Credibile est, hos Apostolorum principes, quod perperam ab illis factum esset, ne forte in Exemplum traferetur, Præceptis suis sedulò cavisse; tantóq; vehementius aliis suisisse, ne Magistratibus non obtemperarent, quantum ipsi eâ in re insignius peccassent.

Ut cunque hae sint, id sanè liquet, quæ ad hoc Officii genus pertinent Præcepta, non sine impetu quodam atq; ardore animi ab iis proferri. Pauli præser-tim, si quando hoc in argumento versetur, altius quodammodo insurgit atq; se erigit Vox; Omnis, inquit, Anima Postf tatibus sublimioribus subdita sit: Eodemq; planè vigore, codem spiritui, à primo usq; ad octavum hujusce Capitis versiculum decurrit, eâdem quasi Apostolicae
ad CLERUM.

postolicae Authoritatis fiducia se effert atque suftentat ipsius Oratio. Non est enim Potesfas, ait, nisi à Deo; quae autem sunt, à Deo ordinata sunt. Itaq; qui resistent Potesfati, Dei Ordinationi resistent: Qui autem resistunt, ipsi sibi damnationem acquirunt. Nam Principes non sunt timori boni operis, sed mali: Vis autem non timere Potesfatem? Bonum fac, & habe-bis laudem ex illâ: Dei enim Minister est tibi in bonum. Si autem malum fece-ris, time; non enim sine causâ Gladium portat: Dei enim Minister est, vindex in iram, ei qui malum agit. Ideò necessitate subditi estote; non solûm propter Iram, sed etiam propter ConScientiam. Ideò enim & Tributa praestatis; Mini-stri enim Dei sunt, in hoc ipsum servientes. Reddite ergo omnibus debita; cui Tributum, Tributum; cui Vectigal, Vectigal; cui Timorem, Timorem; cui Hon-norem, Honorem.

HAE ut, suis locis disposita ac digesta, ordine quodam aprius explicentur; dis-piciamus, primò, Quanam sint illæ Po-testates Sublimiores, quibus hic paren-dum esse edicitur; deinde, Quatensus iis, ex
Serm. ex mente Pauli, subdi oporteat; postea, Quibus ad id adigi Rationibus nos velit Apostolus; postremum, ad Quos haece Praecepta pertineant.

Sententiam Pauli, his Capitibus conclusam, ex ipso Paulo potissimumeliciemus; additis insuper, quae in eadem rem postea differuit Petrus, eâ, uti videtur, ratione, ut, siquid his Pauli verbis subesse videretur ὑστόντων (quod tamen vix simplici quispiam ac sincerâ mente praeditus dixerit) id Ipse & distinctius efferret, & fuisse exponeret, & fortius inculcarent. Sentio quam haec exiliter & Jejunè necessè fit a me dici: Istiusmodi enim sunt, quibus ubertas orationis adhiberi vix potest; quaeq; satis ornate ac splendide tractari videntur, si modò ita ea doceri contigerit, ut liquidò posuìnt intelligi.

I. Ut itaque sensim, & quibusdam quasi gradibus, ad Apostoli sententiam perveniatur, id primò fixum ratumq; fit, Quod de ἡζος; ἡπερεκβασσυ; hic dicitur, Poteatatem in concreto, non in abstraeò sumptam
fumptam (uti loquuntur Scholaftici) spectare; ad Eos quippe, qui cum imperio alios præfunt, non ad ipsum Imperii Jus referri. "Omnis Anima Potestatis sublimioribus subdita fit," id est, Iis qui legitimâ Potestate sunt præditi, quiq; deinceps Principes, & Ministri Dei in bonum, & Scerlerum Vindices in Iram dicitur; quibusq; Tributum reddi vult Apostolus, Vettigal pendi. Mutua hæc sunt Regum Civiumq; hinc, inde, Officio, quæ Personis ita usquequaq; aptatur & congruunt, ut in Rem ipsam, à personâ divulSAM, cadere non possint. Petrus itaq; certissimus Pauli. Interpres, ita hujusce Præcepti vim atq; sententiam aperit, ut nullum dubitationi locum relinquat: Subditi, inquit, estote——sive Regi, quasi præcellenti, sive Ducibus, tanquam ab eo missis.

Quæ quidem Petri verba Paulinæ Orationi, si cui forte subobscura videatur, aliâ etiam ex parte lucem affundent. Satis enim declarant, quod hic præcipitur à Paulo, non ad illum modo pertinent,
Serm. IX.

tinere, qui in summo Imperii fastigio collocatus est, sed ad Duces ab eo missos, ad magistratus infra positos, qui illius vices gerunt, illius Mandata exequentur, ultra debere extendi. Fatendum est, ὑπερέχωσι, quae dicitur, ἱλατιών, Potestatem, quâ nulla est Superior, præcipuè designare; eàmq; Vocem Regi quasi propriam à Petro tributam esse; βασιλεῖ inquit οὗ ὑπερέχωσι. Cùm verò eandem Paulus, laxiori seniù sumptam, alibi usurpârit, ubi scilicet Preces fundendas ἔξερ βασιλεῖαν, ὥς πάντων ἔν ἔμπορον ἐνῶν dixerit; latius patere constat hujusce Vocabuli vim, omnèsq; omnium Magistratum Ordines ambitu suo comprehendere. Sive itaq; Pauli Verba rectè expendimus, sive Rem ipsam à Petro explicatam respicimus, certum est, ὑπερέχωσι ἱλατιών ad Eos, qui summâ rerum potiuntur, minimè arçtari.

Quod si ita est, si hæc minorum quasi gentium Magistratibus conveniant, id etiam inde sequi par est; Apostolum hic loci, Regum ipsorum Authoritatem tucri, non quà Leges ferendi, sed quà jam
jam latas administrandi iis commissa est sèrm, cura. Utrunq; scilicet Pote\textit{st}ates hæ sublimiores, tum cum in Legibus con- dendis occupatæ sunt, potissimùm emi- neant, id tamen muneris monita Apo- stoli vix respiciunt: de iis rerumpubli- carum hic agitur Rectoribus, qui, ne fa- pienter consulta, temere sint violata, prosuciunt, qui Cives in Officio con- tinent, qui Jusititæ habenas temperant, qui suum cuiq; tribuunt, bonis favent, in improbos gladium stringunt. Hæ quidem Juris, non Conditorem, sed Ad- ministrum indicant; qualem etiam Pe- trus, iisdem penè atq; Paulus verbis de- scriptit; missum, scilicet, \textit{ad vini}di\textit{t}am \textit{malefactorum}, laudem verò bonorum.

\textit{Q}u\textit{i}b\textit{u}s verò Magistratibus, ex Apo- stoli præcepto, pare\textit{nd}um fit, hinc de- mum clariùs patebit, fi, Qui, Qualèsq; fuerint, eo ferè tempore, Romæ, ac gen- tium domini, nobiscum reputemus; ad illos enim, cùm quidem Romanis scri- beret Apostolus, animum præcipuè in- tenderit necesse est. Erant autem, qui tum rerum potiti sunt, moribus perdi- tiùsimis
SERM. tissimis, totâq; vitae ratione ab omni
virtute alieni; erant inanium Supersti-
tionum commentis innutriti, ac cultui
Idolorum dediti; non modò suæ reli-
gioni impensè favebant, sed & Christi-
anam, odio ac ludibrio semper habitam,
suppliciis aliquando coercébant: His ta-
men Paulus Romanos, non solum propter
Iram, sed etiam propter Conscenti-
am subdi jubebit; illustre nobis Document-
tum exhibens, ne ex Principum aut Mo-
ribus, aut Religione, aut ex eo quo in
nos sunt animo, nostri erga illos officii
rationem modumque; aestimemus. Quanto
quidem magis consentientem nobiscum
omni in re Principem habemus, tantò
nobis Ille dilectior, tantò Nos alacio-
ri in illum studio futuri sumus. Hæc
tamen Charitatis sunt vincula, non Of-
ficii: quod unum semper idemq; perfstat,
sive allubefcat, sive minus placeat; quodq;
vir bonus ab honestare semper ducet,
voluptate autem suâ, vel commodis valde
renuet metiri.

II. Des-
II. DESCRIPTA haec tenus sunt quae SERM.
definiendis, dignoscendisque Potestatibus 
Sublimioribus fatis invesi&ant: videamus 
porro, Quatenus iisdem, ex mente Pauli, 
subdi oporteat.

