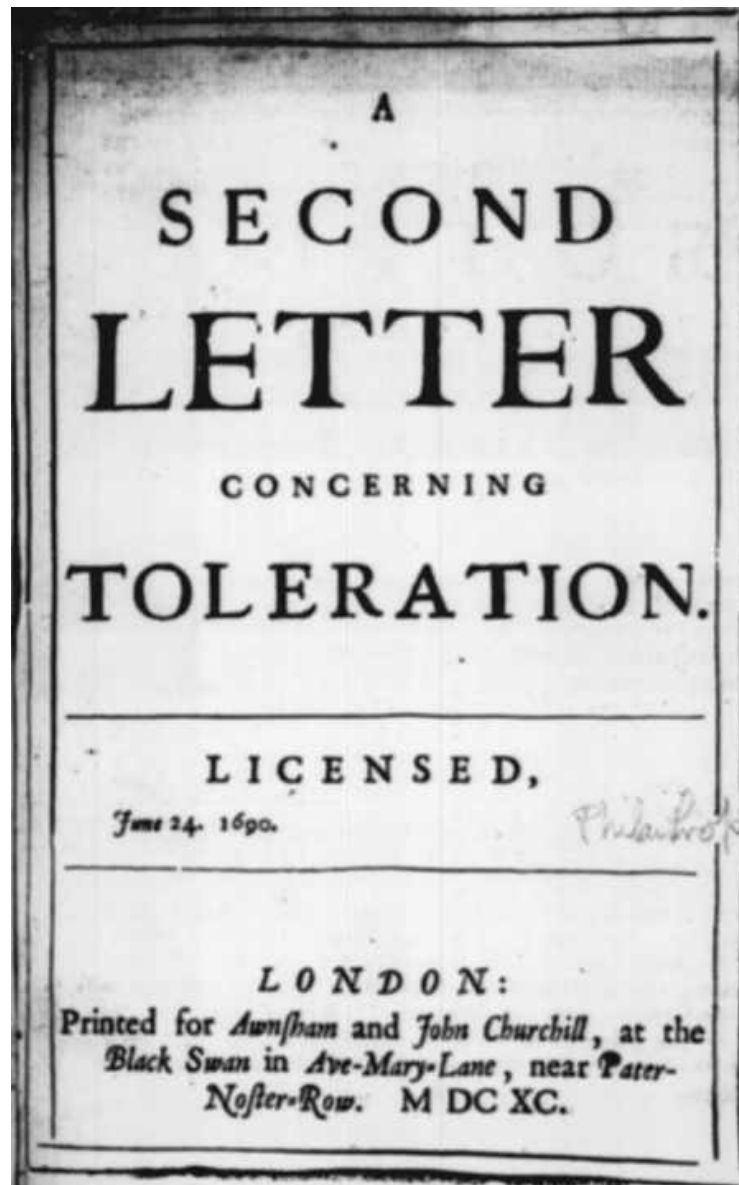


**JOHN LOCKE,**  
*A Second Letter on Toleration (1690)*



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## Editor's Introduction

To make this edition useful to scholars and to make it more readable, I have done the following:

1. inserted and highlighted the page numbers of the original edition
  2. not split a word if it has been hyphenated across a new line or page (this will assist in making word searches)
  3. added unique paragraph IDs (which are used in the "citation tool" which is part of the "enhanced HTML" version of this text)
  4. retained the spaces which separate sections of the text
  5. created a "blocktext" for large quotations
  6. moved the Table of Contents to the beginning of the text
  7. placed the footnotes at the end of the book
  8. reformatted margin notes to float within the paragraph
  9. inserted Greek and Hebrew words as images
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**TO THE AUTHOR OF THE ARGUMENT OF THE LETTER  
CONCERNING TOLERATION, BRIEFLY CONSIDERED AND  
ANSWERED.**

SIR,

YOU will pardon me if I take the same Liberty with you, that you have done with the Author of the Letter concerning Toleration; to consider your Arguments, and endeavour to shew you the Mistakes of them. For since you have so plainly yeilded up the Question to him, and do own that *the Severities* he would dissuade Christians from, *are utterly unapt, and improper to bring Men to imbrace that Truth which must save them*; I [Pag. 12, 13, 14.](#) am not without some hopes to prevail with you, to do that your self, which you say is the only justifiable Aim of Men differing about Religion, even in the use of the severest Methods: *viz. Carefully and impartially to weigh* the whole matter, and thereby to remove that *Prejudice* which makes you yet favour some Remains of Persecution: Promising my self that so ingenious a Person will either be convinced by the Truth which appears so very clear and evident to me; or else confess, that, were either you or I in Authority, we should very unreasonably and very unjustly use any Force upon the other which differ'd from him, upon any pretence of want of Examination. And if Force be not to be used in your case or mine, because unreasonable, [2] or unjust; you will, I hope, think fit that it should be forborn in all others, where it will be equally unjust and unreasonable; as I doubt not but to make it appear it will unavoidably be, where ever you will go about to punish Men for want of Consideration. For the true way to try such Speculations as these, is to see how they will prove when they are reduc'd into Practice.

The first thing you seem startled at, in the Author's Letter, is the largeness of the Toleration he proposes: And you think it strange that he would not have so much as a *Pagan, Mahometan, or Jew, excluded from the Civil Rights of the Commonwealth*, [Pag. 1.](#) *because of his Religion.* We pray every day for their Conversion, and I think it our Duty so to do: But it will, I fear, hardly be believed that we pray in earnest, if we exclude them from the other ordinary and probable means of Conversion; either by driving them from, or persecuting them when they are amongst us. Force, you allow, is improper to convert Men to any Religion. Toleration is but the removing that Force. So that why those should not be tolerated as well as others, if you wish their Conversion, I do not see. But you say, *it seems hard to conceive how the Author of that Letter should think to do any* [Pag. 2.](#) *Service to Religion in general, or to the Christian Religion, by recommending and perswading such a Toleration. For how much soever it may tend to the Advancement of Trade and Commerce, (which some seem to place above all other Considerations) I see no reason, from any Experiment that has been made, to expect that true Religion would be a gainer by it; that it would be either the better preserved, the more widely propagated, or rendred any whit the more fruitful in the Lives of its Professors by it.* Before I come to your Doubt it self, *Whether true Religion would be a gainer by such a Toleration*; give me leave to take notice, that if, by *other Considerations*, you mean any thing but Religion, your Parenthesis is wholly besides the matter; and that if you do not know that the Author of the Letter *places the Advancement of Trade above Religion*, your Insinuation is very uncharitable. But I go on.

*You see no reason, you say, from any Experiment that has been made, to expect that true Religion would be a gainer by it.* True Religion and Christian Religion are, I suppose, to you and me, the same thing. But of this you have an Experiment in its first appearance in [3] the World, and several hundreds of Years after. It was then better *preserv'd, more widely*

*propagated (in proportion) and render'd more fruitful in the Lives of its Professors, than ever since; tho then Jews and Pagans were tolerated, and more than tolerated, by the Governments of those places where it grew up. I hope you do not imagine the Christian Religion has lost any of its first Beauty, Force, or Reasonableness, by having been almost 2000 Years in the World; that you should fear it should be less able now to shift for it self, without the help of Force. I doubt not but you look upon it still to be the Power and Wisdom of God for our Salvation; and therefore cannot suspect it less capable to prevail now, by its own Truth and Light, than it did in the first Ages of the Church, when poor contemptible Men, without Authority, or the countenance of Authority, had alone the care of it. This, as I take it, has been made use of by Christians generally, and by some of our Church in particular, as an Argument for the Truth of the Christian Religion; that it grew and spread, and prevailed, without any Aid from Force, or the Assistance of the Powers in being. And if it be a mark of the true Religion, that it will prevail by its own Light and Strength; (but that false Religions will not, but have need of Force and foreign Helps to support them) nothing certainly can be more for the advantage of true Religion, than to take away Compulsion every where. And therefore it is no more hard to conceive how the Author of the Letter should think to do Service to Religion in general, or to the Christian Religion, than it is hard to conceive that he should think there is a true Religion, and that the Christian Religion is it; which its Professors have always own'd not to need Force, and have urged that as a good Argument to prove the truth of it. The Inventions of Men in Religion need the Force and Helps of Men to support them. A Religion that is of God wants not the Assistance of Human Authority to make it prevail. I guess, when this dropp'd from you, you had narrow'd your Thoughts to your own Age and Country: But if you will enlarge them a little beyond the Confines of England, I do not doubt but you will easily imagine that if in Italy, Spain, Portugal, &c. the Inquisition; and in France their Dragooning; and in other parts those Severities that are used to keep or force Men to the National Religion, were taken away; and instead thereof the Toleration [4] propos'd by the Author were set up, the true Religion, would be a gainer by it.*

The Author of the Letter says, *Truth will do well enough, if she were* [Pag. 49.](#) *once left to shift for her self. She seldom hath received, and he fears never will receive much Assistance from the Power of great Men, to whom she is but rarely known, and more rarely welcome. Errors indeed prevail, by the Assistance of Foreign and borrowed Succours. Truth makes way into our Vnderstanding by her own Light, and is but the weaker for any borrowed Force that Violence can add to her.* These words of his (*how hard soever they may seem to you*) may help you to conceive how he should think to do Service to True Religion, by recommending and perswading such a Toleration as he proposed. And now, pray tell me your self, whether you do not think True Religion would be a gainer by it, if such a Toleration establish'd there, would permit the Doctrine of the Church of England to be freely preached, and its Worship set up, in any Popish, Mahometan, or Pagan Country? If you do not, you have a very ill Opinion of the Religion of the Church of England, and must own that it can only be propagated and supported by Force. If you think it would gain in those Countries, by such a Toleration, you are then of the Author's Mind, and do not find it so hard to conceive how the recommending such a Toleration might do Service to that which you think True Religion. But if you allow such a Toleration useful to Truth in other Countries, you must find something very peculiar in the Air, that must make it less useful to Truth in England. And 'twill savour of much partiality, and be too absurd, I fear, for you to own, that Toleration will be advantagious to True Religion all the World over, except only in this Island; Though, I much suspect, this, as absurd as it is, lies at the bottom; And you build all you say upon this lurking Supposition, that the National Religion now in England, back'd by the Publick Authority of the Law, is the only True Religion, and therefore no other is to be tolerated. Which being a Supposition equally unavoidable, and equally just, in other Countries, (unless we can imagine that every where but in England Men believe what at the same time they think to be a Lie) will in other Places exclude Toleration, and thereby hinder

Truth from the means of propagating it self.

*What the Fruits of Toleration* are, which in the next words you [5] complain do *remain still among us*, and which you say *give no Encouragement to hope for any Advantages from it*; what Fruits, I say, these are, or whether they are owing to the want or wideness of Toleration among us, we shall then be able to judg, when you tell us what they are. In the mean time, I will boldly say, that if the Magistrates will severely and impartially set themselves against Vice, in whomsoever it is found; and leave Men to their own Consciences, in their Articles of Faith, and Ways of Worship; *True Religion will be spread wider, and be more fruitful in the Lives of its Professors*, than ever hitherto it has been, by the imposition of Creeds and Ceremonies.

You tell us, that *no Man can fail of finding the Way of Salvation, who* [Pag. 7.](#) *seeks it as he ought*. I wonder you had not taken notice, in the places you quote for this, how we are directed there to the right way of seeking. The words (*John vii. 17.*) are; *If any Man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God*. And, *Psalm XXV. 9, 12, 14.* which are also quoted by you, tell us, *The Meek will he guide in Judgment, and the Meek will he teach his Way. What Man is he that feareth the Lord, him shall he teach in the Way that he shall chuse. The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant*. So that these places, if they prove what you cite them for, that *no Man can fail of finding the Way of Salvation, who seeks it as he ought*; they do also prove that a good Life is the only way to seek as we ought; and that therefore the Magistrates, if they would put Men upon seeking the way of Salvation as they ought, should, by their Laws and Penalties, force them to a good Life; A good Conversation being the readiest and surest way to a right Understanding. Punishments and Severities thus apply'd, we are sure, are both practicable, just, and useful. How Punishments will prove in the way you contend for, we shall see when we come to consider it.

Having given us these broad Marks of your Good-will to Toleration, you tell us, *'Tis not your Design to argue against it, but only to enquire what our Author offers* [Pag. 3.](#) *for the proof of his Assertion*. And then you give us this Scheme of his Argument.

1. There is but one Way of Salvation, or but one True Religion.

2. No Man can be saved by this Religion, who does not believe it to be the True Religion.

[6]

3. This Belief is to be wrought in Men by Reason and Argument, not by outward Force and Compulsion.

4. Therefore all such Force is utterly of no use for the promoting True Religion, and the Salvation of Souls.

5. And therefore no Body can have any Right to use any Force or Compulsion, for the bringing Men to the True Religion.

And you tell us, *the whole strength of what that Letter urged for the Purpose of it, lies in this Argument*; Which I think you have no more reason to say, than if you should tell us, that only one Beam of a House had any strength in it, when there are several others that would support the Building, were that gone.

The purpose of the Letter is plainly to defend Toleration, exempt from all Force; especially Civil Force, or the Force of the Magistrate. Now if it be a true Consequence, *that Men must be tolerated, if Magistrates have no Commission or Authority to punish them for Matters of Religion*; then the *only strength of that Letter lies not in the unfitness of Force to*

Again; If it be true that *Magistrates being as liable to Error as the rest of Mankind, their using of Force in Matters of Religion, would not at all advance the Salvation of Mankind,* (allowing that even Force could work upon them, and Magistrates had Authority to use it in Religion) then the Argument you mention is not *the only one, in that Letter, of strength to prove the Necessity of Toleration.* V. Let. P. 8. For the Argument of the unfitness of Force to convince Mens Minds being quite taken away, either of the other would be a strong proof for Toleration. But let us consider the Argument as you have put it.