QUICQUID pertinet ad Obsequii jus 
illud quo tenemur erga Principes, duo-
bus fere Praeceptis absolvitur: Ut, si 
quid ab iis justè sanòtèq; decernitur, id 
alacri mente exequamur; siqhud e contrà 
imperatum est, cui parere sit nefas, ita 
tamen eorum jusstà dextrectemus, ut Au-
thoritatem interim vereamur, & quic-
quid inde Damni aut Incommodi in nos 
reundàrit, id leniter & summissè feram-

Quae primo praeeptionis genere con-
tinentur, sic enuntiat Apostolus. Red-
dite omnibus debita; cui Tributum [de-
betis, scilicet,] Tributum [reddite;] 
cui Veltigal, Veltigal; cui Timorem, 
Timorem; cui Honorem, Honorem. Tri-
buti atq; Veltigalis nomine venit, quic-
quid è re cujuspiam privatâ desumptum 
in commune Aëarium defertur, quic-
quid
quid aut in Bellorum sumptus, aut in Domesticos Reipublicae usus, quicquid demum ad sustentandam Principis ipsius Dignitatem atque Splendorem par est suppeditari. Timoris atq; Honoris Debita tum rite persolvimus; cùm invigilantes commodis nostris rerum publicarum custodes omni, quo decet, animi cultu prosequimur, cùmque reverentiam, mente conceptam, omnibus amoris & obsequii indiciis palam facimus: cùm Eos, summi omnium Gubernatoris numine in imperio positos, tanquam Divinæ Potestatis expressas quasdam Imagines suspicimus ac veneramur: cùm, ut bene ab iis cocta prosperè cedant & vocemus ex animo, & omni opera nostra atq; consilio, si ita expedit, conmittimur, & fuus aßidue precibus Deum oramus: cùm in scrutandis imperii Arcanis, cùm in Erratis, si qua fortèhum anitus acciderint, acriter culpandis, in captandis spar-gendisq; Obtrectatorum rumoribus, non sumus occupati; cùm deniq; Regum apud Patres, apud Populum, apud Cives, apud Exteros, Exiftimationi piè confulimus; cùm
ad C L E R U M.

cùm nihil de iis minùs honorificum, nihil, SERM.: quod Dignitatem eorum lèdat, aut dici-

mus aut sentimus.

QUOD si forte tales sint, quos ex animo colere ac diligere non possumus; si nec pietate erga Deum, nec charitate ac benevolentiâ erga homines excellant; si vitiiis suis, si libidinibus indulgeant, si commissis sibi moderandi ac regendi po-
puli habenis, tanquam imperiti aurgae, laxius utantur; si malos cives honoribus cumulent, divitiis augeant, bonis ita non faveant, ut adversentur sæpius, ut damna inferant, ut periculum creent: tum de-
mum ex altero illo, quem diximus, officii fonte haurienda sunt ca Christianæ Man-
suctudinis ac Patientiæ documenta, qui-
bus, quasi alpergine aliquâ, omnes æstu-
antis animi nostrî impetus restringui pos-
sint atq; sedari. Nam qui resstit Pote-
ßati, Dei Ordinationi resstit ; qui autem resistunt, ipsi sibi Damnationem acqui-
runt.

SUNT, qui nihil non agunt, ut Apo-
stolici hujusce effati vim minuant atque infringant. Id itaque temere affirmant,

V O L . II. Y Quod
CONCIO

Serm. Quod hic edicitur, eos tantum reipublicae rectores spectare, qui demandatum
sibi a populo munus prorsus explent, qui non sunt timori boni operis, sed mali—
qui Dei ministri sunt in bonum, & vindices in iram; in hoc ipsum servientes: Qui autem ita in imperio versantur, ut officiis suis non respondeant, qui fontes haud puniunt, bene merenti-
bus inseni sunt; iis, præcepti hujusce vi, obedientiam non esse praestandam. Sed hæc certè a mente Pauli atq; à rei veritate multum abhorrent. Nifi enim ad malos Principes pertingat Apo-
stoli præceptum; ipsas illas ἐσας ἐξας, de quibus mentio hic Facta est, Eos, scilicet, qui tunc temporis res Romanas moderabantur, ambitu suo non inclu-
det. Fuerit ille, quisquis tunc clavum Reipublicae tenuit, seu Caligula, seu
Claudius, seu Nero; certè æquis bonísque Principibus annumerari non potest. Vel itaq; ad hunc referenda sunt Apo-
stoli verba; vel id prorsus dicendum, Christianis tunc Romæ degentibus de
Obsequii jure ea scribi ab Apostolo, quæ—
ad ipsum rerum Romanarum Dominum haudquaquam pertinenter: Quo quid singi poslit absurdius? Sin vero pertinence; ita certè pertinent, ut innuant Ei non esse omnino parendum. Qui enim Magistratis tubummodo justis probísq; obtenerare nos jubet, injustis atque improbis ne obtenperemus, satis monet: Quo genere moniti quid ad permissen- das res humanas accommodatius? quid ab Apostoli instituto, aut à simplicitate Evangelicâ alienius? Et tamen sunt qui hæc, non Hortamenta Obsequii, at Seditionis Irritamenta, ab ipso Paulo, clam quidem ac tecè, sed datâ operâ, volunt subministrari.

Sentiunt ii ipsi qui hæc afferunt, quàm lubrico in loco consistant; itaque aliò se vertunt. Conjiciunt scilicet, hanc Epistolam à Paulo esse exararam, incun- te jam principatum Nerone, cum in Ci- ves adhuc minimè sâviret, cum Christianis nondum cædem inferret, nondum insidias instruceret. Perquam arato sanè spatium inclusa est hæc Conjectura: Ut- cunque enim imperium jam adeptus

Y 2

Nero
Sermo. Nero nihil nisi iussum ac leno, nihil nisi beneficium prae se ferret; personam tamen hanc, quam sibi imposuerat, vix brevi tempore sustinuit; intra quod scriptam esse hanc Epistolam, dicit quidem nihil facilius, sed quae fidem faciant, prorsus incerta sunt. Sint ea autem quam certissima——- At vero illo ipso tempore, cum jam edicto non exularent, capite non pleaterentur Christiani, multis tamen malis atq; incommodis conflictabantur, injuriis lacerisiti sunt, probris atq; contumeliis vexati: Hae ne evenirent Illis, qui Deorum immortalium cultum, omnemque Religionem tollere putabantur, ne mitigissimi quidem Imperatores satis caverunt; quibus scilicet, uti Gallionis illi, nihil eorum quicquam curae erat. Atque hae (si non deteriori) Conditione Christianos tum Romae suiisse, perlecto hujus Epistolae capite octavo, vix est qui dubiter. Hoc innuant, quae in fine Capitis duodecimi occurrunt; Benedicite persequentibus Vos; benedicite, et non maledicite; et cetera, usque ad Illum Versiculum, in quo caput definit; hic...
vinci à malo, sed vince in bono malum. His autem proximè adhæret Præceptum illud ipsum, in quo explicando versamur; ad quod adeò, quæ præcesserant, pertinere, & quasi viam sternere, omnino existimandum est. Sive itaq; rerum Christianarum, pacatissimis etiam Temporibus, atque ea ipsa Tempestate quæ haec scripta sunt, conditionem, sive Apostoloricæ orationis cursum atq; cohærentiam spectemus; id utrinq; perspicuum est; Sublimiores has Potentes, quibus non resistendum esse edixit Paulus, quæcunque illæ fuerint, tales certè fuisset, à quibus multa tunc temporis paterentur Christiani.

Sed demus id etiam, Romanos Christi fidem profiteentes, nihil calamitatis, nihil mali haætæus perpesillos esse: at certè, quod non inciderat, jam tum in propinquo fuit, ac plane instabat. Ea una erat omnium ubicunq; Christianorum fors, periculis semper proximos esse, tanquam in procoindtu atq; in acie flare. Id ści-licet monuerat ipse ille cui nomen dederant: Injicient Vobis manus, & per-

Y 3 sequentur
Serm. sequuntur vos, tradentes in Synagogas &
IX. Custodias, trahentes ad Reges, & Prae-

tides, propter nomen meum. An id lat-
tuit Paulum? an animo forte exciderat,
tum cum de Jure Regum ac Praesidum
in Subditos differret? De se quidem,
Prophetarum monitis obtemperans, &
Divino ipse Spiritu afflatus, præixerat;
Spiritus Sanet us per omnes Civitates
mihi protestatur, dicens, quoniam Vin-
cula & Tribulationes me manent. An,
qui in suis tam perspicax erat, in alio-
rum malis etiam ante occurrum cernen-
dis prorsus caecavit? An, cui sollicitu-
do omnium Ecclesiæam tum im-
minet tempestas, non attendit, non
prospexit, non somniavit? Sin verò præ-
fenserit; credibile est, nullâ inguentis
istius Procellæ ratione habitâ, hæc ad Ro-
manos scripsisse Apostolum? ad alium
quasi scopum mente collineâsse? ea tanti-
tum tradidisse præcepta, quæ pacatis re-
bus congruerent, essentq; in annum fortè
unum aut alterum valitura? Qui hanc
Paulo sententiam affingunt, utcunq; sibi
ipsis
ad C L E R U M. 327

ipsis sapere videantur, Apostoli certe sa-
pientiæ haud multûm tribuant; quem, șerman.
scilicet, existimant, id officii genus, quod
maximi effet momenti, quodq; potissi-
mùm aversarentur homines, omnino præ-
teriisse, in hoc verò totis viribus in-
cubuisse, ut fuaderet discipulis, quæ pon-
deris vix quidquam in se haberent, quæq;
estent ipsi sponte suâ, atq; alacri mente
facturi.