*The two first Propositions, you say, you agree to. As to the Third, you* [Pag. 4.](#)  
grant that *Force is very improper to be used to induce the Mind to assent to any Truth.* But yet you deny that *Force is utterly useless for the promoting True Religion, and the Salvation of Mens Souls;* which you call the Author's 4th Proposition: But indeed that is not the Author's 4th Proposition, or any Proposition of his, to be found in the Pages you quote, or any where else in the whole Letter, either in those terms, or in the sense you take it. In the 8th Page, which you quote, the Author is shewing that the Magistrate has no Power, that is not Right, to make use of Force in Matters of Religion, for the Salvation of Mens Souls. And the reason he gives for it there, is, because force has no efficacy, [7] to convince Mens Minds; and that without a full perswasion of the Mind, the Profession of the true Religion it self is not acceptable to God. *Vpon this ground, says he, I affirm that the Magistrate's Power extends not to the establishing any Articles of Faith, or Forms of Worship, by the force of his Laws. For Laws are of no force at all without Penalties; and Penalties in this case are absolutely impertinent, because they are not proper to convince the Mind.* And so again, [Pag. 27.](#) which is the other place you quote, the Author says; *What soever may be doubted in Religion, yet this at least is certain; that no Religion which I believe not to be true, can be either true, or profitable unto me. In vain therefore do Princes compel their Subjects to come into their Church-Communion, under the pretence of saving their Souls.* And more to this purpose. But in neither of those Passages, nor any where else, that I remember, does the Author say that it is impossible that Force should any way, at any time, upon any Person, by any Accident, be useful towards the promoting of true Religion, and the Salvation of Souls; for that is it which you mean by *utterly of no use.* He does not deny that there is any thing which God in his Goodness does not, or may not, sometimes, graciously make use of, towards the Salvation of Mens Souls (as our Saviour did of Clay and Spittle to cure Blindness) and that so, Force also may be sometimes useful. But that which he denies, and you grant, is that Force has any *proper Efficacy* to enlighten the Understanding, or produce Belief. And from thence he infers, that therefore the Magistrate cannot lawfully compel Men in matters of Religion. This is what the Author says, and what I imagine will always hold true, whatever you or any one can say or think to the contrary.

That which you say is, *Force indirectly and at a distance may do some* [Pag. 5.](#)  
*Service.* What you mean by *doing Service at a distance, towards the bringing Men to Salvation, or to imbrace the Truth,* I confess I do not understand; unless perhaps it be what others, in propriety of Speech, call by *Accident.* But be it what it will, it is such a Service as cannot be ascribed to the direct and *proper Efficacy* of Force. And so, say you, *Force, indirectly, and at a distance, may do some Service.* I grant it: Make your best of it. What do you conclude from thence, to your purpose? That therefore the Magistrate may make use of it? That I deny. That such an *indirect, and at a distance Vsefulness,* will authorize the Civil Power in the use of it, that will never be prov'd. Loss of Estate [8] and Dignities may make a proud Man humble: Sufferings and Imprisonment may make a wild and debauched Man sober: And so these things may *indirectly, and at a distance, be serviceable towards the Salvation of Mens Souls.* I doubt not but God has made some, or all of these, the occasions of good to many Men. But will you therefore infer, that the Magistrate may take away a Man's

Honour, or Estate, or Liberty, for the Salvation of his Soul; or torment him in this, that he may be happy in the other World? What is otherwise unlawful in it self (as it certainly is to punish a Man without a fault) can never be made lawful by some Good that, *indirectly and at a distance*, or if you please, *indirectly and by accident*, may follow from it. Running a Man through may save his Life, as it has done by chance, opening a lurking Imposthume. But will you say therefore that this is lawful, justifiable Chirurgery? The Gallies, 'tis like, might reduce many a vain, loose Protestant, to Repentance, Sobriety of Thought, and a true sense of Religion: And the Torments they suffer'd in the late Persecution, might make several consider the Pains of Hell, and put a due estimate of Vanity and Contempt on all things of this World. But will you say, because those Punishments might, *indirectly and at a distance*, serve to the Salvation of Mens Souls, that therefore the King of *France* had Right and Authority to make use of them? If your *indirect and at a distance Serviceableness* may authorize the Magistrate to use Force in Religion, all the Cruelties used by the Heathens against Christians, by Papists against Protestants, and all the persecuting of Christians one amongst another, are all justifiable.

But what if I should tell you now of other Effects, contrary Effects, that Punishments in matters of Religion may produce; and so may serve to keep Men from the *Truth* and from *Salvation*? What then will become of your *indirect, and at a distance* [Pag. 5.](#)

*Usefulness*? For in all Pleas for any thing because of its *usefulness*, it is not enough to say as you do (and is the utmost that can be said for it) *that it may be serviceable*: But it must be considered not only what it may, but what it is likely to produce: And the greater Good or Harm like to come from it, ought to determine of the use of it. To shew you what Effects one may expect from Force, of what *usefulness it is to bring Men to imbrace the Truth*, be pleas'd to read what you [9] *your self have writ*. I cannot but remark, *say you*, that these Methods (*viz.* depriving Men of their Estates, Corporal Punishments, starving and [Pag. 13.](#)

tormenting them in Prisons, and in the end even taking away their Lives, to make them Christians) are so very improper in respect to the Design of them, that they usually produce the quite contrary Effect. For whereas all the use which Force can have for the advancing true Religion, and the Salvation of Souls, is (as has already been shewed) by disposing Men to submit to Instruction, and to give a fair hearing to the Reasons which are offer'd for the enlightning their Minds and discovering the Truth to them; These Cruelties have the Misfortune to be commonly look'd upon as so just a Prejudice against any Religion that uses them, as makes it needless to look any further into it; and to tempt Men to reject it, as both false and detestable, without ever vouchsafing to consider the rational Grounds and Motives of it. This Effect they seldom fail to work upon the Sufferers of them. And as to the Spectators, if they be not beforehand well instructed in those Grounds and Motives, they will be much tempted likewise, not only to entertain the same Opinion of such a Religion, but withal to judg much more favourably of that of the Sufferers; who, they will be apt to think, would not expose themselves to such Extremities, which they might avoid by compliance, if they were not thoroughly satisfied of the Justice of their Cause. *Here then you allow that taking away Mens Estates or Liberty, and Corporal Punishments, are apt to drive away both Sufferers and Spectators, from the Religion that makes use of them, rather than to it. And so these you renounce. Now if you give up Punishments of a Man, in his Person, Liberty, and Estate, I think we need not stand with you, for any other Punishments may be made use of. But, by what follows, it seems you shelter your self under the name of Severities. For moderate Punishments, as you call them in another place, you think may be serviceable; indirectly, and at a distance serviceable, to bring Men to the Truth. And I say, any sort of Punishments disproportioned to the Offence, or where there is no fault at all, will always be Severity, unjustifiable Severity, and will be thought so by the Sufferers and By-standers; and so will usually produce the Effects you have mentioned, contrary to the Design they are used for. Not to profess the National Faith, whilst one believes it not to be true; not to enter into Church-Communion with the Magistrate, as long as one judges the Doctrine there professed*



to [10] be erroneous, or the Worship not such as God has either prescribed, or will accept; this you allow, and all the World with you must allow, not to be a fault. But yet you would have Men punished for not being of the National Religion; that is, as you your self confess, for no fault at all. Whether this be not Severity, nay so open and avow'd Injustice, that it will give Men a just Prejudice against the Religion that uses it, and produce all [Pag. 14.](#)

those ill Effects you there mention, I leave you to consider. So that the name of Severities in opposition to the moderate Punishments' you speak for, can do you no Service at all. For where there is no Fault, there can be no moderate Punishment: All Punishment is immoderate, where there is no Fault to be punished. But of your moderate Punishment we shall have occasion to speak more in another place. It suffices here to have shewn, that, whatever Punishments you use, they are as likely to drive Men from the Religion that uses them, as to bring them to the Truth; and much more likely; as we shall see before we have done: And so, by your own Confession, they are not to be used.

One thing in this Passage of the Author, it seems, appears *absurd* to you; that he should say, *That to take away Mens Lives, to make them Christians, was but an ill way of expressing a Design of their Salvation.* I grant there is great Absurdity some where in the case. But it is in the Practice of those who, persecuting Men under a pretence of *bringing them to Salvation*, suffer the Temper of their Good-will to betray it self, in taking away their Lives. And whatever Absurdities there be in this way of proceeding, there is none in the Author's way of expressing it; as you would more plainly have seen, if you had looked into the Latin Original, where the words are *Vita denique ipsâ privant, ut fideles, ut salvi siant* ([Pag. 5.](#)) which tho more literally, might be thus render'd, *To bring them to the Faith and to Salvation*; yet the Translator is not to be blamed, if he chose to express the Sense of the Author, in words that very lively represented the extream Absurdity they are guilty of, who under pretence of Zeal for the Salvation of Souls, proceed to the taking away their Lives. An Example whereof we have in a neighbouring Country, where the Prince declares he will have all his Dissenting Subjects sav'd, and pursuant thereunto has taken away the Lives of many of them. For thither at [11] last Persecution must come: As I fear, notwithstanding your talk of *moderate Punishments*, you your self intimate in these words; *Not that I think the Sword is to be used in this business, (as I have sufficiently declared already) but because all* [Pag. 23.](#)

*coactive Power resolves at last into the Sword; since all (I do not say, that will not be reformed in this matter by lesser Penalties, but) that refuse to submit to lesser Penalties, must at last fall under the stroke of it.* In which words, if you mean any thing to the busines in hand, you seem to have a reserve for greater Punishments, when lesser are not sufficient to bring Men to be convinced. But let that pass.

You say, *If Force be used, not instead of Reason and Arguments, that is,* [Pag. 5.](#) *not to convince by its own proper Efficacy, which it cannot do, &c.* I think those who make Laws, and use Force, to bring Men to Church-Conformity in Religion, seek only the Compliance, but concern themselves not for the Conviction of those they punish; and so never use Force to *convince*. For, pray tell me; When any Dissenter conforms, and enters into the Church-Communion, is he ever examined to see whether he does it upon Reason, and Conviction, and such Grounds as would become a Christian concern'd for Religion? If Persecution (as is pretended) were for the Salvation of Mens Souls, this would be done; and Men not driven to take the Sacrament to keep their Places, or to obtain Licenses to sell Ale, (for so low have these holy Things been prostituted) who perhaps knew nothing of its Institution; and considered no other use of it but the securing some poor secular Advantage, which without taking of it they should have lost. So that this Exception of yours, of the *use of Force, instead of Arguments, to convince Men*, I think is needless; those who use it, not being (that ever I heard) concern'd that Men should be convinced.

to consider those Reasons and Arguments, which are proper and sufficient to convince them; but which, without being forced, they would not consider. *And, say you, Who can deny but that, indirectly, and at a distance, it does some Service, towards bringing Men to imbrace that Truth, which either through Negligence they would never acquaint themselves with, or through Prejudice they would reject and condemn unheard? Whether this way of Punishment is like to increase, or remove Prejudice, we have already seen. And what [12] that Truth is, which you can positively say, any Man, without being forced by Punishment, would through carelessness never acquaint himself with, I desire you to name. Some are call'd at the third, some at the ninth, and some at the eleventh hour. And whenever they are call'd, they imbrace all the Truth necessary to Salvation. But these slips may be forgiven, amongst so many gross and palpable Mistakes, as appear to me all through your Discourse. For Example: You tell us that Force used to bring Men to consider, does indirectly, and at a distance, some Service. Here now you walk in the dark, and endeavour to cover your self with Obscurity, by omitting two necessary parts. As, first, who must use this Force: which, tho you tell us not here, yet by other parts of your Treatise 'tis plain you mean the Magistrate. And, secondly, you omit to say upon whom it must be used; who it is must be punished: And those, if you say any thing to your purpose, must be Dissenters from the National Religion, those who come not into Church-Communion with the Magistrate. And then your Proposition in fair plain terms will stand thus. *If the Magistrate punish Dissenters, only to bring them to consider those Reasons and Arguments which are proper to convince them; who can deny but that indirectly, and at distance, it may do Service, &c. towards bringing Men to embrace that Truth which otherwise they would never be acquainted with? &c.* In which Proposition, 1. There is something impracticable. 2. Something unjust. And, 3. Whatever Efficacy there is in Force (your way apply'd) to bring Men to consider and be convinced, it makes against you.*

1. It is impracticable to punish Dissenters, as Dissenters, only to make them consider. For if you punish them as Dissenters (as certainly you do, if you punish them alone, and them all without exception) you punish them for not being of the National Religion. And to punish a Man for not being of the National Religion, is not to punish him only to make him consider; unless not to be of the National Religion, and not to consider, be the same thing. But you will say the design is only to make Dissenters consider; and therefore they may be punished only to make them consider. To this I reply; It is impossible you should punish one with a design only to make him consider, whom you punish for something else besides want of Consideration; or if you punish him whether he consider or no; as you do, if [13] you lay Penalties on Dissenters in general. If you should make a Law to punish all Stammerers; could any one believe you, if you said it was designed only to make them leave Swearing? Would not every one see it was impossible that punishment should be only against Swearing, when all Stammerers were under the penalty? Such a proposal as this, is in it self, at first sight, monstrously absurd. But you must thank your self for it. For to lay penalties upon Stammerers, only to make them not swear, is not more absurd and impossible than it is to lay Penalties upon Dissenters only to make them consider.

2. To punish Men out of the Communion of the National Church, to make them consider, is unjust. They are punished because out of the National Church: And they are out of the National Church, because they are not yet convinced. Their standing out therefore in this State, whilst they are not convinced, not satisfied in their Minds, is no Fault; and therefore cannot justly be punished. But your method is, Punish them, to make them consider such Reasons and Arguments as are proper to convince them. Which is just such Justice, as it would be for the Magistrate to punish you for not being a Cartesian, only to bring you to consider such Reasons and Arguments as are proper and sufficient to convince you: When it is possible, 1. That you being satisfied of the truth of your own Opinion in Philosophy, did not judg it worth while to consider that of *Des Cartes*. 2. It is possible you are not able to

consider, and examine, all the Proofs and Grounds upon which he endeavours to establish his Philosophy. 3. Possibly you have examined, and can find no *Reasons and Arguments proper and sufficient to convince you*.

3. What ever *indirect Efficacy* there be in Force, apply'd by the Magistrate your way, it makes against you. *Force used by the Magistrate to bring Men to consider those Reasons and Arguments, which are proper and sufficient to convince them, but which without being forced they would not consider; may, say you, be serviceable indirectly, and at a distance, to make Men imbrace the Truth which must save them*. And thus, say I, it may be *serviceable to bring Men to receive and imbrace Falshood*, which will destroy them. So that Force and Punishment, by your own confession, not being able directly, by its *proper Efficacy*, to do Men any good, in reference to their future Estate; though it be sure directly to do them harm, in reference to their present condition [14] here; and indirectly, and in your way of applying it, being proper to do at least as much harm as good; I desire to know what the *Vsefulness* is which so much recommends it, even to a degree that you pretend it needful and necessary. Had you some new untry'd Chymical Preparation, that was as proper to kill as to save an infirm Man, (of whose Life I hope you would not be more tender than of a weak Brother's Soul) would you give it your Child, or try it upon your Friend, or recommend it to the World for its rare Usefulness? I deal very favourably with you, when I say as proper to kill as to save. For Force, in your *indirect way*, of the Magistrates *applying it to make Men consider those Arguments that otherwise they would not; to make them lend an Ear to those who tell them they have mistaken their Way, and offer to shew them the right*; I say in this Way, Force is much more proper, and likely, to make Men receive and imbrace Error than the Truth.

1. Because Men out of the right Way are as apt, I think I may say apter, to use Force, than others. For Truth, I mean the Truth of the Gospel, which is that of the True Religion, is mild, and gentle, and meek, and apter to use Prayers and Intreaties, than Force, to gain a hearing.

2. Because the Magistrates of the World, or the *Civil Sovereigns* (as you think it more proper to call them) being few of them in the right Way; (not one of ten, [Pag. 16](#). take which side you will) perhaps you will grant not one of an hundred, being of the True Religion; 'tis likely *your indirect way of using of Force* would do an hundred, or at least ten times as much harm as good: Especially if you consider, that as the Magistrate will certainly use it to force Men to hearken to the *proper Ministers of his Religion*, let it be what it will; so you having set no Time, nor bounds, to this consideration of Arguments and Reasons, short of being convinced; you, under another pretence, put into the Magistrate's Hands as much Power to force Men to his Religion, as any the openest Persecutors can pretend to. For what difference, I beseech you, between punishing you to bring you to Mass; and punishing you to bring you to consider *those Reasons and Arguments which are proper and sufficient to convince you* that you ought to go to Mass? For till you are *brought to consider Reasons and Arguments proper and sufficient to convince you*; that is, till you are convinced; you are [15] punished on. If you reply, you meant *Reasons and Arguments proper and sufficient to convince* them of the Truth. I answer, if you meant so, why did you not say so? But if you had, it would in this case do you little service. For the Mass, in *France*, is as much supposed the Truth, as the Liturgy here. And your way of applying Force will as much promote Popery in *France*, as Protestantism in *England*. And so you see how serviceable it is to make Men *receive and imbrace the Truth that must save them*.

However you tell us, in the same Page, that *if Force so applied, as is [Pag. 5](#). above mentioned, may in such sort as has been said, i. e. Indirectly, and at a distance, be serviceable to bring Men to receive and imbrace Truth, you think it sufficient to shew the usefulness of it in Religion*. Where I shall observe, 1st. That this *Vsefulness* amounts to no more but this, That it is not impossible but that it may be useful. And such a *Vsefulness* one cannot deny to Auricular Confession, doing of Penance, going of a Pilgrimage to some Saint,

and what not. Yet our Church do's not think fit to use them: though it cannot be deny'd but they may have some of your *indirect, and at a distance usefulness*; that is, perhaps may do some service, indirectly, and by accident.

2. Force your way apply'd, as it may be useful, so also it may be useless. For, 1st, Where the Law punishes Dissenters, without telling them it is to make them consider, they may through ignorance and over-sight neglect to do it, and so your Force proves useless. 2. Some Dissenters may have considered already, and then Force employ'd upon them must needs be useless; unless you can think it useful to punish a Man to make him do that which he has done already. 3. God has not directed it: and therefore we have no reason to expect he should make it successful.

3. It may be hurtful: nay it is likely to prove more hurtful than useful. 1st. Because to punish Men for that, which 'tis visible cannot be known whether they have perform'd or no, is so palpable an Injustice, that it is likelier to give them an aversion to the Persons and Religion that uses it, than to bring them to it. 2ly. Because the greatest part of Mankind being not able to discern betwixt Truth and Falshood, that depend upon long and many Proofs, and remote [16] Consequences; nor have ability enough to discover the false Grounds, and resist the captious and fallacious Arguments of Learned Men versed in Controversies; are so much more expos'd, by the *Force* which is used to *make them hearken to the Information and Instruction of Men appointed* to it by the Magistrate, or those of his Religion, to be led into Falshood and Error, than they are likely this way to be *brought to imbrace the Truth that must save them*; by how much the National Religions of the World are, beyond comparison, more of them False or Erroneous, than such as have God for their Author, and Truth for their Standard. And that seeking and examining, without the special Grace of God, will not secure even knowing and learned Men from Error. We have a famous instance in the two *Reynold's* (both Scholars, and Brothers, but one a Protestant, the other a Papist) who upon the exchange of Papers between them, were both turn'd; but so that neither of them, with all the Arguments he could use, could bring his Brother back to the Religion which he himself had found Reason to imbrace. Here was Ability to examine and judg, beyond the ordinary rate of most Men. Yet one of these Brothers was so caught by the sophistry and skill of the other, that he was brought into Error, from which he could never again be extricated. This we must unavoidably conclude; unless we can think, that wherein they differ'd, they were both in the right; or that Truth can be an Argument to support a Falshood; both which are impossible. And now, I pray, which of these two Brothers would you have punished, to make him *bethink himself*, and bring him back to the Truth? For 'tis certain some ill-grounded Cause of assent *alienated one of them from it*. If you will examine your Principles, you will find that, according to your Rule, The Papist must be punished in *England*, and the Protestant in *Italy*. So that, in effect, (by your Rule) *Passion, Humour, Prejudice, Lust, Impressions of Education, Admiration of Persons, Worldly Respect, and the like incompetent Motives*, must always be supposed on that side on which the Magistrate is not.

I have taken the Pains here, in a short recapitulation, to give you the view of the *Vsefulness* of Force, your way applied, which you make such a noise with, and lay so much stress on. Whereby I doubt not but it is visible, that its Usefulness and Uselessness laid in the Ballance against each other, the [17] pretended *Vsefulness* is so far from outweighing, that it can neither encourage nor excuse the using of Punishments; which are not lawful to be used in our case without strong probability of Success. But when to its Uselessness Mischief is added, and it is evident that more, much more, harm may be expected from it than good, your own Argument returns upon you. For if it be reasonable to use it, because *it may be serviceable to promote true Religion, and the Salvation of Souls*; it is much more reasonable to let it alone, if it may be more serviceable to the promoting Falshood, and the Perdition of Souls. And therefore you will do well hereafter not to build so much on the *Vsefulness* of

*Force*, apply'd your way, *your indirect and at a distance Vsefulness*, which amounts but to the shadow and possibility of *Vsefulness*, but with an over-balancing weight of Mischief and Harm annexed to it. For upon a just estimate, this *indirect, and at a distance, Vsefulness* can directly go for nothing; or rather less than nothing.

But suppose *Force*, apply'd your way, were as *useful* for the promoting true Religion, as I suppose I have shew'd it to be the contrary; it does not from thence follow that it is lawful, and may be used. It may be very useful in a Parish that has no Teacher, or as bad as none, that a Lay-man who wanted not Abilities for it (for such we may suppose to be) should sometimes preach to them the Doctrine of the Gospel, and stir them up to the Duties of a good Life. And yet this, (which cannot be deny'd may be at least *indirectly, and at a distance, serviceable towards the promoting true Religion and the Salvation of Souls*) you will not (I imagine) allow, for this *Vsefulness*, to be lawful: And that, because he has not Commission and Authority to do it. The same might be said of the Administration of the Sacraments, and any other Function of the Priestly Office. This is just our Case. Granting *Force*, as you say, *indirectly, and at a distance, useful* to the Salvation of Mens Souls; yet it does not therefore follow that it is lawful for the Magistrate to use it: Because, as the Author says, the Magistrate has no Commission or Authority to do so. For however you have put it thus, (as you have fram'd the Author's Argument) *Force is utterly of no use for the promoting of true Religion, and the Salvation of Souls; and therefore no body can have [18] any right to use any Force or Compulsion for the bringing Men to the true Religion;* yet the Author does not, in those Pages you quote, make the latter of these Propositions an Inference barely from the former; but makes use of it as a Truth proved by several Arguments he had before brought to that purpose. For tho it be a good Argument; it is not useful, therefore not fit to be used: yet this will not be good Logick; it is *useful*, therefore any one has a right to use it. For if the *Vsefulness* makes it lawful, it makes it lawful in any hands that can so apply it; and so private Men may use it.

*Who can deny, say you, but that Force indirectly, and at a distance, may do some Service towards the bringing Men to imbrace that Truth, which otherwise they would never acquaint themselves with.* If this be good arguing in you, for the *usefulness of Force towards the saving of Mens Souls;* give me leave to argue after the same fashion. 1. I will suppose, which you will not deny me, that as there are many who take up their Religion upon wrong Grounds, to the indangering of their Souls; so there are many that abandon themselves to the heat of their Lusts, to the indangering of their Souls. 2dly, I will suppose, that as *Force* apply'd your way is apt to make the Inconsiderate consider, so *Force* apply'd another way is as apt to make the Lascivious chaste. The Argument then, in your form, will stand thus: *Who can deny but that Force, indirectly, and at a distance, may, by Castration, do some Service towards bringing Men to imbrace that Chastity, which otherwise they would never acquaint themselves with.* Thus, you see, Castration may, *indirectly, and at a distance, be serviceable towards the Salvation of Mens Souls.* But will you say, from such an usefulness as this, because it may *indirectly, and at a distance,* conduce to the saving of any of his Subjects Souls, that therefore the Magistrate has a right to do it, and may by *Force* make his Subjects Eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven? It is not for the Magistrate, or any body else, upon an Imagination of its *Vsefulness*, to make use of any other means for the Salvation of Mens Souls than what the Author and Finisher of our Faith hath directed. You may be mistaken in what you think *useful.* *Dives* thought, and so perhaps should you and I too, if not better inform'd by the Scriptures, that it would be *useful* to rouze and awaken Men if one [19] should come to them from the Dead. But he was mistaken. And we are told that if Men will not *hearken to Moses and the Prophets,* the means appointed, neither will the Strangeness nor Terror of one coming from the Dead perswade them. If what we are apt to think *useful* were thence to be concluded so, we should (I fear) be obliged to believe the Miracles pretended to by the Church of *Rome.* For Miracles, we know, were once *useful* for the

promoting true Religion, and the Salvation of Souls; which is more than you can say for your Political Punishments: But yet we must conclude that God thinks them not useful now; *unless we will say (that which without Impiety cannot be said) that the Wise and Benign Disposer and Governour of all things does not now use all useful means for promoting his own Honour in the World, and the Good of Souls.* I think this Consequence will hold, as well as what you draw in near the same words.

Let us not therefore be more wise than our Maker, in that stupendious and supernatural Work of our Salvation. The Scripture, that reveals it to us, contains all that we can know, or do, in order to it: and where that is silent, 'tis in us Presumption to direct. When you can shew any Commission in Scripture, for the use of Force, to compel Men to hear, any more than to imbrace the Doctrine of others that differ from them, we shall have reason to submit to it, and the Magistrate have some ground to set up this new way of Persecution. But till then, 'twill be fit for us to obey that Precept of the Gospel, which bids us *take heed what we hear.* So that hearing is not always so useful as you suppose. If it had, we should never [Mark 4.24.](#) have had so direct a Caution against it. 'Tis not any imaginary *Vsefulness*, you can suppose, which can make that a punishable Crime, which the Magistrate was never authorized to meddle with. *Go and teach all Nations*, was a Commission of our Saviour's: But there was not added to it, Punish those that will not hear and consider what you say. No, but *if they will not receive you, shake off the Dust of your Feet;* leave them, and apply your selves to some others. And St. *Paul* knew no other means to make Men hear, but the preaching of the Gospel; as will appear to any one who will read *Romans* the 10th, 14, &c. *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.*

[20]

*You go on, and in favour of your beloved Force, you tell us that it is not* [Pag. 6.](#) *only useful but needful. And here, after having at large, in the four following Pages, set out the Negligence or Aversion, or other hinderances that keep Men from examining, with that application and freedom of Judgment they should, the Grounds upon which they take up and persist in their Religion, you come to conclude Force necessary. Your words are: If Men are generally averse to a due Consideration of things, where they are most* [Pag. 10.](#) *concerned to use it; if they usually take up their Religion without examining it as they ought, and then grow so opinionative and so stiff in their Prejudice, that neither the gentlest Admonitions, nor the most earnest Intreaties, shall ever prevail with them afterwards to do it; what means is there left (besides the Grace of God) to reduce those of them that are got into a wrong Way, but to lay Thorns and Briars in it? That since they are deaf to all Perswasions, the uneasiness they meet with may at least put them to a stand, and incline them to lend an Ear to those who tell them they have mistaken their way, and offer to shew them the right way. What means is there left, say you, but Force. What to do? To reduce Men, who are out of it, into the right way. So you tell us here. And to that, I say, there is other means besides Force; that which was appointed and made use of from the beginning, the Preaching of the Gospel.*

But, *say you*, to make them hear, to make them consider, to make them examine, *there is no other means but Punishment; and therefore it is necessary.*

I answer. 1st, What if God, for Reasons best known to himself, would not have Men compell'd to hear; but thought the good Tidings of Salvation, and the Proposals of Life and Death, Means and Inducements enough to make them hear, and consider, now as well as heretofore? Then your *Means*, your *Punishments*, are not necessary. What if God would have Men left to their freedom in this Point, if they will hear, or if they will forbear, will you constrain them? Thus we are sure he did with his own People: And this when they were in Captivity: And 'tis very like were ill treated for being of a different Religion [Ezek. 11.5, 7.](#)

from the National, and so were punished as Dissenters. Yet then God expected not that those Punishments should force them to hearken, more than at other times: As appears by *Ezek.* 3.11. And this also is the Method of the Gospel. [21] *We are Ambassadors for Christ; as if God did beseech by us, we pray in Christ's stead,* says St. Paul, *2 Cor.* v. 20. If God had thought it necessary to have Men punish'd to make them give Ear, he could have call'd Magistrates to be Spreaders and Ministers of the Gospel, as well as poor Fisher-men, or Paul a Persecutor, who yet wanted not Power to punish where Punishment was necessary, as is evident in *Ananias and Sapphira*, and the incestuous *Corinthian*.