E C Q U I D enim suafore opus est, ut
Veçtigalis, ac Tributi, Timoris, atq; Ho-
noris Debita persolvantur Regibus, qui
de Nobis, & de Republicâ optimè sunt
meriti? ut Magistratibus non resistatur,
à quibus minimè lædimur? ut Poteştati-
bis sublimioribus subditi esse velimus, quæ
in id tantûm præsunt, ut, quasi in Spe-
culâ posita, commodis nostra prospiciant
meliûs atq; invigilent?

C U M quidem ad inïquis Principibus
premi nos atq; affligi contigerit; cùm
capita, cùm fortûnae periclitentur; cùm
multa mala perpeşti, plura adhuc impen-
dere videamus; tum sanè Præceptis,
Hortationibus, Argumentis opus est,

Y 4

quæ
Serm. quæ animum injuriarum non latis patientem temperent, quibusq; quasi admi-
iculis sulti in officio stare possimus. Hâc itaque in causâ aptè admodum & cum dignitate Pauli versatur oratio. Qui autem id illum egisse putant, ne erga bene merentes sintus ingratii, ut optimis principibus sua constet reverentia; nec, quid argumento conveniat, nec quid Apostolum deecat, perspicere vi-
dentur.

Unum hoc, quò se recipiant, habent Persugium; insitam nempe hominum animis opinionem de observantiâ Ethni-
cis Magistratibus minimè debità, hic à Paulo acriter atq; animose, ut oportuit, convelli. Sed cum hunc Errem foli amplecterentur Judæi, cumq; ea Romæ Ecclesia, ad quam scribere Paulus, ex Ethniciis fere constaret; patet, huic uni fundamento omnem Apostolicæ argumentationis vim inniti non posse; adeò-
que nec tanti esse hanc captiunculam, ut ei discutiendæ ultrà immoremur: præ-
sertim cum in eadem sententiâ, quam Paulo nos tribuimus, Petrum ex omni parte
parte consentientem, eîq; suffragantem serm. habemus.

Subditos, Servósque ne deessent officiiis, quibus tenerentur adversus Reges ac Dominos, sic hortatur Petrus—— Subjèsti estote omni humanae Creaturae, propter Deum; sive Regi, quasi præcel- lenti, sive Ducibus, tanquam ab eo missis, ad vindictam malefactorum, laudem verò bonorum—— Servi, subditi estote, cum omni timore, Dominis; non tantum bonis & modestis, sed etiam dyscolis, Dein, quod ex utrâque parte præceperat, hoc communi quasi Argumento tutur & commendat: Hac est enim grâ- tia, sì, propter Dei Conscientiam, susti- net quis Tristitias, patiens injustè. Quæ enim est Gloria, sì, peccantes, & colaphi- zati suffertis? sed sì, bene facientes, pa- tienter sustinetis, hæc est Gratia apud Deum. Postremò, Chrifti Patientiam, tanquam Exemplar, intueri cos jubet, ad eâmq; se totos componere ac conforma- re. In hoc enim (ait) vocati estis; quia & Chriftus passus est pro Nobis, Vobis relinquens Exemplum, ut sequamini Ve- stigia
S E R M .  

§ 1. *Stigia ejus:* Qui, cum malediceretur, non maledicebat; cum pateretur, non minabatur; tradebat autem justè se judicanti. Quò pertinent hæc, non opus est ut multis apud Vos agam; ita enim facilia atq; expedita sunt, ut disputatione vix egeant. Apertè hoc Petrus significat, Subdi nos oportere tam *Regibus,* quam *Dominis,* non tantum bonis & modestis, sed etiam dyscolis, i.e. qui iniquè, asperè, & inhumanè nos tractant; quibusq; vix esset ut non resisteretur à nobis, nisi intuitu tum mercedis quam pollicetur Deus, tum Exemplet quod proposuit Christus, omnes iracundiae aculeos, omnes animorum tumores, comprimeremus.

S P E C T A R E hæc qui ad *Servos* tantum aiunt, ad *Subditos* vero pernegant, dupliciter peccant; cum & ea discerpant quæ, uti ab Apostolo prolata sunt, aptissimè cohærent, & rei ipsius rationem non satis attendant. Petrum, scilicet, existimant, cum exposuerat, primò, Quid *Subditi Regibus,* dein, & Quid Dominis Servi deberent, ad ea Argumenta pro- tinus dilapsum esse, ísç; inculcandis usq; ad
ad finem Capitis inhaefisse, quæ quidem sērμ. omnino ad Servos, haudquaquam ad Subditos, in Officio continendos pertinent. 

Id certè magis intererat rei & Publicæ & Christianæ, ut Regibus, quàm ut Heris, piè obediretur. Id itaq; quod præcipuum erat, præcipuè in animo habuisse Apostolum, par est credi, si modò ad id aptari possint ejus Verba; quæ quidem ad id aptari non tantùm possunt, sed debent. Scripsit Petrus Advenis Dispersio-
nis, Judæis nempe à patriâ procul degentibus; quos ex hâc ipsâ Epístola * con-
stat à Praefidibus Provinciarum malè hábitos esse, probris multùm vexatos, ærum-
nis misere oppressos. Quid Apostoli au-
thoritate, aut pietate dignius, quàm ea illis adhibere consilia, ea in mandatis dare, quibus freti atq; suffulti tot tan-
tāsq; miserias æquo animo possent perpeti? Hoc itaq; studiosè agit ac vehementer, hoc argumentis quàm maximè ac-
commodis suadet, præcipuè Christi Ex-
emplo quasi ob oculos posito: quod cer-

* Vide cap. i. ver. 6, 7. ii. 1, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. v. 8, 9.
Serm. IX. tē ad miseram Subditorum, quàm Ser-

orum, conditionem propius accedit: non enim privati cujuspiam domini jussū, sed summi Magistratūs nutu, flagris cæsus, ludibrio habitus, colaphis percutiūs, morti addīctus est Christus. Exemplum itaque Subditōs potissimum utile reliquit, ut sequerentur Vestigia ejus.

Est tamen, hæc ad illos solummodo, qui herili imperio suberant, a Petro referri: at certe, sī debeatur hæc Heris observantia (æquè, imò) multō magis debeatur Regibus; quorum ut inviolata permaneant Jura, multō acrius enitendum est, quàm ut Dominis obsequiantur Famuli. Principi enim dum sūa constituerit authoritas, facile erit omnem domesticæ disciplinæ vim, aut nutantem sustinere, aut collapsam restituere; sī vero apex ille Regiæ potestatis ruerit; conspiciemus illico omnia ea Instituta, quæ intra privatos parietes vigere debent, una in ruinam labi.

Summa rerum huc redit; Petrum in ca esse Sententiam, ut Magistratui, utcunque munus suum malè tuenti, utcunque injuriās
rias nobis & damna inferenti, cedamus tamen atq; obtemperemus; cùmq; Petrus hâc in re quasi Pauli interpretem egerit, diversum certè ab illo minimè senserit, eandem fuifse & Pauli Sententiam li- quidò constat; adeóq; quæ circa Potefta- tes Sublimiores officii præcepta exposuit, non ad eos tantùm Reges restringi de- bere, qui officio suo prorsus satisfaciunt.

Meminerint, qui istiusmodi Interpret- tamentis, ad libitum, imò ad studium atq; gratiam conficet temerè indulgent, meminerint, inquam, quid aliàs ab eo- dem Petro dictum sit; Quosdam scilicet instabiles atque indoétos, quæ in Paulinis Epiftolis occurrerent intellectu difficilia, ad suam ipsorum perditionem depravare. Quòd si tam severè illos notaverit, qui etiam difficilia intellectu pravè detorque- rent; quid de iis arbitramur dicturum fuifse, qui omni arte, omni studio elabo- rant, ut quæ satis per se facilia sunt atq; explicata, Commentis suis invertant atq; obscurent?

Atque hâc hastenus—— Quousq; enim pertingat Officii nostri ratio, (iiis

haud-
haudquaquam angustiis, intra quas eam Novatores quidam coarctare fatagunt, à Paulo conclusa) fatis videtur expositorum. Quærendum dein,

III. QUIBUS Argumentis, ut Magistratui rite obsequamur, contendat Apostolus.

OBSEQUI erga Principes exhibendi duas afferit Rationes: quarum hæc quidem ducitur à sacro illo fonte, unde fluxit Regum Majestas, atq; ipsum jus Imperii; non est enim Potestas nisi à Deo, quæ autem sunt, à Deo ordinata sunt, &c. Altera autem pertinet ad Utilitatem, seu privatam cujuscunque, seu omnium communem, cui invigilat, cui consulit, præmiis, poenísq; æquá lege distributis, reipublicæ dominus: Dei enim Minister est tibi in bonum, & vindex in iram ei qui malè agit. Ab utraq; decerpta, utriusq; quasi in unam vim colligit Apostoli illa Conclusio: Ideo necessitate subditi estote (vel potius, *Idæo

* "Αντίχθος εὖ καταδοχῆς.

necessē
neceffe est ut subjiciamini) non solum propter Iram, sed etiam propter Consci-entiam; non metu tantum Poenae ab hominibus irrogando, sed & Officii ipsius, quo constrinxit nos Deus, vinculo adducti.