2ly. What if God, foreseeing this Force would be in the hands of Men as *passionate*, as *humoursome*, as *liable to Prejudice and Error* as the rest of their Brethren, did not think it a proper Means to bring Men into *the Right Way*?

3ly. What if there be other Means? Then yours ceases to be necessary, upon the account that there is *no means left*. For you your self allow, *That the Grace of God is another means*. And I suppose you will not deny it to be both a proper and sufficient Means; and, which is more, the only Means; such Means as can work by it self, and without which all the Force in the World can do nothing. God alone can open the Ear that it may hear, and open the Heart that it may understand: and this he does in his own good Time, and to whom he is graciously pleas'd; but not according to the Will and Phancy of Man, when he thinks fit, by Punishments, to compel his Brethren. If God has pronounced against any Person or People, what he did against the Jews, (*Isa.* 6.10.) *Make the Heart of this People fat, and make their Ears heavy, and shut their Eyes; lest they see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and understand with their Hearts, and convert, and be healed:* Will all the Force you can use, be a Means to make them hear and understand, and be converted?

But, Sir, to return your Argument; You see *no other Means left (taking the World as we now find it) to make Men thoroughly and impartially examine a Religion, which they imbraced upon such Inducements as ought to have no sway at all in the Matter, and with little or no examination of the proper Grounds of it.* And thence you conclude the use of Force, by the Magistrate, upon Dissenters, *necessary*. And, I say, *I see no other Means left (taking the World as we now find it, wherein the Magistrates never lay Penalties, for Matters of Religion, [22] upon those of his own Church, nor is it to be expected they ever should;) to make Men of the National Church, any where, thoroughly and impartially examine a Religion, which they imbraced upon such Inducements, as ought to have no sway at all in the Matter, and therefore with little or no examination of the proper Grounds of it.* And therefore, I conclude the use of Force by Dissenters upon Conformists necessary. I appeal to the World, whether this be not as just and natural a Conclusion as yours. Though, if you will have my Opinion, I think the more genuine Consequence is, that Force, to make Men examine Matters of Religion, is not necessary at all. But you may take which of these Consequences you please. Both of them, I am sure, you cannot avoid. It is not for you and me, out of an imagination that they may be *useful*, or are *necessary*, to prescribe means in the great and mysterious Work of Salvation, other than what God himself has directed. God has appointed Force as *useful* and *necessary*, and therefore it is to be used; is a way of Arguing, becoming the Ignorance and Humility of poor Creatures. But I think Force *useful* or *necessary*, and therefore it is to be used; has, methinks, a little too much presumption in it. You ask, *What Means else is there left?* None, say I, to be used by Man, but what God himself has directed in the Scriptures, wherein are contained all the Means and Methods of Salvation. *Faith is the Gift of God.* And we are not to use any other Means to procure this Gift to any one, but what God himself has prescribed. If he has there appointed that any should be forced *to hear those who tell them they have mistaken their way, and offer to shew them the right;* and that they should be punished by *the Magistrate* if they did not; 'twill be past doubt, it is to be made use of. But till that can be done, 'twill be in vain to say *what other Means is there left.* If all the

Means God has appointed, to make Men hear and consider, be *Exhortation in Season and out of Season*, &c. together with Prayer for them, and the Example of Meekness and a good Life; this is all ought to be done, *Whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear*.

[23]

By these means the Gospel at first made it self to be heard through a great part of the World; and in a crooked and perverse Generation, led away by *Lusts, Humours, and Prejudice*, (as well as this you complain of) prevail'd with Men to hear and *imbrace the Truth, and take care of their own Souls*; without the assistance of any such *Force* of the Magistrate, which you now think *needful*. But whatever *Neglect* or *Aversion* there is in some Men, *impartially* and *thoroughly* to be instructed; there will upon a due Examination (I fear) be found no less a *Neglect* and *Aversion* in others, *impartially* and *thoroughly* to instruct them. 'Tis not the talking even general Truths in plain and clear Language; much less a Man's own Fancies in Scholastick or uncommon ways of speaking, an hour or two, once a week, in publick; that is enough to instruct even willing Hearers in the way of Salvation, and the Grounds of their Religion. They are not Politick Discourses which are *the means of right Information in the Foundations of Religion*. For with such, (sometimes venting Antimonarchical Principles, sometimes again preaching up nothing but absolute Monarchy and Passive Obedience, as the one or other have been in vogue and the way to Preferment) have our Churches rung in their turns, so loudly, that *Reasons and Arguments proper and sufficient to convince* Men of the Truth in the controverted Points of Religion, and to direct them in the right way to Salvation, were scarce any were to be heard. But how many, do you think, by Friendly and Christian Debates with them at their Houses, and by the gentle Methods of the Gospel made use of in private Conversation, might have been brought into the Church; who, by railing from the Pulpit, ill and unfriendly Treatment out of it, and other Neglects or Miscarriages of those who claimed to be their Teachers, have been driven from hearing them? Paint the Defects and Miscarriages frequent on this side, as well as you have done those on the other, and then do you, with all the World, consider whether those who you so handsomely declaim against, for being misled by *Education, Passion, Humour, Prejudice, Obstinacy*, &c. do deserve all the Punishment. Perhaps it will be answered; If there be so much toil in it, that particular Persons must be apply'd to, who then will be a Minister? And what if a Lay-man should [24] reply: If there be so much toil in it, that Doubts must be cleared, Prejudices removed, Foundations examined, &c. Who then will be a Protestant? The Excuse will be as good hereafter for the one as for the other.

This new Method of yours, which you say *no body can deny but that indirectly, and at a distance, it does some Service towards bringing Men to embrace the Truth*; was never yet thought on by the most refined Persecutors. Tho indeed it is not altogether unlike the Plea made use of to excuse the late barbarous Usage of the Protestants in *France*, (designed to extirpate the Reformed Religion there) from being a Persecution for Religion. The French King requires all his Subjects to come to Mass. Those who do not, are punished with a witness. For what? Not for their Religion, say the Pleaders for that Discipline, but for disobeying the King's Laws. So by your Rule, the Dissenters (for thither you would, and thither you must come, if you mean any thing) must be punished. For what? Not for their Religion, say you, not for *following the Light of their own Reason, not for obeying the Dictates of their own Consciences*. That you think not fit. For what then are they to be punished? To *make* them, say you, *examine the Religion they have imbraced, and the Religion they have rejected*. So that they are punished, not for having offended against a Law: For there is no Law of the Land that requires them to *examine*. And which now is the fairer Plea, pray judg. You ought, indeed, to have the Credit of this new Invention. All other Law-makers have constantly taken this Method; that where any thing was to be amended, the Fault was first declared, and then Penalties denounced against all those, who after a time set,



should be found guilty of it. This the common Sense of Mankind, and the very Reason of Laws (which are intended not for Punishment, but Correction) has made so plain; that the subtlest and most refined Law-makers have not gone out of this course, nor have the most ignorant and barbarous Nations mist it. But you have out-done *Solon* and *Lycurgus*, *Moses* and our Saviour, and are resolved to be a Law-maker of a way by your self. 'Tis an old and obsolete way, and will not serve your turn, to begin with Warnings and Threats of Penalties to be inflicted on those who do not reform, but continue to [25] do that which you think they fail in. To allow of Impunity to the Innocent, or the opportunity of Amendment to those who would avoid the Penalties, are Formalities not worth your notice. You are for a shorter and surer way. Take a whole Tribe and punish them at all Adventures; whether guilty or no, of the Miscarriage which you would have amended; or without so much as telling them what it is you would have them do, but leaving them to find it out if they can. All these Absurdities are contained in your way of proceeding; and are impossible to be avoided by any one who will punish Dissenters, and only Dissenters, to make them *consider and weigh the Grounds of their Religion, and impartially examine whether it be true or no, and upon what Grounds they took it up*, that so they may find and imbrace the Truth that must save them. But that this new sort of Discipline may have all fair play; let us enquire,

*First*, Who it is you would have be punished. In the place above cited, they are *those who are got into a wrong way, and are deaf to all Perswasions*. If these are the [Pag. 10.](#)

Men to be punished, let a Law be made against them: you have my Consent; and that is the proper course to have Offenders punished. For you do not, I hope, intend to punish any fault by a Law, which you do not name in the Law; nor make a Law against any fault you would not have punished. And now, if you are sincere, and in earnest, and are (as a fair Man should be) for what your words plainly signify, and nothing else; what will such a Law serve for? *Men in the wrong Way are to be punished*: but who are *in the wrong Way* is the Question. You have no more reason to determine it against one, who differs from you; than he has to conclude against you, who differ from him. No, not tho you have the Magistrate and the National Church on your side. For, if to differ from them be to be *in the wrong Way*; you, who are *in the right Way* in *England*, will be *in the wrong Way* in *France*. Every one here must be judg for himself: And your Law will reach no body, till you have convinced him he is *in the wrong Way*. And then there will be no need of Punishment to make him consider; unless you will affirm again, what you have deny'd, and, have Men punished for imbracing the Religion they believe to be [26] true, when it differs from yours or the Publick.

Besides being *in the wrong Way*, those who you would have punished must be such as are *deaf to all Perswasions*. But any such, I suppose, you will hardly find, who hearken to no body, not to those of their own Way. If you mean by *deaf to all Perswasions*, all Perswasions of a contrary Party, or of a different Church; such, I suppose, you may abundantly find in your own Church, as well as else-where; and I presume to them you are so charitable, that you would not have them punished for not lending an Ear to Seducers. For Constancy in the Truth, and Perseverance in the Faith, is (I hope) rather to be encouraged, than by any Penalties check'd in the Orthodox. And your Church, doubtless as well as all others, is Orthodox to it self, in all its Tenets. If you mean by *all Perswasion*, all your Perswasion, or all Perswasion of those of your Communion; you do but beg the Question, and suppose you have a right to punish those who differ from, and will not comply with you.

*Your next words are*, When Men fly from the means of a right [Pag. 11.](#) Information, and will not so much as consider how reasonable it is, throughly and impartially to examine a Religion, which they embraced upon such Inducements as ought to have no sway at all in the matter, and therefore with little or no Examination of the proper Grounds of it; What Human Method can be used, to bring them to act like Men, in an Affair of such Consequence, and to make a wiser and more rational Choice, but that of laying such

Penalties upon them, as may ballance the weight of those Prejudices which inclin'd them to prefer a false Way before the true, and recover them to so much Sobriety and Reflection, as seriously to put the Question to themselves; Whether it be really worth the while to undergo such Inconveniencies, for adhering to a Religion, which, for any thing they know, may be false, or for rejecting another (if that be the case) which, for any thing they know, may be true, till they have brought it to the Bar of Reason, and given it a fair trial there. *Here you again bring in such as prefer a false Way before a true: To which having answered already, I shall here say no more, but that, since our Church will not allow those to be in a false Way who are out of the Church of Rome, because the Church [27] of Rome (which pretends Infallibility) declares hers to be the only true Way; certainly no one of our Church (nor any other, which claims not Infallibility) can require any one to take the Testimony of any Church, as a sufficient Proof of the Truth of her own Doctrine. So that true and false (as it commonly happens, when we suppose them for our selves, or our Party) in effect, signify just nothing, or nothing to the purpose; unless we can think that true or false in England, which will not be so at Rome, or Geneva: and Vice versâ. As for the rest of the Description, of those on whom you are here laying Penalties; I beseech you consider whether it will not belong to any of your Church, let it be what it will. Consider, I say, if there be none in your Church who have imbrac'd her Religion, upon such Inducements as ought to have no sway at all in the matter, and therefore with little or no Examination of the proper Grounds of it; who have not been inclin'd by Prejudices; who do not adhere to a Religion, which for any thing they know may be false, and who have rejected another which for any thing they know may be true. If you have any such in your Communion (and 'twill be an admirable, tho I fear but a little, Flock that has none such in it) consider well what you have done. You have prepared Rods for them, for which I imagine they will con you no Thanks. For to make any tolerable Sense of what you here propose, it must be understood that you would have Men of all Religions punished, to make them consider whether it be really worth the while to undergo such Inconveniencies for adhering to a Religion which for any thing they know may be false. If you hope to avoid that, by what you have said of true and false; and pretend that the supposed preference of the true Way in your Church, ought to preserve its Members from your Punishment; you manifestly trifle. For every Church's Testimony, that it has chosen the true Way, must be taken for it self; and then none will be liable; and your new Invention of Punishment is come to nothing: Or else the differing Churches Testimonies must be taken one for another; and then they will be all out of the true Way, and your Church need Penalties as well as the rest. So that, upon your Principles, they must all or none be punished. Chuse which you please: [28] One of them, I think, you cannot escape.*

What you say in the next words; *Where Instruction is stily refused, and* [Pag. 11.](#) *all Admonitions and Perswasions prove vain and ineffectual;* differs nothing but in the way of expressing, from *Deaf to all Perswasions:* And so that is answer'd already.