Quod percontabatur aliquando à Pharisaïs Christus de Baptismo Johannis, id ad Imperii Humani originem potest aptè referri; Unde erat? è caelo, an ex hominibus? Sunt, qui illico respondeant, ex hominibus; & multa quidem habent prompta ac proposta, quibus Sententiam hanc tueantur ut rerum naturæ congruentem, & verisimilissimam. Cætera inter Causae sue præsidia, duo sunt quibus maximè nitantur; quorum alterum quidem sibi concedi postulant, non admodum verecunde; alterum argumentis non satis firmis ac valentibus, extorquere contendunt. Quod sumunt, hujusmodi est, Fuisset tempus aliquod, cum nullius Dominationi subjeci viverent mortales: dein arguunt, Jus Vitæ ac Necis in Multitudine ipsâ reseedisse primò, id Populum à semetipfs ad Magistratus legitimè
Serm. legitime transtulisse. Quorum Ego ab iis neq; illud in hâc disputatione poni debere, neq; hoc rationibus unquam posse confici, prorsus mihi persuadeo.

Hæc autem, ad alia quàm festinemus, nec vacat, neq; multùm attinet excutere; præsertim quàm unâ illâ Pauli voce fatis argui posint ac refelli; Non est enim Potestas nisi à Deo, qua autem sunt, à Deo ordinata sunt. Significantiùs ac clariùs multò eadem Graece efferuntur, e χρὶ θεοῦ θεοῦ, eί μη ἐκ τῶν Θεῶν, αἰ ἐκ θεοῦ ἡθοῦν ἐκ τῶν Θεῶν τεταγμένη εἰσίν. Fontem hıc, ut diximus, aperit Apostolus, à quo manat quæcunque inter homines licite exercetur Potestas, e χρὶ θεοῦ θεοῦ, eί μη ἐκ τῶν Θεῶν. Qui autem tali Potestate sunt præditi, cos ὑπὸ Θεὸς τῆλαχθαυ afirmat, id est, (ut Ego quidem exiftimo) non a Deo tantum, sed & sub Deo constitui atq; ordinari; suprmi nempe omnium Gubernatoris in moderandis hominum Civitatibus sustinere perionam, vices explere: unde & Dei Ministri continuo appellantur, qui, scilicet, non jure suo imperant, non suâ aliquâ Authoritate pollent, sed tantum
ad C L E R U M.

tantùm commissâs sibi à mundi rectore parres tuentur; cui & muneris sui, seu bene, seu malè administrati, rationem sunt reddituri.

Cum itaque Potestatem, à Deo derivatam, sortiantur; Dei ipsius quoque nomine insigniuntur passim apud Sacros Scriptores: Dei enim dicti sunt, inquit Christus, quia ad illos Sermo Dei factus est; eò quòd Numinis iuisti evocati, & populis præfecti, essent divinæ quasi dominationis vicarii—non est enim Potestas nisi a Deo; quæ autem sunt Potestates, sub Deo ordinatae sunt; sub beato, scilicet, illo & solo Potente, Rege Regum, & Domine Dominantium, qui solus habet Immortalitatem, ut alibi idem Pau- lus loquitur: cujus verba, cùmi illustrandæ huic de Regum potestate à Deo accessenda doctrinæ faciant, opera pretium erit hic paucis expendere.

Deum solum Potentem prædicat Apostolus, eadem planè ratione, ac quà solum Immortalem: ad Eundem quippe, & Potentiae illius, quà hominibus præstant Reges, & Immortalitatis, quà Homines befi-
Serm. is antecellunt, origo referenda est. Potentes quidem sunt, in sua quique di-
tione, Principes; Immortales sunt Ani-
mi humani: at non suâpte naturâ ac vi, non facultate aliquâ, aut a Populo, aut a 
Parentibus traductâ, sed Dei unius volun-
tate ac nutu, et illi sunt Potentes, & hi 
Immortales. Imperii jus omne, omnem 
Immortalitatis vim unus in se continet 
Deus; quicquid horum ad res creatas 
pertinet, id ab illo universum emanat. 
Regibus constitueriis Populus nonnun-
quam, Libris serendis Parentes semper 
intervenient: a Populo tamen haud ma-
gis oriri possunt summa Majestatis Jura, 
quàm a Parentibus filiorum Animæ non 
interiturae: haec hujusmodi sunt, quae fo-
lus, a se orta, pro lubitu suo imperitit 
Deus; idem, & Potestatis humanæ fons, 
& Animorum immortalium author atque 
sator unus.

Hanc Apostoli verbis incelle senten-
tiam, perquam probabile est; hanc adeò 
respexisse videntur primævæ Ecclesiae Scri-
ptores. Cujus jussu Homines nascuntur, 
hus jussu & Reges constituuntur, 
inquit
inquit Irenæi interpres *. Idemque planè S E R M: fentit, Irenæi fortè vestigiis insistens, Tertullianus §. Inde, inquit, est Imperator, unde et Homo, antequam Imperator; inde Potestas illi, unde & Spiritus.

Potestas hæc quidem, accedente hominum consensu, Principibus non rarò defertur; hæc, pro hominum arbitrio, iis qui rempublicam gerunt, non uno more ac modo, dispertitur; hæc in homines, ab hominibus exercetur; hæc denique promovendis hominum Commodis atque Felicitatibus unicè destinatur. Potestatem itaque hanc adepti Principes, non incongrué a Petro ἄνθρωπινας ἔλεες nuncupantur. Sin verò, aut unde duèta ad Ipsos pervenerit Authoritas, aut Cujus in fungendo munere vices obeant, & Cui demum reddenda sit defuncti ratio, cogitemus nobiscum; Eos, secundùm Paulum, esse revera Θεός δικαστής, ipsam ipsius Dei ordinationem, fatcamur necessè est.

His radicibus subnixa firmiter se tuentur Magistratu[m] Jura, facilè exurgunt Subditorum Officia. Cùm enim fummi Numinis Ministrī sint Principes, cùm ab illo quasi jure Legationis missī ad nos venerint, par est ut Eos, Dei ipsius metu ac reverentia adduēti, omni qua posūmus observantia atque honore prosequamur. Eo ipsō itaque in loco, ubi Reges Ducē[que eanthē−vinae xilose vocat, propter Deum tamen colendos esse Petrus affirmat. Si autem propter Deum colendi sunt; quicquid in eos asperè aut contumeliosè dīctum, quicquid obstinato iis renitendi studio factum est, id omne in Deum recidit, Regiē Poteﬆatis Authorem atque Vindicem. Qui enim resistit Potestati, Dei Ordinationi resistit; qui autem resistunt, ipsī sībi damnationem acquirunt.

"Imō ita est, inquiant, Populi qui cauſam agunt, si modò Principes Im− perii sui à Deo instituti limites non transfiliant, si intra jus fāisque se contine− ant: si ultra pergant, Dei certè vo− luntati repugnant, Dei authoritye sunt "protinus
ad C L E R U M.

" protinus deflituti. Quisquis ita; iis, SERM.
" injusta molientibus, restiterit, divinæ 
" Voluntati repugnâsse, Ordinationi re-
" stitisse, minimè cenfundus est.

V E R A si hæc sunt, quò tendant illa Apostoli, primis duobus versiculis com-
prehensa, non video. Quid refert enim 
â Paulo nos moneri, ut Potestatibus sub-
limioribus ea de causa obtemperemus, 
quòd à Deo ortæ, atque sub Deo consti-
tutæ sint; si nihil unquam obsequii suo 
jure vendicent, nisi cùm in omni admi-
nistrandæ reipublicæ ratione Civibus pro-
sint, æquirati studcant, justitiam colant?
Istiustmodi scilicet Gubernatoribus, sive à 
cœlo, sive à terra ortum trahant; sive 
Dei, sive Populi solummodo personam 
sutineant; quis sanæ mentis est, parere 
qui recusaverit? Ut autem iniquis Ma-
gistratibus obediatur, ut rempublicam e-
tiam malè gerentibus, Dei tamen autho-
ritate munitis, Dei ipsius gratiâ, suus con-
ficit honos; hoc summo studio elaboran-
dum est, hæc digna planè est Apostoli 
potrocinio causa: Huc itaq; ipsius spectat
oratio---- Omnis Anima Potestatibus sub-

limioribus
limioribus subdita sit; non est ENIM Potestas nisi à Deo; quæ autem sunt Potestates, sub Deo ordinatae sunt. Huc etiam quæ sequuntur, omnino pertinent; Qui ITAQUE resistit Potestati, Dei Ordinationi resistit, &c. &c. &c. &c. atque χρηστικῶς τῇ Ἑβραίᾳ, &c. ITA UT qui resistiterit Potestati, &c. cui nempe nos [κρηστικῶς] subdi voluit ipso orationis exordio Apostolus. Respondent extrema primis, atque omnia, sibi invicem apta atque connexa, eodem recidunt; ne licet non subditi simus, ne resistamus iis, qui nobis legitimè præsunt Quorum verò hæc tam multiplex, tam gravis, tam vehemens hortatio; si eos tantùm habuerit in animo Apostolus Civitatum Recôores, qui communi Civium saluti non deessent, quibúsque non solùm sine pacis publicæ dispensio, sed et fine summo dedecore atque infamia, resisti non posset? Iis certe, qui nihil nisi iustum imperant, nihil nisi quod expediat, æquum est ut dicto audientes nos omni ex parte præbeamus; æquum est ut id ipsum quod imperant, promptè atque alacriter exequamur.
ad C L E R U M.  