In another place, you give us another description of those you think ought to be punished, in these words; *Those who refuse to embrace the Doctrine, and submit to* [Pag. 20.](#) *the Spiritual Government of the proper Ministers of Religion, who by special designation, are appointed to Exhort, Admonish, Reprove, &c.* Here then, those to be punished, *are such who refuse to imbrace the Doctrine, and submit to the Government of the proper Ministers of Religion.* Whereby we are as much still at uncertainty, as we were before, who those are who (by your Scheme, and Laws suitable to it) are to be punished. Since every Church has, as it thinks, its *proper Ministers of Religion.* And if you mean those that refuse to imbrace the Doctrine, and submit to the Government of the Ministers of another Church; then all Men will be guilty, and must be punished; even those of your Church, as well as others. If you mean those who refuse, &c. the Ministers of their own Church; very few will incur your Penalties. But if, by these *Proper Ministers of Religion,* the Ministers of some particular Church are intended; why do you not name it? Why are you so reserv'd, in a Matter wherein,

if you speak not out, all the rest that you say will be to no purpose? Are Men to be punished for *refusing to imbrace the Doctrine, and submit to the Government, of the proper Ministers of the Church of Geneva*? For this time, (since you have declared nothing to the contrary) let me suppose you of that Church: And then, I am sure, that is it that you would name. For of what-ever Church you are, if you think the Ministers of any one Church ought to be hearken'd to, and obey'd, it must be those of your own. There are Persons to be punished, you say. This you contend for, all through your Book; and lay so much stress on it, that you make the Preservation and Propagation of Religion, and the Salvation of Souls, to depend on it: And yet you describe them by so general and equivocal Marks; that, unless it be upon Suppositions which no Body will grant you, [29] I dare say, neither you, nor any Body else, will be able to find one guilty. Pray find me, if you can, a Man whom you can, judicially prove (for he that is to be punished by Law, must be fairly tried) *is in a wrong way*, in respect of his Faith; I mean, who is *deaf to all Perswasions, who flies from all Means of a right Information, who refuses to imbrace the Doctrine, and submit to the Government of the Spiritual Pastors*. And when you have done that, I think, I may allow you what Power you please to punish him; without any prejudice to the Toleration the Author of the Letter proposes.

But why, I pray, all this bogling, all this loose talking, as if you knew not what you meant, or durst not speak it out? Would you be for punishing some Body, you know not whom? I do not think so ill of you. Let me then speak out for you. The Evidence of the Argument has convinced you that Men ought not to be persecuted for their Religion; That the Severities in use amongst Christians cannot be defended; That the Magistrate has not Authority to compel any one to his Religion. This you are forced to yield. But you would fain retain some Power in the Magistrate's Hands to punish Dissenters, upon a new Pretence; *viz.* not for having imbraced the Doctrine and Worship they believe to be True and Right, but for not having well consider'd their own and the Magistrate's Religion. To shew you that I do not speak wholly without-Book; give me leave to mind you of one Passage of yours. The words are, *Penalties to put them upon a serious and impartial examination of the* [Pag. 26.](#) *Controversy between the Magistrates and them*. Though these words be not intended to tell us who you would have punished, yet it may be plainly inferr'd from them. And they more clearly point out whom you aim at, than all the foregoing places, where you seem to (and should) describe them. For they are such as *between whom and the Magistrate there is a Controversy*: That is, in short, who differ from the Magistrate in Religion. And now indeed you have given us a Note by which these you would have punished may be known. We have, with much ado, found at last whom it is we may presume you would have punished. [30] Which in other Cases is usually not very difficult: because there the Faults to be mended easily design the Persons to be corrected. But yours is a new Method, and unlike all that ever went before it.

In the next place; Let us see for what you would have them punished. You tell us, and it will easily be granted you, that not to *examine and weigh impartially, and without Prejudice or Passion*, (all which, for shortness-sake, we will express by this one word *Consider*) *the Religion one embraces or refuses*, is a Fault very common, and very prejudicial to true Religion, and the Salvation of Mens Souls. But Penalties and Punishments are very necessary, say you, to remedy this Evil.

Let us see now how you apply this Remedy. Therefore, say you, let all Dissenters be punished. Why? Have no Dissenters considered of Religion? Or have all Conformists considered? That you your self will not say. Your Project therefore is just as reasonable, as if a Lethargy growing Epidemical in *England*; you should propose to have a Law made to blister and scarify and shave the Heads of all who wear Gowns: Though it be certain that neither all who wear Gowns are Lethargick, nor all who are Lethargick wear Gowns.

—Dii te Damasippe Deaq,  
Verum ob consilium donent tonsore.

For there could not be certainly a more Learned Advice, than that one Man should be pull'd by the Ears, because another is asleep. This, when you have consider'd of it again, (for I find, according to your Principle, all Men have now and then need to be jog'd) you will, I guess, be convinced is not like a fair Physician, to apply a Remedy to a Disease; but, like an engag'd Enemy, to vent one's Spleen upon a Party. Common Sense, as well as Common Justice, requires, that the Remedies of Laws and Penalties should be directed against the Evil that is to be removed, where-ever it be found. And if the Punishment, you think so necessary, be (as you pretend) to cure the Mischief you complain [31] of, you must let it pursue and fall on the Guilty, and those only, in what company soever they are; And not, as you here propose, and is the highest Injustice, punish the Innocent *considering* Dissenter, with the Guilty; and, on the other side, let the *inconsiderate* guilty Conformist scape, with the Innocent. For one may rationally presume that the National Church has some, nay more, in proportion, of those who little consider or concern themselves about Religion, than any Congregation of Dissenters. For Conscience, or the Care of their Souls, being once laid aside; Interest, of course, leads Men into that Society, where the Protection and Countenance of the Government, and hopes of Preferment, bid fairest to all their remaining Desires. So that if careless, negligent, inconsiderate Men in Matters of Religion, *who without being forced would not consider*, are to be roused into a care of their Souls, and a search after Truth, by Punishments; The National Religion, in all Countries, will certainly have a right to the greatest share of those Punishments; at least, not to be wholly exempt from them.

This is that which the Author of the Letter, as I remember complains of; and that justly, *viz. That the pretended Care of Mens Souls always expresses it self, in those who would have Force any way made use of to that end, in very unequal Methods; some Persons being to be treated with Severity, whilst others guilty of the same Faults are not to be so much as touched.* Though you are got pretty well out of the deep Mud, and renounce Punishments directly for Religion; yet you stick still in this part of the Mire; whilst you would have Dissenters punished to make them *consider*, but would not have any thing done to Conformists, tho never so negligent in this point of *considering*. The Author's Letter pleas'd me, because it is equal to all Mankind, is direct, and will, I think, hold every where; which I take to be a good Mark of Truth. For, I shall always suspect that neither to comport with the Truth of Religion, or the Design of the Gospel, which is suited to only some one Country, or Party. What is True and Good in *England*, will be True and Good at *Rome* too, in *China*, or *Geneva*. But whether your great and *only Method* for [32] the propagating of Truth, by bringing the Inconsiderate by Punishments to *consider*, would (according to [Pag. 12.](#) your way of applying your Punishments only to Dissenters from the National Religion) be of use in those Countries, or any where but where you suppose the Magistrate to be in the Right, judg you. Pray, Sir, consider a little, whether Prejudice has not some share in your way of Arguing. For this is your Position; *Men are generally negligent in examining the Grounds of their Religion.* This I grant. But could there be a more wild and incoherent Consequence drawn from it, than this; *Therefore Dissenters must be punished?*

But that being laid aside, let us now see to what end they must be punished. Sometimes it is, *To bring them to consider those Reasons and Arguments which are* [Pag. 5.](#) *proper and sufficient to convince them.* Of what? That it is not easy to set *Grantham Steeple* upon *Paul's Church*? What-ever it be you would have them convinced of, you are not willing to tell us. And so it may be any thing. Sometimes it is, *To incline them to* [Pag. 10.](#) *lend an Ear to those who tell them they have mistaken their Way, and offer to shew them the Right.* Which is, to lend an Ear to all who differ from them in Religion; as well *crafty Seducers*, as others. Whether this be for *the procuring the Salvation of their* [Pag. 27](#) [Pag. 23.](#)

*Souls*, the End for which you say this Force is to be used, judg you. But this I am sure; Whoever will *lend an Ear to all who will tell them they are out of the Way*, will not have much time for any other Business.

Sometimes it is, *To recover Men to so much Sobriety and Reflection*, as [Pag. 11.](#) *seriously to put the Question to themselves, Whether it be really worth their while to undergo such Inconveniences, for adhering to a Religion which, for any thing they know, may be false, or for rejecting another (if that be the case) which, for ought they know, may be true, till they have brought it to the Bar of Reason, and given it a fair Trial there.* Which, in short, amounts to thus much, *viz. To make them examine whether their Religion be True, and so worth the holding, under those Penalties that are annexed to it.* Dissenters are indebted to you, for your great care of their Souls. But what, I beseech you, shall become of those of the National Church, every [33] where (which make far the greater part of Mankind) who have no such Punishments to make them *consider*; who have not this *only Remedy* provided for them; but are lest in that deplorable Condition, you mention, of *being suffer'd quietly*, [Pag. 27.](#) *and without Molestation, to take no care at all of their Souls, or in doing of it to follow their own Prejudices, Humours, or some crafty Seducers:* Need not those of the National Church, as well as others, *bring their Religion to the Bar of Reason, and give it a fair trial there?* And if they need to do so, (as they must, if all National Religions cannot be supposed true) they will always need that which, you say, is the *only means* to make them do so. [Pag. 12.](#) So that if you are sure, as you tell us, that *there is need of your Method*; I am sure, there is as much need of it in National Churches, as any other. And so, for ought I can see, you must either punish them, or let others alone; Unless you think it reasonable that the far greater part of Mankind should constantly be without that Sovereign and only Remedy, which they stand in need of equally with other People.

Sometimes the end for which Men must be punished is, *to dispose them* [Pag. 13.](#) *to submit to Instruction, and to give a fair hearing to the Reasons are offer'd for the inlightning their Minds, and discovering the Truth to them.* If their own words may be taken for it, there are as few Dissenters as Conformists, in any Country, who will not profess they have done, and do this. And if their own word; may not be taken; who, I pray must be judg? You and your Magistrates? If so, then it is plain you punish them not to *dispose them to submit to Instruction*, but to your *Instruction*; not to *dispose them to give a fair hearing to Reasons offer'd for the inlightning their Minds*, but to give an obedient *hearing* to your *Reasons*. If you mean this; it had been fairer and shorter to have spoken out plainly, than thus in fair words, of indefinite Signification, to say that which amounts to nothing. For what Sense is it, to punish a Man *to dispose him to submit to Instruction, and give a fair hearing to Reasons offer'd for the inlightning his Mind, and discovering Truth to him*, who goes two or three times a week several Miles on purpose to do it, and that with the hazard of his Liberty or Purse; Unless you mean your *Instructions*, your *Reasons*, your *Truth*: Which brings us [34] but back to what you have disclaimed, plain Persecution for differing in Religion.

Sometimes this is to be done, *To prevail with Men to weigh Matters of* [Pag. 14.](#) *Religion carefully, and impartially.* Discountenance and Punishment put into one Scale, with Impunity and hopes of Preferment put into the other, is as sure a way to make a Man *weigh impartially*, as it would be for a Prince to bribe and threaten a Judg to make him judg uprightly.

Sometimes it is, *To make Men bethink themselves, and put it out of the* [Pag. 20.](#) *power of any foolish Humor, or unreasonable Prejudice, to alienate them from Truth and their own Happiness.* Add but this, *to put it out of the power of any Humour or Prejudice* of their own, or other Mens; and I grant the end is good, if you can find the means to procure it. But why it should not be put out of the Power of other Mens *Humour* or *Prejudice*, as well as their own, wants (and will always want) a Reason to prove. Would it not, I beseech you, to an

indifferent Bystander, appear *Humour* or *Prejudice*, or some thing as bad; to see Men, who profess a Religion reveal'd from Heaven, and which they own contains all in it necessary to Salvation, exclude Men from their Communion, and persecute them with the Penalties of the Civil Law, for not joining in the use of Ceremonies which are no where to be found in that reveal'd Religion? Would it not appear *Humour* or *Prejudice*, or some such thing, to a sober impartial Heathen; to see Christians exclude and persecute one of the same Faith, for things which they themselves confess to be indifferent, and not worth the contending for? *Prejudice, Humour, Passion, Lusts, Impressions of Education, Reverence and* [Pag. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.](#) *Admiration of Persons, Worldly Respects, Love of their own Choice, and the like,* (to which you justly impute many Mens taking up and persisting in their Religion) are indeed good words; and so, on the other side, are these following; *Truth, the right Way, inlightning, Reason, sound Judgment;* but they signify nothing at all to your purpose, till you can evidently and unquestionably shew the World that the latter (*viz. Truth and the right way, &c.*) are always, and in all Countries, to be found only in the National Church; and the former (*viz. Passion and Prejudice, &c.*) only amongst the Dissenters. But to go on:

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Sometimes it is, *To bring Men to take such care as they ought of their* [Pag. 22.](#) *Salvation.* What care is such as Men ought to take, whilst they are out of your Church, will be hard for you to tell me. But you endeavour to explain your self, in the following words; *that they may not blindly leave it to the choice neither of any other Person, nor yet of their own Lusts and Passions, to prescribe to them what Faith or Worship they shall imbrace.* You do well to make use of Punishment to shut *Passion* out of the choice: because you know fear of suffering is no *Passion*. But let that pass. You would have Men punished, *to bring them to take such care of their Salvation, that they may not blindly leave it to the choice of any other Person to prescribe to them.* Are you sincere? Are you in earnest? Tell me then truly: Did the Magistrate or National Church, any where, or yours in particular, ever punish any Man, to bring him to *have this care* which, you say, *he ought to take of his Salvation?* Did you ever punish any Man, that he might not *blindly leave it to the choice* of his Parish-Priest, or Bishop, or the Convocation, *what Faith or Worship he should imbrace?* 'Twill be suspected care of a Party, or any thing else rather than *care of the Salvation of Mens Souls;* if, having found out so *useful so necessary* a Remedy, *the only Method there is room* [Pag. 12.](#) *left for,* you will apply it but partially, and make trial of it only on those who you have truly least kindness for. This will, unavoidably, give one Reason to imagine, you do not think so well of your Remedy as you pretend, who are so sparing of it to your Friends; but are very free of it to Strangers, who in other things are used very much like Enemies. But your Remedy is like the *Helleboraster,* that grew in the Woman's Garden, for the cure of Worms in her Neighbours Children: For truly it wrought too roughly, to give it to any of her own. Methinks your Charity, in your present Persecution, is much what as prudent, as justifiable, as that good Woman's. I hope I have done you no Injury, that I here suppose you of the Church of *England.* If I have, I beg your Pardon. It is no offence of Malice, I I assure you: For I suppose no worse of you, than I confess of my self.