exequamur. Hos itaque si mente desig-
nàslct, Hoc etiam apertè edixisset Aposto-
lus: Et tamen, quæ monet, co tantùm 
pertinent, Magistratibus ut subditi simus, 
Ut non resistamus. Quæ quidem Officii 
nostri pars minima est, nec momenti 
quidquam in se habet, si ad bonos Prin-
cipes referatur; sin malos spectet, ar-
duum sanè hoc est, gravissimùmque præ-
ceptionis genus, in quo ad summum per-
ducta consistit Obedientiæ Civilis ratio. 
Hoc itaque magno animo aggressus, uber-
rimè, prout decuir, atque ardentissimè 
pertractavit Apostolus. Plura à me can-
dem in rem afferri possent, si non hic Lo-
cus alià occasione jam antea occupatus ef-
sèt, multisque expositus; aut non essèt eti-
am, antè quàm perorem, jam iterum at-
tingendus. Hoc itaque quatenus res posita-
lat, perfectum ratione, conclusùmque fit; 
Pauli Præcepta in eos etiam Principes 
cadere, qui Authoritatem legitimam ille-
gitimè exercent; quique à Deo constitutii, 
ad Dei tamen voluntatem se neutiquam 
accommodant.

Z 4 P O T E S-
POTESTATEM Imperatoriam qui non nisi recta imperantibus concedunt, duas res multùm diversas permiscent, Jus, atq; Authoritatem; quid inter sit inter ea quæ à Principibus legitime, atque ea quæ pro imperio sint, non vident. Ut Principes jure quidquam agant, quod Justitiae repugnat, fieri nequit: ut tamen in iis ipsis, quæ injustè agunt, eorum vigeat Authoritas, nihil vetat. Authoritate enim pollent Principes, non solùm cùm, quæ juri omnino sint consentanea, præcipiant; sed cùm ea aut jubeant, aut prohibeant, quæ, sive æqua, sive iniqua sint, suam tamen vim quandam atque robur habent; ita ut Civibus, quibus hæc praecptâ sunt, aut parenti, aut certè non repugnandi necessitatem imponant. Harum enim vim vocum diligenter perpendenti patebit, Jus ad Actiones, Authoritatem ad Personas pertinent. Jus omne ad Legem aliquam, recti pravique normam, referitur; Authoritas, necessituddinem nexùmque illum, quo Magistratibus Cives conjuncti sunt, unicè respicit. Atque hæc quidem ita ab invicem distrahí, non cogita-
cognitione tantum, sed & re ipsa, possunt, s e r m. & solent; ut quaedam sibi Magistratus suo Jure vendicet, quae tamen, ut persolvantur à Subditis, Authoritate sua non efficiat; alia pro Authoritate praebribat, nullo tamen Jure, cum, quæ imperat, privatorum Juri aperte derogent. Ubi quidem tuendo atq; conservando Juri Principum adhibetur Authoritas, animos hominum arctissime devinétos tenet: est tamen ubi Authoritas, à Jure divulsa, ipsa per se valet.

S u b t i l i u s hæc fortasse disputantur; sed, Exemplo in hanc rem adduco, sient dilucidiora. Qui Litibus dirimendis praeficiuntur Judices, id folum negotii sibi commissum habent, ut in Causis Forensibus, quæ Legi sunt congrua, discernant. Si quis tamen Judex, quod à recto abhorret, perperam decreverit; Iniquam sanè protulit Sententiam, haudquam tamen Irritam: Muneris sibi descripti fines excessit: at suum interim Munus exercuit. Lati quidem præter jus fæisque Judicii, id ipsum si spectes, nulla prorsus est vis; firmum tamen ratumque praestabit
Duarum Rationum, quibus praecipum suum de Obscequo erga Principes praestando munit Apostolus, unam quidem, à derivatæ cœlitus Regum Maje-state sumptam, explicuimus; ad alteram nunc, à Civium utilitate, seu privatâ cu-juscunque seu omnium communi ductam aggredimur. Qui autem resistunt, ipsi sibi damnationem acquirunt. Nam Principes non sunt timori boni operis, sed mali. Vis autem non timere Potestatem? Bonum fac, & habebis laudem ex illâ: Dei enim Minister est tibi in bonum. Si autem malum feceris, time; non enim sine causa Gladium portat: Dei enim Minister est, vindex in iram, ei qui malè agit. Quæ prima hìc occurrunt Pauli verba, id tantùm indicare videntur, Romanos, si Principibus, ilisque qui in Magistratu essent, piè obtemperarent, suæ quemque Saluti, suís Commodís, optimè consul-turos. Id ubi striètim pauciéisque attigerat, ad alia, quæ, spatiis amplioribus, effusa, Regum instituendorum finem, & commune reipublicæ bonum spectarent, sen-sim delabilitur Apostolus; cæque & copiosæ & ardenti oratione exponit.
QUI resistunt (inquit) ipsi sibi Damnationem acquirunt. Oi άθενώτες έκποις κείμαι λύγοντες, Qui restiterint, sibi ipsis perniciem accersent, commissi facinoris poenas luent. Κείμαι nominem, non æternæ tantum poenæ significantur, à Deo aliquando exigenda; sed & illa etiam Supplicia, quibus in hac vita coercentur improbi. Eo sensu sacris Scriptoribus usitata frequentius & trita vox, * ut hic loci etiam accipiatur, suadet certè Apostolici, & Argumenti, & Orationis nexus--- Qui resistunt, ipsi sibi Damnationem acquirunt: NAM Principes non sunt timori boni operis, sed mali, &c. De- nunciati κείμαι [Judicii] Causam † subjungit Apostolus, eâque adducâtâ, quod affirmatè primum dixerat, fulcit dein atque roborat. Ad Poenas autem in hoc sæculo inflictas causa allata pertinet; ad eandem itaque & Κείμαι illud,

* Vide Luc. xxiii. 40. xxiv. 20. 1 Cor. xi. 29, 34. 1 Pet. iv. 17. Apoc. xviii. 20
† Intra sex primos hujusce Capitis Versiculos particula illa, γάρ, septies occurrit: Ubicunque autem legatur, ad ea, quæ proxime præcesserant, verba nusquam non referri debet.

quod
quod antè intentatum est, pertinuit; non tamen ita ut nulla interim habeatur ratio pœnarum illarum quæ & mortuos manent, quibusque ea, quæ in maleficos, ac sceleratos nunc constituuntur supplicia, quasi futurorum Auguria, omnino præcurrunt. Christo enim & Apostolis nihil usitatius, quàm, propositis hujus vitæ malis, quæ a Deo immisita, sustinent Peccatores, Cruciatuum illorum, qui ad æternitatem pertinent, speciem quandam adumbrare; & cum præsentia tantum verbo tenus exprimant, futura tamen mente complecti, atque ad ea expectanda, sive audientium, sive legentium animos erigere velle atque adhortari. Notiora sunt hæc, quàm ut probatu indigeant, quàm ut Exemplis confirmanda sint. Quod itaque jam diximus, in eo perstamus; Apostolum, cum summī Magistratūs oppugnatoribus Exemplis, sive Judicium denuntiet, à Hiero xpharatos, Judicīi illius quod altero sæculo exercebit Deus, non esse immemorem; & tamen ea, quæ jam nunc instant facinorosīs, supplicia expressiūs mītīrī. Hoc planè more mihi & facillime,
cillumè, & verissimè explicari posse videntur Pauli verba: [Qui resistunt, ipsi sibi Damnationem acquirunt; NAM Principes non sunt timori boni operis, sed mali, &c.] Quæ qui referunt ad illa quæ longiùs præcesserant [Non est enim Poestas, nisi à Deo, &c.] perversissimè agunt: cohærentia enim, atque inter se nexa, temerè divellunt; aliena autem, & multùm disjunctà, nullo jure copulant: Eâ scilicet de causâ, Ut, quæ duo Apostolus fatis distinctè Argumenta, in unum coalescant; atque ita alterum alterius vim frangat ac debilitet: Ut, inquam, Pauli Doctrina de Deo Potestatis humanae fonte atque authore, Appendiculâ quàdam perperam aucta, iis tantùm Regibus conveniet, qui officio suo sanctè funguntur, & non sunt timori boni operis, sed mali: quod (ut à me sæpe dicitum, sæpius dicendum est) ab omni probabilitatis specie quàm longissimè abhorret.

A T Q U E hoc esse illud Keïμετις genus quo Romanis metum incutere vult Apostolus, hanc verbo subjicitam esse notionem, eò mihi fortùs persuadco, quòd, quæ sequun-
sequuntur omnia, finitima huic sint atque serm. consentanea: de Jure enim Gladii prorsus agunt, de Præmiis ac Suppliciis, quibus à Magistratu Cives aut ad Virtutem allici solent, aut à viriis absterreri. Orta autem illa omnia cùm sint ex eo quod jam ante dixerat Apostolus [Qui resistunt, ipsi sibi Damnationem acquirunt.] ad id etiam, si non omni ex parte, quadante-nus certè debent referri.

Hoc itaque posito, argumentum, quod inde ducit, & quo, quod unicuique in hâc re seorsum utile sit, docet Apostolus, istiusmodi est———Magistratibus non esse ullâ in re obstendum; ne, dum iis negotium faceamus, nobismetìpsis perniciem merito moliamur. Cùm enim à Deo Regibus jus gladii sit commissum, quo ma-leficia cujusque generis vindicent, certissimum est, eo illos acerrimè usuros adversus perduelles, pacisque publicae everiores: quicquid culpæ, quicquid facinoris, lenitate ac misericordiâ aliquando ducti præteread, hoc tamen audaciae, quo eorum labesactatur Authoritas, impunitum inultumque non dimittent. Christianis,
Serm. 1. Stianis, Religionis causâ, satis ex se adversantur Principes à Christi fide alieni: si verò, qui hac ex parte Principibus odio sunt, rerum etiam novandarum studio teneantur, atque ad Seditionem propendcant; imò, si Religionis ipsius obtentu Rempublicam perturbent, leges violent; quo non Exitio digni videbuntur? quibus non Suppliciis coercendi? Ex altera autem parte, nihil est quod tam deliniat Principes, Christianso nominis infensos, tantumque ad manuetudinem ac benevolentiam traducat, ac si iij, qui è Christi grege sunt, modestè atque summisse se gerant, & Magistratibus in omni re secundum Deum pareant. Quæ Christiansorum cervicibus semper impendent pericula, si quâ forte ratione vitari possint, hâc certè declinanda sunt viâ. Non sæpe enim malis etiam à Regibus malè tradtari contigit isliusmodi Cives, qui Religionis, quâ imbuti sunt eorum animi, quæcumque illa sit, privatò gaudent; nihil interim turbarum excitant, nihil magistratui molestiæ creant; sed, dum pietati student, una etiam pacem colunt.

Ita,
ad C L E R U M:

Ita, inquam, plerúmque se res habet---

Unde Petri illa Vox, câ ipsâ in Epístolâ,
ubi Christianos tâquam multa jam
pérpestos, plurâ etiam passuros alloquitur:

Qui est qui vobis nóceat, si boni amulo-
tores füeritis?

Haçtenus Pauli argumentum, ab Utí-
licitate ductum, quatenus separatini ad sin-
gulos spéctat, perpendimus: ab ea nunc
parte considerandum est, qua ad Univer-
sos péròineat, ac derivata à Magistratu
ad humanii générís Societatem Commo-
da respiciat. In hac enim cogitatione
précipue defixa erat Apostoli mens, cùm
Principes diceret Timori esse in bónum;
ac Víndices in iram eis qui male agunt.

Quam ob causam instítuerentur Reges;
quæ Regni ipsius Necessitas sit, quamta
Utilitas; quo Officii génere, quàmque
latè ad Omnes Vitæ humanae usus patenti,
perfungantur Principes; his, atque aliis
in eandem rem, verbis à Paulo declaratuni
èst. Ii scilicet Pacis atque Incolumitatis
publicæ conservatores sunt; Ii Legum
communium, quarum descriptione omnis
omnium salus continetur, Latorès pri-

VOL. II. A a mām,
C O N C I O

SERM. mum, dein & Custodes. Pœnas à quoque Civium pro merito exigendi, Præmia, quæ cuique conveniunt, tribuendi jus iis concessum est: atque hoc férè ita utuntur, ut nefariorum scelera cohibeant, audaciam redundant; bonos autem beneficiis ad virtutem, veramque laudem accendant. Muneris itaque tam fructuosi nobis, Ministri cum sint, æquum est, ut Gratiam iis quantam possimus maximam referamus; ut eos summè colamus atque amemus, non protervè iis refragemur, non improbè resistamus, quorum laboribus ac pervigiliis effectum est, ut tot tantisque vitæ commoditatibus placide perfrueamur. NAM Principes non sunt timori boni operis, sed mali, &c. Necesse ITAQUE est ut subjiciamini, &c.

INSTANT iterum Potestatis Regiæ Oppugnatores, ac fidenter affirmant. "E- " numeratis, quæ ex reipublice administratione exurgunt, atque ad universos " Cives permanant, Utilitatibus, non id " Paulo proposirum esse, ut inde Obedi- " entiam quibuscunque Potestatibus subli- " mioribus deberi contendat; sed iis tan- " tum,
ad C L E R U M.

"tûm, qui descriptas muneris sui partes \textit{s e r m.}
"ruentur, & ad expressam justi imperii
"effigiem se totos componunt." Inane
hoc esse assentantium populi libidinibus
Commentum, atque à Pauli mente alie
nissimum; jam antè à me multis, ut opi
nor, demonstratum est. Id unum nunc
addo— Aut ab ipso Regum, seu bene;
seu malè rempublicam gerentium Officio;
atque à communi hominum Utilitate, cui
Magistratûs jura inserviunt, hic duci ar
gumentum; aut nusquam ab Apostolo,
totâ illâ Oratâone, quâ de Officiis Civium
erga Principes disquiritur, hunc locum
trâctari: quem tamen, amplissimus cùm
sit, atque ad stâbiliendum imperii jus va
leat plurimum, prorsus ab eo negligi, ac
consultò præteriri non est credendum.
Omnia excutit Paulus, follicitè omnia
vestigat atque explorat, quæ ad firmandam
Principum Authoritatem adjumenti ali
quid suppeditent. Multùm autem ad id
confert, ut intelligent Cives, quæ bona
iis etiam non boni Principes importent,
quantûmque Rectoribus, officii quod sui
est non satis exequentibus, debeat ref-
A a 2

cuplica.
S E R M. publica. Hæc cine itaque oblivisci potuit
Paulus? an causæ suæ parum favere ar-
bitratus est? Hæc cine Gamalielis ille Dif-
cipulus, Gentiumque Doctor non vidit, 
qui cætera omnia acutissimè perspexit, co-
piosè différerit? Si autem animadverte-
rit; integrum atque intactum ab eo hunc 
locum relinqui, quis unquam existima-
verit? Et tamen hæc ab illis sentiri 
necesse est, qui à Paulo præcepta opti-
mis tantum Regibus convenire affirm-
ment.

"At, inquiunt, non in Præceptis fo-
"lum tradendis versatur, Ratione etiam 
pugnat Apostolus. Principibus ne re-
"statur, monet: Causam deinde ad-
jicit; NAM timori non sunt boni 
operis, sed mali. Congruum itaque est 
"ut Præcepti vim Ratione hâc, quasi 
"Regulâ ad id adducta metiamur. Hoc 
"si fiat, ad bene imperantes necesse est 
quod præcipitur contrahi; cùm ad eos 
tantum, quæ affertur Ratio pertingat."
Argutè hæc quidem, haudquaquam tamen 
verè; prout cuivis patebit, non illo fo-
lùm,

A a 3
SERM. IX. \textit{verò illorum nolite facere; dicunt enim & non faciunt.} His Legis interpretingatæ jux datum est: his itaque jus dicentibus, auctari atque obediri convenit, utequinque dictis fata non respondeant: horum enim licet vita moresque merito displaceant, non ideo tamen sùsque deque habenda est iuoritas. Pauli itaque argumentum, quod Ecclesiæ rectores spectat, sì et iussis & rectius poterit explicari. \textit{Ipsi enim praenostis vestris, &c.} \textit{Ipsi enim} \textit{vestris, &c.} Ipsi" emin enim est, Christi regnum curare et regere; hæc iis à Deo tradita est provincia; quam si parum pro dignitate iminent atque ornant, jure tamen fuo protinus non excidunt: Munes enim ipsius, malè licet administrati, ratione, multum Observantiae atque Honoris sibi vendicant. Clarius hæc ac distinctius idem aliæs enuntiat Apostolus \textit{---Rogamus vos, Fratres, ut noveritis eos [vel potius, ut eos vereamini] qui laborant inter vos, & præsunt vobis in domino, & manent vos: & habeatis illos abundantiæ in charitate, propter Opus ipsorum: Kæl} ηγεῖσαι ἀμετῶς ἕτερον εἰς πετοῦν, \&
ad C L E R U M. 359

éträtze, ut alibi apud Novi Testamenti Scriptores*, Officium significat; ca plane est Apostoli sententia—— Ecclesiæ Præsules (non tantùm ob beneficia in nos labore suo, ac monitis collata, sed &) Officii ipsius, quod exercerit, causâ, apprimè nobis charos esse debere, summòque semper pretio æstimandos. Quod si ἐργον Opus aut Laborem simpliciter denotet, id saltem Pauli verba præ se ferunt; Essè aliquem, qui Præsulibus Ecclesiæ, utcunque minimè laborantibus, debeatur, Amorem, cultumque: cùm, qui operi instat sedulo, ἀν ἐὰν περισσῶ, ím penisius multo colendi sint ac diligendi. Sed omnium appositi sima ad id quod volumus est ca ejusdem Pauli ad Timotheum scribentis hortatio, ut Qui bene præsunt [οἱ καλῶς ἐργαζόμενοι] Presbyteri, duplici honore digni videantur. Eft itaque & suis iis, qui male præsunt (co ipso quod præsunt)


A a 4 honos
honos exhibendus; cum quidem ad nolam
duplo major pertineat.