Sometimes this Punishment that you contend for is, *to bring Men to act* [Pag. 22.](#) *according to Reason, and sound Judgment.*

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*Tertius è Coelo cecidit Cato.*

This is Reformation indeed. If you can help us to it, you will deserve Statues to be erected to you, as to the Restorer of decay'd Religion. But if all Men have not *Reason and sound Judgment,* will Punishment put it into them? Besides, concerning this matter Mankind

is so divided, that he *acts according to Reason and sound Judgment at Auspurg*, who would be judged to do the quite contrary at *Edinburgh*. Will Punishment make Men know what is *Reason and sound Judgment*? If it will not, 'tis impossible it should make them *act according to it*. *Reason and sound Judgment* are the *Elixir* it self, the universal Remedy: And you may as reasonably punish Men to bring them to have the Philosopher's Stone, as to *bring them to act according to Reason and sound Judgment*.

Sometimes it is, *To put Men upon a serious and impartial Examination* Pag. 26. *of the Controversy between the Magistrate and them, which is the way for them to come to the Knowledg of the Truth*. But what if the Truth be on neither side (as I am apt to imagine you will think it is not, where neither the Magistrate nor the Dissenter is either of them of your Church) how will the *examining the Controversy between the Magistrate and him be the way to come to the Knowledg of the Truth*? Suppose the Controversy between a Lutheran and a Papist; or, if you please, between a Presbyterian Magistrate and a Quaker Subject. *Will the examining the Controversy between the Magistrate and the Dissenting Subject, in this case bring him to the Knowledg of the Truth*? If you say yes, then you grant one of these to have the Truth on his side. For the examining the Controversy between a Presbyterian and a Quaker, leaves the Controversy either of them has with the Church of *England*, or any other Church, untouched. And so one, at least, of those being already *come to the Knowledg of the Truth*, ought not to be put under your Discipline of Punishment; which is only to *bring him to the Truth*. If you say no, and that *the examining the Controversy between the Magistrate and the Dissenter, in this case, will not bring him to the Knowledg of the Truth*; you confess your Rule to be salse, and your Method to no purpose.

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To conclude, your System is, in short, this. You would have all Men (laying aside *Prejudice, Humour, Passion, &c.*) *examine the Grounds of their Religion, and search for the Truth*. This, I confess, is heartily to be wish'd. The means that you propose to make Men do this, is that Dissenters should be punished, to make them do so. It is as if you had said: Men generally are guilty of a Fault; therefore let one Sect, who have the ill luck to be of an Opinion different from the Magistrate, be punished. This at first sight shocks any who has the least spark of Sense, Reason or Justice. But having spoken of this already, and concluding that upon second thoughts, you your self will be ashamed of it; let us consider it put so as to be consistent with common Sense, and with all the advantage it can bear; and then let us see what you can make of it. *Men are negligent in examining the Religions they imbrace, refuse, or persist in; therefore it is fit they should be punished to make them do it*. This is a Consequence indeed which may, without defiance to common Sense, be drawn from it. This is the use, the only use, which you think Punishment can *indirectly, and at a distance*, have, in matters of Religion. You would have Men by Punishments driven to examine. What? *Religion*. To what end? *To bring them to the Knowledg of the Truth*. But I answer.

*First*, Every one has not the Ability to do this.

*Secondly*, Every one has not the opportunity to do it.

Would you have every poor Protestant, for Example, in the *Palatinate*, *examine thoroughly* whether the Pope be infallible, or Head of the Church; whether there be a Purgatory; whether Saints are to be pray'd to, or the Dead pray'd for; whether the Scripture be the only Rule of Faith; whether there be no Salvation out of the Church; and whether there be no Church without Bishops; and an hundred other Questions in Controversy between the Papists and those Protestants; and when he had master'd these, go on to fortify himself against the Opinions and Objections of other Churches he differs from? This, which is no small Task, must be done; before a Man can have *brought his Religion to the Bar of Reason, and given it*

*fair trial there.* And if you will punish Men till this be done; the Country-man must leave off plowing and sowing, and betake himself to the Study of Greek and Latin; and the Artisan [38] must sell his Tools, to buy Fathers and School-men, and leave his Family to starve. If something less than this will satisfy you, pray tell me what is enough. Have they considered and examined enough, if they are satisfied themselves where the Truth lies? If this be the limits of their Examination, you will find few to punish; unless you will punish them to make them do what they have done already. For, however he came by his Religion, there is scarce any one to be found who does not own himself satisfied that he is in the right. Or else, must they be punished to make them consider and examine till they imbrace that which you choose for Truth? If this be so, what do you but in effect choose for them, when yet you would have Men punished, *To bring them to such a care of their Souls that no other Person might choose for them?* If it be Truth in general you would have them by Punishments driven to seek; that is to offer matter of Dispute, and not a Rule of Discipline. For to punish any one to make him seek till he find Truth, without a Judg of Truth, is to punish for you know not what; and is all one as if you should whip a Scholar to make him find out the square Root of a Number you do not know. I wonder not therefore that you could not resolve with your self what degree of Severity you would have used, nor how long continued; when you dare not speak out directly whom you would have punished, and are far from being clear to what end they should be under Penalties.

Consonant to this uncertainty, of whom, or what, to be punished; you tell us, *That there is no question of the Success of this Method. Force will certainly do, if duly proportioned to the design of it.* Pag. 12.

What, I pray, is the *design of it?* I challenge you, or any Man living, out of what you have said in your Book, to tell me directly what it is. In all other Punishments that ever I heard of yet, till now that you have taught the World a new Method, the Design of them has been to cure the Crime they are denounced against; and so I think it ought to be here. What I beseech you is the Crime here? Dissenting? That you say not, any where, is a Fault. Besides you tell us, *That the Magistrate hath not an Authority to compel any one to his Religion:* And that *you do not require that Men should [39] have no Rule but the Religion of the Country.* And the *Power you ascribe to the Magistrate is given him to bring Men, not to his own, but to the true Religion.* If Dissenting be not the Fault; is it that a Man does not examine his own Religion, and the Grounds of it? Is that the Crime your Punishments are designed to cure? Neither that dare you say; lest you displeas more than you satisfy with your new Discipline. And then again, (as I said before) you must tell us how far you would have them examin, before you punish them for not doing it. And I imagine, if that were all we required of you, it would be long enough before you would trouble us with a Law, that should prescribe to every one how far he was to examine Matters of Religion; wherein if he fail'd and came short, he was to be punished; if he perform'd and went in his Examination to the Bounds set by the Law, he was acquitted and free. Sir, when you consider it again, you will perhaps think this a case reserv'd to the Great Day, when the Secrets of all Hearts shall be laid open. For I imagine it is beyond the Power or Judgment of Man, in that variety of Circumstances, in respect of Parts, Tempers, Opportunities, Helps, &c. Men are in, in this World, to determine what is every one's Duty in this great Business of Search, Enquiry, Examination, or to know when any one has done it. That which makes me believe you will be of this Mind, is, that where you undertake for *the success of this Method, if rightly used,* it is with a Limitation, *upon such as are not altogether incurable.* So that when your Remedy is prepared according to Art, (which Art is yet unknown) and rightly apply'd, and given in a due Dose, (all which are Secrets) it will then infallibly cure. Whom? All that are not incurable by it. And so will a Pippin Posset, eating Fish in Lent, or a Presbyterian Lecture, certainly cure all that are not incurable by them. For I am sure you do not mean it will cure all, but those who are absolutely incurable;



Because you your self allow one Means left of Cure, when yours will not do, viz. *The Grace of God*. Your words are, *What Means is there left (except the Grace of God)* Pag. 10. *to reduce them, but to lay Thorns and Briars in their Way*. And here also, in the place we were considering, you tell us, *The Incurable are to be left to God*. Whereby, Pag. 12. if you mean they are to be left to those Means [40] he has ordained for Mens Conversion and Salvation, yours must never be made use of: For he indeed has prescribed Preaching and Hearing of his Word; but as for those who will not hear, I do not find any where that he has commanded they should be compell'd or beaten to it.

There is a third Thing that you are as tender and reserv'd in, as either naming the Criminal; to be punished, or positively telling us the End for which they should be punished: And that is with what sort of Penalties, what degree of Punishment they should be forced. You are indeed so gracious to them, that you renounce the *Severities* and Penalties hitherto made use of. You tell us, they should be but *moderate Penalties*. But if we ask you what are moderate Penalties, you confess you cannot tell us. So that by *Moderate*, Pag. 24. here, you yet mean nothing. You tell us, the *outward Force to be apply'd*, Pag. 15. *should be duly temper'd*. But what that due Temper is, you do not, or cannot say; and so in effect, it signifies just nothing. Yet if in this you are not plain and direct, all the rest of your Design will signify nothing. For it being to have some Men, and to some End, punished; Yet if it cannot be found what Punishment is to be used, is (notwithstanding all you have said) utterly useless. *You tell us modestly, That to determine precisely the just* Pag. 12. *measure of the Punishment, will require some consideration*. If the Faults were precisely determined, and could be proved, it would require no more consideration to determine the Measure of the Punishment, in this, than it would in any other case, where those were known. But where the Fault is undesigned, and the Guilt not to be proved, (as I suppose it will be found in this present Business of *examining*) it will without doubt *require Consideration* to proportion the Force to the Design. Just so much Consideration as it will require to fit a Coat to the Moon, or proportion a Shooe to the Feet of those who inhabit her. For to proportion a Punishment to a Fault that you do not name, (and so we in Charity ought to think you do not yet know) and a Fault that when you have named it, will be imposible to be proved who are or are not guilty of it; will I suppose *require as much Consideration* as to fit a Shooe to Feet whose Size and Shape are not known.

[41]

However, you offer some measures whereby to regulate your Punishments; which when they are looked into, will be found to be just as good as none; they being impossible to be any rule in the case. The first is, *So much Force, or such Penalties as are ordinarily sufficient to prevail with men of common discretion, and not desperately* P. 14. *perverse and obstinate, to weigh matters of Religion carefully and impartially, and without which ordinarily they will not do this*. Where it is to be observed:

First, That who are these men of *Common Discretion*, is as hard to know, as to know what is a fit degree of Punishment in the case; and so you do but regulate one Uncertainty by another. Some men will be apt to think, that he who will not *weigh matters of Religion*, which are of infinite concernment to him, without Punishment, cannot in reason be thought a man of *Common Discretion*. Many Women of *Common Discretion* enough to manage the ordinary Affairs of their Families, are not able to read a Page in an ordinary Author, or to understand and give an account what it means, when read to them. Many men of *Common Discretion* in their Callings, are not able to judg when an Argument is conclusive or no; much less to trace it through a long train of Consequences. *What Penalties shall be sufficient to prevail* with such (who upon examination I fear will not be found to make the least part of Mankind) *to examine and weigh matters of Religion carefully and impartially?* The Law allows all to have *Common Discretion*, for whom it has not provided Guardians or *Bedlam*. So that, in effect,

your men of *Common Discretion*, are all men, not judg'd Ideots or Madmen: And *Penalties sufficient to prevail with men of Common Discretion*, are Penalties sufficient to prevail with all men, but Ideots and Mad-men. Which what a measure it is to regulate Penalties by, let all men of Common Discretion judg.

Secondly, You may be pleased to consider, That all men of the same degree of *Discretion*, are not apt to be moved by the same degree of Penalties. Some are of a more yielding, some of a more stiff Temper; and what is sufficient to prevail on one, is not half enough to move the other; tho both men of *Common Discretion*. So that *Common Discretion* will be here of no use to determine the measure of Punishment: Especially, when in the same Clause you except men *desperately perverse and obstinate*; who are as hard to be known, as what you seek: viz. the just proportions [42] of Punishments necessary *to prevail with men to consider, examine, and weigh matters of Religion*; wherein, if a man tells you he has *consider'd*, he has *weigh'd*, he has *examin'd*, and so goes on in his former course, 'tis impossible for you ever to know whether he has done his duty, or whether he be *desperately perverse and obstinate*. So that this exception signifies just nothing.

There are many things in your use of Force and Penalties, different from any I ever met with elsewhere. One of them, this Clause of yours, concerning the measure of Punishments, now under consideration, offers me: Wherein you proportion your Punishments only to the yielding and corrigible, not to the perverse and obstinate; contrary to the Common Discretion which has hitherto made Laws in other cases, which levels the Punishments against refractory Offenders, and never spares them because they are obstinate. This however I will not blame, as an oversight in you. Your new method, which aims at such impracticable and inconsistent things as Laws cannot bear, nor Penalties be useful to, forced you to it. The Uselessness, absurdity, and unreasonableness of great *Severities*, you had acknowledg'd in the foregoing Paragraphs. Dissenters you would have brought *to consider* P. 13, 14. *by moderate Penalties*. They lye under them; but whether they have consider'd or no (for that you cannot tell), they still continue Dissenters. What is to be done now? Why, *the incurable are to be left to God*, as you tell us, P. 12. Your Punishments were not meant *to prevail on the desperately perverse and obstinate*, as you tell us here. And so whatever be the success, your Punishments are however justified.

You have given us in another place, something like another boundary to your *moderate Penalties*: But when examined, it proves just like the rest, trifling only, in good words, so put together as to have no direct meaning; an art very much in use amongst some sort of Learned Men. The words are these; *Such Penalties as may not tempt persons who* P. 26. *have any concern for their Eternal Salvation, (and those who have none, ought not to be considered) to renounce a Religion which they believe to be true, or profess one which they do not believe to be so.* If by *any concern*, you mean a true *concern for their Eternal Salvation*, by this rule you may make your Punishments as great as you please; and all the severities you have disclaim'd may be brought in play again: For none of those will be able to make a man, *who is truly concerned for his eternal Salvation*, [43] *renounce a Religion he believes to be true, or profess one he does not believe to be so.* If by *those who have any concern*, you mean such who have some faint wishes for Happiness hereafter, and would be glad to have things go well with them in the other world, but will venture nothing in this world for it; These the moderateest Punishments you can imagine, will make change their Religion. If by *any concern*, you mean whatever may be between these two; the degrees are so infinite, that to proportion your Punishments by that, is to have no measure of them at all.

One thing I cannot but take notice of in this passage, before I leave it: And that is that you say here, *Those who have no concern for their Salvation deserve not to be considered.* In other parts of your Letter you pretend to have compassion on the careless, and provide remedies for them: But here, of a sudden, your Charity fails you; and you give them up to

Eternal Perdition, without the least regard, the least pity; and say *they deserve not to be considered*. Our Saviour's Rule was, *The sick, and not the whole, need a Physician*. Your Rule here is, Those that are careless are not to be considered, but are to be left to themselves. This would seem strange, if one did not observe what drew you to it. You perceiv'd that if the Magistrate was to use no Punishments but such as would make no body change their Religion, he was to use none at all: For the careless would be brought to the National Church, with any slight Punishments; and when they are once there, you are, it seems, satisfied, and look no further after them. So that by your own measures, *if the Careless, and those who have no concern for their Eternal Salvation*, are to be regarded and taken care of; if the Salvation of their Souls is to be promoted there is to be no Punishments used at all: And therefore you leave them out as not to be *considered*.

There remains yet one thing to be enquired into, concerning the measure of the Punishments, and that is the length of their duration. *Moderate Punishments* that are continued, that men find no end of, know no way out of, sit heavy, and become immoderately uneasie. *Dissenters* you would have *punished, to make them consider*. Your Penalties have had the effect on them you intended; they have made them consider; and they have done their utmost in considering. What now must be done with them? They must be punish'd on; for they are still Dissenters. If it were just, if you had reason at first to punish a Dissenter, to [44] make him *consider*, when you did not know but that he had *considered* already; it is as just, and you have as much reason to punish him on, even when he has perform'd what your Punishments was designed for, when he has *considered*, but yet remains a Dissenter. For I may justly suppose, and you must grant, that a man may remain a Dissenter, after all the consideration your *moderate Penalties* can *bring* him to; when we see greater Punishments, even those *Severities* you disown, as too great, are not able to make men *consider* so far as to be *convinced*, and brought over to the National Church. If your Punishments may not be inflicted on men, to make them *consider*, who have or may have considered already for ought you know; then Dissenters are never to be once punished, no more than any other sort of men. If Dissenters are to be punished, to make them *consider*, whether they have considered or no; then their Punishments, tho they do *consider*, must never cease, as long as they are Dissenters; which whether it be to punish them only to bring them to consider, let all men judg. This I am sure; Punishments, in your method, must either never begin upon Dissenters, or never cease. And so pretend, Moderation as you please, the Punishments which your method requires, must be either very immoderate, or none at all.

*And now, you having yielded to our Author, and that upon very good reasons which you your self urge, and which I shall set down in your own words*, That to prosecute men with Fire and Sword, or to deprive them of their Estates, to maim them with [P. 13, 14](#) corporal Punishments, to starve and torture them in noisom Prisons, and in the end even to take away their lives, to make them Christians, is but an ill way of expressing mens desire of the Salvation of those whom they treat in this manner. And that it will be very difficult to perswade men of sense, that he who with dry eyes and satisfaction of mind can deliver his Brother to the Executioner, to be burnt alive, does sincerely and heartily concern himself to save that Brother from the Flames of Hell in the world to come. And that these Methods are so very improper, in respect to the Design of them, that they usually produce the quite contrary effect. For whereas all the use which Force can have for the advancing true Religion, and the Salvation of Souls, is (as has already been shewed) by disposing men to submit to Instruction, and to give a fair hearing to the Reasons which are offered, for the enlightning their minds, and discovering the Truth to them; these Cruelties have the misfortune to be commonly look'd upon as so just a prejudice [45] against any Religion that uses them, as makes it needless to look any further into it; and to tempt men to reject it, as both false and detestable, without ever vouchsafing to consider the rational Grounds and Motives of it. This effect they seldom fail to work upon the Sufferers of them; and as to the

Spectators, if they be not before-hand well instructed in those Grounds and Motives, they will be much tempted likewise, not only to entertain the same opinion of such a Religion, but withal to judg much more favourably of that of the Sufferers; who they will be apt to think, would not expose themselves to such extremities, which they might avoid by compliance, if they were not throughly satisfied of the Justice of their Cause. *And upon these Reasons you conclude, That these Severities are utterly unapt and improper for the bringing men to embrace that Truth which must save them. Again, you having acknowledged, That the Authority of the Magistrate is not an Authority to compel any one to his* P. 21.

Religion. *And again, That the rigor of Laws, and force of Penalties are not capable to convince and change mens minds. And yet further, That you do not require* P. 24.

that men should have no rule, but the Religion of the Court; or that they P. 25.

should be put under a necessity to quit the light of their own Reason, and oppose the dictates of their own consciences, and blindly resign up themselves to the will of their Governors; but that the Power you ascribe to the Magistrate, is given him to bring man not to his own, but to the true Religion *Now you having, I say, granted this; whereby you directly condemn and abolish all Laws that have been made here, or any where else (that ever I heard of) to compel men to Conformity, I think the Author, and whosoever else are most for Liberty of Conscience, might be content with the Toleration you allow, by condemning the Laws about Religion, now in force; and rest satisfied, until you had made your new Method consistent and practicable, by telling the World plainly and directly;*

1. Who are to be Punished.
2. For what.
3. With what Punishments.
4. How long.
5. What Advantage to true Religion it would be, if Magistrates every where did so punish.
6. And lastly, Whence the Magistrate had Commission to do so.

When you have done this plainly and intelligibly, without keeping [46] in the uncertainty of general expressions, and without supposing all along your Church in the right, and your Religion the true; (which can no more be allow'd to you in this case, whatever your Church or Religion be, than it can be to a Papist or a *Lutheran*, a Presbyterian, or an Anabaptist; nay no more to you, than it can be allowid to a *Jew* or a *Mahometan*); when, I say, you have by settling these Points, fram'd the parts of your new Engine, set it together, and shew'd that it will work, without doing more harm than good in the world; I think then men may be content to submit to it. But imagining this, and an Engine to shew the perpetual Motion, will be found out together; I think Toleration in a very good state, notwithstanding your answer; wherein you having said so much for it, and for ought I see, nothing against it; unless an impracticable Chimera be, in your opinion, something mightily to be apprehended.

We have now seen and examined the main of your Treatise; and therefore I think I might here end, without going any farther. But, that you may not think your self or any of your Arguments neglected, I will go over the remainder, and give you my thoughts on every thing I shall meet with in it, that seems to need any answer.

In one place you argue against the Author thus: *If then the Author's Fourth Proposition, as you call it, viz. That Force is of no use for promoting true Religion and the Salvation of Souls, be not true (as perhaps by this time it appears it is not) then the last Proposition, which is built upon it, must fall with it:* Which last Proposition is this, viz. *That no body can have any right to use any outward Force or Compulsion, to bring men to the true Religion, and so to Salvation.* If this Proposition were built, as you alledg, upon that which you call his fourth, then indeed if the fourth fell, this built upon it would fall with it. But that not being the Author's Proposition, (as I have shew'd) nor this built wholly on it, but on other Reasons,

(as I have already prov'd, and any one may see in several parts of his Letter, particularly P. 7, 8, and 9.) what you alledg falls of it self.

The business of the next Paragraph is to prove, That if *Force be useful, then somebody must certainly have a right to use it*. The first Argument you go about to prove it by, is this, That *Usefulness is as good an Argument to prove there is somewhere a right to use it, as Uselessness is to prove no body has such a right*. If you consider the [47] things of whose Usefulness or Uselessness we are speaking, you will perhaps be of another mind. It is Punishment, or Force used in punishing. Now all Punishment is some evil, some inconvenience, some suffering; by taking away or abridging some good thing, which he who is punished has otherwise a right to. Now to justify the bringing any such evil upon any man, two things are requisite. First, That he who does it has Commission and Power so to do. Secondly, That it be directly useful for the procuring some greater good. Whatever Punishment one man uses to another, without these two conditions, whatever he may pretend, proves an injury and injustice, and so of right ought to have been let alone. And therefore, though Usefulness (which is one of the conditions that makes Punishments just) when it is away, may hinder Punishments from being lawful in any bodies hands; yet Usefulness, when present (being but one of those conditions) cannot give the other, which is a Commission to punish; without which also Punishment is unlawful. From whence it follows, That tho useless Punishment be unlawful from any hand; yet useful Punishment from every hand is not lawful. A man may have the Stone, and it may be useful (more than *indirectly and at a distance useful*) to him to be cut; but yet this usefulness will not justify the most skilful Chirurgeon in the world, by Force to make him endure the pain and hazard of Cutting; because he has no commission, no right, without the Patients own consent to do so. Nor is it a good Argument, Cutting will be useful to him; therefore there is a right somewhere to cut him, whether he will or no. Much less will there be an Argument for any right, if there be only a possibility that it may prove useful *indirectly* and by accident.

Your other Argument is this; *If Force or Punishment be of necessary use, then it must be acknowledged, that there is a right somewhere to use it; unless we will say (what without impiety cannot be said), That the wise and benign Disposer and Governour of all things has not furnished mankind with competent means for the promoting his own honour in the world, and the good of souls*. If your way of arguing be true; 'tis demonstration, that Force is not of necessary use. For I argue thus, in your form. We must acknowledg Force not to be of necessary use; *unless we will say (what without impiety cannot be said) that the wise Disposer and Governour of all things did not, for above 300 years after Christ, furnish his Church with competent [48] means for promoting his own honour in the world, and the good of souls*. 'Tis for you to consider whether these Arguments be conclusive or no. This I am sure; the one is as conclusive as the other. But if your supposed *Usefulness* places a right somewhere to use it, pray tell me in whose hands it places it in *Turky, Persia, or China*, or any Country where Christians of different Churches live under a Heathen or *Mahometan* Sovereign? And if you cannot tell me in whose hands it places it there, (as I believe you will find it pretty hard to do) there are then (it seems) some places where (upon your supposition of the necessary usefulness of Force) *the wise and benign Governour and Disposer of all things, has not furnish'd man with competent means for promoting his own honour, and the good of Souls*; unless you will grant, *that the wise and benign Disposer and Governour of all things, hath for the promoting of his honour, and the good of souls, placed a power in Mahometan or Heathen Princes, to punish Christians, to bring them to consider Reasons and Arguments proper to convince them*. But this is the advantage of so sine an invention, as that of Force *doing some Service indirectly and at a distance*; which Usefulness, if we may believe you, places a right in *Mahometan* or *Pagan* Princes hands, to use force upon Christians; for fear lest mankind, in those Countries, should be *unfurnish'd with means for the promoting God's honour and the good of souls*. For thus you argue; *If there be so great*

*use of Force, then there is a right somewhere to use it. And if there be such* P. 15.

*a right somewhere, where should it be but in the Civil Sovereign? Who can* P. 16.

deny now, but that you have taken care, great care, for the promoting of Truth and the Christian Religion? But yet it is as hard for me, I confess, and I believe for others, to conceive how you should think to do any service to Truth and the Christian Religion, by putting a right into *Mahometans* or Heathens hands to punish Christians; as it was for you *to conceive how the Author should think to do any service to Truth, and the Christian Religion*, by exempting the Professors of it from Punishment every where; Since there are more Pagan, *Mahometan*, and erroneous Princes in the world, than Orthodox; Truth, and the Christian Religion (*taking the world as we find it*) is sure to be more punished and suppress'd, than Error and Falshood.

The Author having endeavour'd to shew that no body at all, of any rank or condition, had a power to punish, torment, or use any man ill, for matters of Religion; you tell us *you do not yet understand* [49] *why Clergy-men are not as capable of such Power as other Men*. I do not remember that the Author any where, by excepting Ecclesiasticks more P. 17. than others, gave you any occasion to shew your concern in this point. Had he foreseen that this would have touch'd you so nearly, and that you set your heart so much upon the clergy Power of punishing; 'tis like he would have told you, he thought Ecclesiasticks as capable of it as any Men; and that if forwardness and diligence in the exercise of such Power may recommend any to it, Clergy-men in the Opinion of the World stand fairest for it. However, you do well to put in your claim for them, tho the Author excludes them no more than their Neighbours. Nay, they must be allow'd the pretence of the fairest Title. For I never read of any severities that were to bring Men to Christ, but those of the Law of *Moses* ; which is therefore call'd a *Pedagogue*. (*Gal. 3 14.*) And the next Verse tells us, *That after that Faith is come, we are no longer under a School-master*. But yet if we are still to be driven to Christ by a Rod, I shall not envy them the pleasure of wielding it: only to desire them, when they have got the Scourge into their Hands, to remember our Saviour, and follow his Example, who never us'd it but once; and that they would, like him, imploy it only to drive vile and scandalous Trafickers for the things of this World out of their Church, rather than to drive whoever they can into it. Whether that latter be not a proper method to make their Church what our Saviour there pronounced of the Temple, they who use it were best look. For in matters of Religion, none are so easy to be so driven, as those who have nothing of Religion at all; and next to them, the Vicious, the Ignorant, the Worldling, and the Hypocrite; Who care for no more of Religion but the Name, nor no more of any Church, but its Prosperity and Power; and who, not unlike those describ'd by our Saviour, *Luke 20.47.*) for a shew come to, or cry up the Prayers of the Church, *That they may devour Widows*, and other helpless People's *houses*. I say not this of the serious Professors of any Church, who are in earnest in matters of Religion. Such I value, who conscientiously, and out of a sincere Perswasion, imbrace any Religion, tho different from mine, and in a way, I think, mistaken. But no body can have reason to think otherwise than what I have said, of those who are wrought upon to be of any Church, by secular hopes and fears. Those truly, *place Trade* [50] *above all other Considerations*, and Merchandize with Religion it self, who regulate their choice by worldly Profit and Loss.