ATQUE haec omnia, quae Obsequii erga
Hierarchas praebendi modum tradunt, ad
describendum etiam Civilis Obedientiae
rationem jure optimo possunt accommodari. Quod si fiat, apparebit statim, nihil
esse illo Interpretum quorumdam Com-
mento ineptius atque insulsius, quo id
Paulum agere pertendunt, ut Præcepti sui
yim omnem, adhibita quadam Ratione,
extenuet atque energet; & cùm alta
voce jam edixerat, Sublimioribus Pote-
statibus non esse ullatenus resistentium,
dein in aures Romanorum haec quæ
insulsurasse distinctiunculam—"si modò
" tales essent Principes, qui Justitiam
" sanctè coelerent, & Civium Felicitati
" probo consularent." Capitalis Oratio!
qua, haud scio an Sacrarum Literarum,
an Principum Authoritati plus detrahat;
an Christi Ecclesiæ, an Reipublicæ magis
noceat. De utraque certè ii præterme-
merur, qui talibus Interpretamentis in re
panti ponderis indulgent; & ut Civium
animos pravis Opinionibus insipient, ip-

os
ad Clerum.

dos divinæ Veritatis Fontes audacter contaminant.

Sed de his fatis---Ut interim, quam Paulo tribuimus, sententiam plenius explicemus, id breviter restate quærendum: Qua ratione Civium Communitati sit utile, ut iniquis etiam pravisque Magistratibus non repungnetur. Hoc autem ex eo fit, quod à malorum etiam Principum Domina cum plura multò ad Civès Commoda, quam Damna plerumque perveniant. Illa itaque relinquere atque abjicere, ut hæ subterfugere possimus; vix est eorum qui publicæ utilitati consultum volunt. Non recta semper, non legitima imperant populo, legitimè qui præsunt: Bona aliquando subditorum invadunt, jus violant. Sed perferenda sunt hæ à privatis injuriæ, non minori incommodo mederi qui student, in majus incurrant; plusque noceant reipublicæ, quam sibi-metipsis profint. Imò verò si tale quidpiam à princiipe fieri contigerit, unde detrimenti multum, non Civis unus aut alter, sed ipsa Civitas accipiat; ut huic malo succurratur, ut hoc damnum refaciatur, non protinus
Serm. protinus ad extrema confugiendum est, non ferro certandum. Morbo enim ipso gravius multò atque exitiosius est hoc Remedii genus. Magis expedit reipublicæ, ut Tyranni, crudelissimi licet, imperio subjiciunt sint Cives, quàm ut cervicibus suis jugum excutiant prorsus, quàm ut Nemini omnino parant, quàm ut in vi armisque spes omnes suas ponant. Nihil enim illo rerum humanarum statu tetrius singi potest, aut miserius: in quo excussæ Rectoris manibus habentæ cùm sint, Populo liberum est, eò quò velit cunque pæcipitem ferri; & quicquid suaserit libidio, id omne, sublatâ Legum reverentiâ, Magistratuæ authority conculcatâ, impune exequi. Pertinet itaque ad Utilitatem communem, ut malis Regibus non resistedur à Populo; ne, commotâ Seditione, gravius aliquod reipublicæ vulneris inferatur, quàm id ipsum quod à manu Régia immissum prius pertulerat.

IV. Hæc ferè, atque his è locis de-prompta sunt Rationum momenta, qui-bus ad Obedientiam Romanos impellit atque
atque urget Apostolus: Quæ quidem tanti Serm. ponderis sunt, eâ vi pollent, ut non uni alicui aut hominum Ordini, aut Genti, aut Ætati aptentur; sed Omnibus, quo- cunque loco aut tempore, seu vixerint, seu victuri sint, Christianis convenient. Nequis enim, qui aliis Legibus aliando uteretur, aliis Magistratibus subeslet; ne- quis, inter Civis qui emineret paulò, qui aut Dignitate, aut Potentiâ, aut rerum Copia excelleret, parendi necessitate se non adeò, ac cæteros constrictum putaret; sententiam suam verbis ita expressis clarisque aperuit Paulus, ut nulli omnino subditorum, ea ex parte quâ subditus sit, excusandi Officii sui locum relinquat. OMNIS, inquit, ANIMA Potestati- tibus sublimioribus subdita sit. Quisquis is est, qui legitimæ alterius potestati subjactus vivit; quacunque sorte & conditi- one fuerit, in quocunque honoris loco positus, ad quemcunque imperii gradum (qui tamen summo subsit) ecectus; no- verit se Præcepti hujusce comprehensione includi, hujus Formulae vi, pari ac cæ- teros jure, prorsus teneri.
S E R M. A t vero (inquiet aliquis) tam latè pa-
ter, ita quaquaversum se diffundit Prae-
cepti hujusce vis, ut nullis usquam cir-
cumscripta sit finibus? nullus, utcunque
res humanæ ecciderint, parendi statuatur
modus? Una hæc est inter omnes offici-
orum Formulas, à qua ne transversum
quidem unguem liceat discedere? Quid si
rempublicam, cui conservandæ definitan-
tur Principes, pro libidine sua ipsi lace-
rent ac pessündent? Quid si Jura omnia,
humana atque divina, pervertant; si in
Civium capita ac Fortunas immaniter fæ-
viant? si id molestur, ut Patriam alienæ
dominationi nefario seelere subjiciant?
anon Populo licebit his conatibus obviam
ire? hoc amentiæ refraenare? hanc à se
perniciem pestémque depellere? Sunt ëà
qui licere hoc contendunt, Viri graves &
boni; quique in tuendis Regum Juribus,
in reprimenda Populi Licentia multam ip-
fi operam atque utilem posuere. Recténe,
an secus fecerint, penes alios sit Judicium.
Me quod attinet, ne eadem hic loci in-
culem, multa sunt quæ nunc dicentem
impediant; plura etiam, quæ si apudPo-
pulum
pulum habenda esset Concio, impedi- rent.

Convenit certè, Verbi divini Interpretes, Ratiocinationes suas omnes ad Scripturæ normam exigere. Sacris autem Scriptoribus solenne est, ipsa quidem Officiorum Praecepta diligenter tradere, acriter urgere; non itidem Exceptionibus corroborum vim frangere, imminuere authoritatem. In hoc ipso quo versamur argumento, multa nobis Sacrae Literae suggerunt, de Imperii humani Origine ad Deum referenda, de Regum Potestate non temperanda; multa habent, quæ Principes Populo magis suspiciendos, populum Principi reddant parentiorem. Quando autem, quibusque de causis Magistratum imperia detrectare, nosmetipsos in libertatem vindicare liceat, ne verbulo quidem indicant—nisi cum aliquid ab hominibus forte imperatum fecit, latis à Deo legibus contrarium: Id ubi acciderit, quid agendum sit, Petri vox illa declarat. Obedire oportet Deo magis quam hominibus. Num qua alia sit Causa, ob quam Nodus ille, Subditos Regibus suis devinciens,
Serm. devinciens, aut penitus dissolvi posset, aut quoquo modo relaxari, ab Apostolis, inquam, omnino filetur: Sileri adeò par est & à Nobis, qui, in praedicanda Evangelii doctrina, Apostolorum vestigiis insistere debemus. Petenda sunt Ista (si quidem peti neceñse sit) à Jurisconsultis, à Thesìum Politicarum tractatoribus; è Legibus, è Rerumpublicarum Formis, suæ cuique genti propriis, tanquam è fonte suo, sunt haurienda: è Scriptura certè peti non possunt, quæ, cum de his offici i hujus limitibus nihil quidquam tradiderit, ad eos signandos definiendosque velit, non nitve, non debet trahi. Admone Populum (inquit Paulus, ad Titum scribens) Principibus & Potestatibus subjitos esse, dicto obedire: Ut autem moneret populum Titus, Qua Occasione, Quo rerum statu Principibus non subjitum esse, non obedire sit lícitum; id verò illi nulquam praecipit Apostolus.

Constant quippe hortatore atque impulsore quopiam non egere populum, in istiusmodi rebus, quibus ipsi per se satis student. Fræno potius opus est, quo repri-
reprimantur, quàm Calcaribus, quibus serm. incitentur proclives eorum ad seditionem animi. Ita fere omnes à naturâ comparati sumus, ut in exquirendis Effugiis, per quæ officiorum quasi septi cancellis, elabi possimus in indagandis Distinctionibus, quibus Christianæ Disciplinæ mitigetur severitas, mirē sumus sagaces; neque aliās solertiori acumine id agimus, quàm cūm Ei, qui Magistratum habet, cedere in omni re ac parere jubemur. Haud multùm expedit itaque hæc nos ab aliis studiose doceri, quæ etiam fine magistro, naturâ ipsâ duce, facilè discimus, atque avidè haurimus. Disceptatorum quorundam Moralium meritò culpatur subtilitas, quà, non arceri ab illicito homines, sed potiùs erudiri putantur, quàm prope ad peccatum absque peccato liceat accedere. Neque ego illum in minori culpa esse arbitror, qui accuratè disputat, Quatenus summo reipublicæ gubernatori à nobis resitt poßit, ita tamen ut perduellionis sumus minime rei. Perinde id mihi esse videtur, ac si quis apud Milites verba faciens, Quas ob causas iis signa impune
S E R M. impune deserere, praefidio ac statione sua
cedere, imperatorum mandatis non ob-
sequi, aliquando & repugnare sit licitum;
omni oratione disquirat: peritide est, ac
si quispiam Libertatis humanæ Patronus
ac Vindex, multis argumentis, multis di-
finitionibus egregie caveret, ne Liber
Servique non intelligant; quid iis contra
Parentes ac Dominos sit concessum; qua
ratione, quot modis aræissimo illo; quo
tenentur officiis vinculo possint exolvi.
Sìt quidem in istis, quæ argutè in hanc
rem asserantur, fani aliquid ac sinceri,
habeant quandam verisimilitudinem, ita
tamen piis auribus molesta sunt, ita hó-
minum impurorum vitiiæ ac cupiditatibus
adblandientur, ut rarò admodum apud
Eruditos diffcri, vix unquam cum impe-
rità multitudine communicari, atque hā-
bitis ad populum Concionibus exponi
debeant.

V E R U M esto, concedatur, hoc ali-
quando non inhonestè, non indecorè fieri
posse: ut tamen hisce Pauli verbis, tan-
quam ansâ aliquâ ad id utatur, cui uni-
quam sano ac simplici in mentem vene-
rit.
rit? Percurrentur omnes tum veteris, tum Novi Fœderis Paginæ; non alius quispiam in iis reperietur locus, ubi quæ summam Rerum tenentibus debentur Officia, & accuratè adeo expendi constat, & tam vehementer suaderi, & tantâ undique argumentorum copiâ muniri. Perversè itaque (ne dicam, absurdè) agunt, qui, inde arrepta (non datâ) occasione, de Magistratibus in ordinem cogendis proximè disputant; qui hoc ipso in solo, tanquam omnium maximè opportunun, Machinas suas figunt, quibus Arcem Regiæ Potestatis impetant atque oppugnent. Mihi certè religio est, etiam post explicatam abunde Pauli doctrinam, ea, quibus infirmari quovis modo videatur, hic in fine orationis leviter attin gere: quantù graviùs peccant, qui quod ab Apostolo, verbis disertis, & magno cum animi ardore præcipitur, id omnino prætervolant; quicquid autem ad contra- hendam Apostolici præcepti amplitudinem excogitari poslit, id scilicet acute rimantur, id acri mente persequuntur, & toto orationis cursu copiosè enarrant.
SERM. Q U I C U N Q U E ista Apostoli ejusdem monita exponenda susciperet; Servi, obede
dite per omnia Dominis Carnalibus; Filii, obede
dite Parentibus per omnia, hoc enim placitum est Deo: à re ipsâ ut opin
nor, paulò aberraret, si in hoc unum incumberet, ut Liberis ac Servis palam
sieret, quoties illis cum veniâ, etiam cum laude, immorigeris esse liceret.

Q U Ä castrrensis disciplinæ atque imperii sit vis, Centurionis illius Evange
lici verba significat: Ego, inquit, homo sum sub potestate constitutus, habens sub
me milites; & dico huic, Vade, & vadit; & alii, Veni, & venit; & servo meo,
Fac hoc, & facit. Quisquamne est, qui, proposito hoc apud militum cohortes di-
cendi Thematè, tum demum argumento atque officio suo pulchrè se satisfecisse
existimet, si ea omnia, quibus imperandi jus, atque parendi necessitas quoquo
modo minuatur, enumeret? de Sacramenti interim Militaris summa religione, de
obsequio exercituum Ducibus legitime debito nihil quidquam afferat, nihil ex-
ponat? Qui in sacris Literis Explicandis
ita versantur, non iis lucem, sed vim inferunt, Eculeum admovent, quo, quæ minimè dixerint, senserintve, cogantur fateri: Veritatem, prima Scripturae ipsius quasi voce & indicio patefactam, respunt; ut ei deinde, tanquam adhibitis quibusdam tormentis, alienissima quæque exprimant atque elidant.

Alia adhuc hæc gravia eandem in rem mihi suppeditat argumenta, Ecclesiae doctrina, & Antiquæ, & Nostræ; Temporum etiam, in quæ incidimus, ratio. Hæc tamen, cum longius jam evagata modum fere excesserit oratio,strictim ac breviter percurram.

Inter omnes, qui primis Ecclesiae sæculis clarueræ Scriptores, non occurrit, qui noxio hoc alimenti genere Gregem sibi commissum paverit; qui Sacris Lite-ris abuteretur ad ferendas inter populum opiniones, de Juribus suis quocunque modo tuendis, de Regibus, si opus fuerit, etiam per vim coercendis. Et tamen istis scriptoere temporibus, cum hujusmodi doctrinae animis hominum se facilè insinuassent, essentque acceptissimæ: cum

Bb 2 scilicet
Sermon. scilicet variæ acciderent rerum publicarum

IX. Vices atque Conversiones: cumque ii

dominarentur Principes, qui, Civibus

pessimè tractatis, tantum ab illis obsequii

promereri videbantur, quantum summo

jure possent vendicare.

Inter Homilias, Ecclesia nostræ

auctoritate firmatas, sunt, quæ Subdito-

rum erga Reges officia præscribunt, non

paucæ; est etiam, ubi de hoc ipso Pauli

præcepto non parcè agitur. Multa in-

didem de promis posseunt, quæ populum,

officii non satis memorem, cohicant;

nihil, quod inflammet. Nusquam nos ad-

monent, ne Libertatis, ad quam nati

factique sumus, studium negligamus; ne

iis, qui Reipublicæ præfunt, nimium pa-

reamus.

Eademum est Rerum, ea Temporum,
in quibus versamur, Ratio, ut cudendis

his Argutiis, dissemianandis hujusmodi

Doctrinis, minimè videatur opportuna.

Libertatem studiosè satis colimus, am-

plectimur, tuemur; periculi nihil quid-

quam est, ne illam non suo pretio æsti-

niemus: Id potius pertimefcendum, ne

liberiús
liberius paulò quàm par est, (quam aut Christianos deceat, aut bonos Cives) & sentiamus, & vivamus; id cavendum, ne Libertati injeéta à legibus frôena có usque laxemus, donec in Licentiam erumpat, omnia permisceat, ac perturbet, & se ipsa tandem suis quasi manibus confo- diat, ac perimat. Quod Galatis à Paulo dìctum est, quod Advenis dispersionis, à Petro, hoc Nobis non minus appositè dici possit; Vos in Libertatem vocati estis, Fratres; tantum ne Libertatem in occasionem detis carni, sed per Charitatem servite invicem—Quasi liberì, & non quasi velamen habentes malitiae Libertatem; sed sicut servi Dei. Hæc audire convenit pacis Christianæ Sectatores, hæc effari Nuncios ac Praècones; hæc Ordini nostro vitaeque Instituto sunt apta, hæc Moribus his, Temporibusque accommodata; hæc Deo placitura; atque Hominibus profutura. His itaque edocendis toti vacemus, atque inhaereamus. Si qui verò sint, qui quasi Tubâ Evangelicum canere ament, qui effroenès vulgi animos ad ferociam ultra stimulent.
ac proritent, etiam accensis faces admo-
veant: quâ mente ad hoc opus se ac-
cinxerint, quâ auctoritate freti, quibus
Exemplis adduxit has in se partes tuen-
das susceperint, Ipsí viderint: Unusquis-
que suum Onus portabit: Nos autem ta-
lem Consuetudinem non habemus, neque
Ecclesia Dei.

A Pauli Verbis exorsa oratio in
iidem etiam liberiûs recitandis definit.
Quæ itaque ad Timothæum Titumque ab
illo primûm scripta sunt, ad Nos etiam,
qui in partem ejusdem Ministerii venimus,
pertinere arbitremur. Atque utinam
ea unusquisque nostrum, Fratres in
Christo Dilectissimi, & auri-
ribus avidis accipiat & animo penitûs
insigat! Timotheum Apostolus sic allo-
quitur: Testificor coram Deo, & Jesu
Christo, qui judicaturus est Vivos &
Mortuos,& per Adventum ipsius, &
Regnum ejus, prædica Verbum; insta
opportunè, importunè; argui, obscura, in-
crepà, in omni patientiâ & doctrinâ.
Erit enim tempus (imò Tempus jam est)
cùm sanam Doctrinam non sustinebunt,
sed
ad CLERUM...


Gratia Domini nostri Jesu Christi, & Charitas Dei, & Communicatio Spiritus Sancti sit semper Nobiscum omnibus!

FINIS.