You endeavour to prove, against the Author, that Civil Society is not instituted only for Civil Ends, *i. e.* The *procuring, preserving, and advancing* Mens Civil Interests. Your words are: *I must say, that our Author does but beg the Question, when he affirms* P. 18.

*that the Commonwealth is constituted only for the procuring, preserving, and advancing of the Civil Interests of the Members of it. That Commonwealths are instituted for these Ends, no Man will deny. But if there be any other ends besides these, attainable by the Civil Society and Government, there is no reason to affirm, That these are the only ends, for which they are designed. Doubtless Commonwealths are instituted for the attaining of all the Benefits which*

*Political Government can yield. And therefore, if the Spiritual and Eternal Interests of Men may any way be procured or advanced by Political Government, the procuring and advancing those Interests must in all reason be reckon'd among the Ends of Civil Societies, and so, consequently, fall within the compass of the Magistrates Jurisdiction.* I have set down your words at large, to let the Reader see, That you of all Men had the least reason to tell the Author he does but beg the Question; unless you mean to justify your self by the pretence of his Example. You argue thus. *If there be any other Ends attainable by Civil Society, then Civil Interests are not the only Ends for which Commonwealths are instituted.* And how do you prove there be other ends? Why thus. *Doubtless Commonwealths are instituted for the attaining all the Benefits which Political Government can yeild.* Which is as clear a Demonstration, as *Doubtless* can make it to be. The Question is, Whether Civil Society be instituted only for Civil Ends? You say, No; and your proof is, Because, *Doubtless*, it is instituted for other Ends. If I now say, *Doubtless* this is a good argument; is not every one bound without more ado to admit it for such? If not, *Doubtless* you are in danger to be thought to beg the Question.

But notwithstanding you say here, That the Author begs the Question; In the following Page you tell us, That *the Author offer three Considerations which seem to him abundantly to demonstrate, [51] that the Civil Power neither can, nor ought in any manner to be extended to the Salvation of Souls.* He does not then *beg the Question.* For the Question being, *Whether Civil Interest be the only End of Civil Society,* he gives this reason for the Negative; *That Civil Power has nothing to do with the Salvation of Souls;* and offers *three Considerations* for the proof of it. For it will always be a good consequence, that, if the Civil Power has nothing to do with the Salvation of Souls, *then Civil Interest is the only End of Civil Society.* And the reason of it is plain; Because a Man having no other Interest, but either in this World, or the World to come; if the End of Civil Society reach not to a Man's Interest in the other World, (all which is comprehended in the Salvation of his Soul) 'tis plain, that the sole End of Civil Society is Civil Interest, under which the Author comprehends the good things of this World.

And now let us examine the Truth of your main Position, viz. *That Civil Society is instituted for the attaining all the Benefits that it may any way yeild.* Which, if true, then this Position must be true, viz. *That all Societies whatsoever are instituted for the attaining all the Benefits that they may any way yeild;* there being nothing peculiar to Civil Society in the Case, why that Society should be *instituted for the attaining all the Benefits it can any way yeild,* and other Societies not. By which Argument it will follow, That all Societies are instituted for one and the same End: *i. e.* for the *attaining all the Benefits that they can any way yeild.* By which account there will be no difference between Church and State; A Commonwealth and an Army; or between a Family and the *East-India* Company; all which have hitherto been thought distinct sorts of Societies, instituted for different Ends. If your Hypothesis hold good, one of the Ends of the Family must be to Preach the Gospel, and Administer the Sacraments; and one business of an Army to teach Languages, and propagate Religion; because these are Benefits *some way or other attainable* by those Societies: Unless you take want of Commission and Authority to be a sufficient Impediment: And that will be so too in other cases.

'Tis a benefit to have true Knowledge and Philosophy imbraced and assented to, in any Civil Society or Government. But will you say, therefore, that it is a benefit to the Society, or one of [52] the Ends of Government, that all who are not Peripateticks should be punished, to make Men find out the Truth, and profess it. This indeed might be thought a fit way to make some Men imbrace the Peripatetick Philosophy, but not a proper way to find the Truth. For, perhaps the Peripatetick Philosophy may not be true; perhaps a great many have not time, nor Parts to Study it; perhaps a great many who have studied it, cannot be convinced of the truth

of it: And therefore it cannot be a benefit to the Commonwealth, nor one of the Ends of it, that these Members of the Society should be disturb'd, and diseas'd to no purpose, when they are guilty of no fault. For just the same reason, it cannot be a benefit to Civil Society, that Men should be punished in *Denmark*, for not being *Lutherans*; in *Geneva*, for not being *Calvinists*; and in *Vienna*, for not being Papists; as a means to make them find out the true Religion. For so, upon your grounds, Men must be treated in those places, as well as in *England*, for not being of the Church of *England*. And then, I beseech you, consider the great benefit will accrue to Men in Society by this method; And I suppose it will be a hard thing for you to prove, That ever Civil Governments were instituted to punish Men for not being of this, or that Sect in Religion; however by accident, *indirectly, and at a distance*, it may be an occasion to one perhaps of a thousand, or an hundred, to study that Controversy, which is all you expect from it. If it be a *Benefit*, pray tell me what *Benefit* it is. A Civil *Benefit* it cannot be. For Mens Civil Interests are disturb'd, injur'd, and impair'd by it. And what *Spiritual Benefit* that can be to any multitude of Men, to be punished for Dissenting from a false or erroneous Profession, I would have you find out: unless it be a Spiritual Benefit to be in danger to be driven into a wrong way. For if in all differing Sects, one is in the wrong, 'tis a hundred to one but that from which one Dissents, and is punished for Dissenting from, is the wrong.

I grant it is past doubt, That the Nature of Man is so covetous of Good, that no one would have excluded from any Action he does, or from any Institution he is concerned in, any manner of Good or Benefit, that it might any way yeild. And if this be your meaning, it will not be denied you. But then you speak very improperly, or rather very mistakenly, if you call such benefits as may any way (i. e. *indirectly, and at a distance* [53] or by accident) be attain'd by Civil or any other Society, the Ends for which it is instituted. Nothing can *in reason be reckon'd amongst the Ends of any Society*, but what may *in reason* be supposed to be designed by those who enter into it. Now no body can *in reason* suppose, that any one entered into Civil Society for the *procuring, securing, or advancing* the salvation of his Soul; when he, for that end, needed not the Force of Civil Society. The *procuring, therefore, securing, and advancing the Spiritual and Eternal Interest of men, cannot in reason be reckon'd amongst the Ends of Civil Societies*; Tho perhaps it might so fall out, that in some particular instance, some mans spiritual Interest might be advanced by your or any other way of *applying Civil Force*. A Nobleman, whose Chappel is decayed or fallen, may make use of his Dining-room for Praying and Preaching. Yet whatever Benefit were attainable by this use of the room, no body can *in reason reckon this among the Ends* for which it was built; no more than the accidental breeding of some Bird in any part of it (tho it were a Benefit it yielded) could *in reason* be reckon'd among the Ends of building the House.

But, say you, *Doubtless Commonwealths are instituted for the attaining of all the Benefits which political Government can yield; and therefore if the Spiritual and Eternal Interests of men may any way be procur'd or advanc'd by Political Government, the procuring and advancing those Interests, must in all reason be reckon'd amongst the Ends of Civil Society, and so consequently fall within the compass of the Magistrates Jurisdiction*. Upon the same Grounds, I thus reason. *Doubtless Churches are instituted for the attaining of all the Benefits which Ecclesiastical Government can yield: And therefore, if the Temporal and Secular Interests of men may any way be procured or advanced by Ecclesiastical Polity, the procuring and advancing those Interests, must in all reason be reckoned among the Ends of Religious Societies, and so consequently fall within the compass of Church-mens Jurisdiction*. The Church of *Rome* has openly made its advantage of *Secular Interests to be precured or advanced, indirectly and at a distance, and in ordine ad spiritualia*; all which ways (if I mistake not *English*) are comprehended under your *any way*. But I do not remember that any of the Reformed Churches have hitherto directly professed it. But there is a time for all things. And if the Commonwealth once invades the spiritual *Ends* of the Church, by meddling



with the [54] Salvation of Souls, (which she has always been so tender of) who can deny, that the Church should have liberty to make her self some amends by Reprisals?

But, Sir, however you and I may argue from wrong suppositions, yet unless the Apostle, (*Eph. 4;*) where he reckons up the Church-Officers which Christ had instituted in his Church, had told us they were for some other Ends than for the *perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ;* the advancing of their secular Interests will scarce be allow'd to be their business, or *within the compass of their Jurisdiction*. Nor till it can be shewn that Civil Society is instituted for Spiritual Ends, or that the Magistrate has commission to interpose his Authority, or use Force in matters of Religion; your supposition of *Spiritual Benefits indirectly and at a distance attainable* by Political Government, will never prove the advancing of those Interests by Force, to be the Magistrates business, and *to fall within the compass of his Jurisdiction*. And till then, the Force of the Arguments which the Author has brought against it, (in the 7th and following Pages of his Letter) will hold good.

Common-wealths, or Civil Societies and Governments, if you will believe the judicious Mr. *Hooker*, are as St. *Peter* calls them (1 Pet. 2.13.) ἀνθρώπινη κτίσις, the contrivance and institution of man; and he shews there for what end; *viz. for the Punishment of evil doers, and the praise of them that do well*. I do not find any where, that it is for the punishment of those who are not in Church Communion with the Magistrate, to make them study Controversies in Religion, or *hearken* to those who will tell them *they have mistaken their way, and offer to show them the right one*. You must shew them such a Commission, if you say it is from God. And in all Societies instituted by man, the Ends of them can be no other than what the Instructors appointed; which I am sure could not be their *spiritual and eternal Interest*. For they could not stipulate about these one with another, nor submit this Interest to the power of the Society, or any Sovereign they they should set over it. There are Nations in the *West-Indies* which have no other End of their Society, but their mutual defence against their common enemies. In these, their Captain, or Prince, is Sovereign Commander in time of War; but in time of Peace, neither he nor any body else has any Authority over any of the Society. You cannot deny but other, even temporal ends, [55] are attainable by these Commonwealths, if they had been otherwise instituted and appointed to those ends. But all your saying, *Doubtless Commonwealths are instituted for the attaining of all the benefits which they can yield*, will not give Authority to any one, or more, in such a Society, by *Political Government or Force*, to procure directly or indirectly other Benefits than that for which it was instituted: And therefore, there it *falls not within the compass of those Princes Jurisdiction* to punish any one of the Society for injuring another; because he has no commission so to do; whatever reason you may think there is, that that should be reckoned amongst the Ends of their Society.

But to conclude: Your Argument has that defect in it which turns it upon your self. And that is, that the *procuring and advancing the Spiritual and Eternal Interest of Souls*, your way, is not a *Benefit* to the Society: And so, upon your own Supposition, the *procuring and advancing the spiritual Interest of Souls, any way*, cannot be one of the *Ends of Civil Society*; unless the *procuring and advancing the spiritual Interest of souls*, in a way proper to do more harm than good towards the salvation of Souls, be to be accounted such a *Benefit* as to be one of the ends of Civil Societies. For that yours is such a way, I have proved already. So that were it hard to prove that Political Government, whose only Instrument is Force, could no way by *Force* (however applied) more *advance* than hinder the *Spiritual and Eternal Interest* of men; yet having prov'd it against your particular new way of *applying Force*, I have sufficiently vindicated the Author's Doctrine from any thing you have said against it. Which is enough for my present purpose.

Your next Page tells us, That this reasoning of the Author, viz. *That the Power of the Magistrate cannot be extended to the Salvation of Souls, because the care of Souls is not committed to the Magistrate; is proving the thing by it self.* P. 19. As if you should say, when I tell you that you could not extend your Power to meddle with the money of a young Gentleman you travelled with, as Tutor, because the care of his Money was not committed to you, were proving the thing by it self. For it is not necessary that you should have the Power of his money; it may be intrusted to a Steward who travels with him; or it may be left to himself. If you have it, it is but a delegated Power. And in all delegated Powers, I thought this a fair proof; you have it not, or cannot use it, [56] (which is what the Author means here by *extended to*) because it is not committed to you. In the summing up of this Argument, (P. 18.) the Author says, *No body therefore, in fine, neither Commonwealths, &c. hath any Title to invade the Civil Rights and worldly goods of another, upon pretence of Religion.* Which is an exposition of what he means in the beginning of the Argument, by the *Magistrates Power cannot be extended to the Salvation of Souls.* So that if we take these last cited words equivalent to those in the former place, his Proof will stand thus. *The Magistrate has no title to invade the Civil Rights or Worldly Goods of any one, upon pretence of Religion; because the care of Souls is not committed to him.* This is the same in the Author's sense with the former. And whether either this, or that, *be a proving the same thing by it self,* we must leave to others to judg.

You quote the Author's Argument, which he brings to prove that the care of Souls is not committed to the Magistrate, in these words. *It is not committed to him by God, because it appears not that God has ever given any such authority to one man over another, as to compel any one to his Religion.* P. 21. This when first I read it, I confess I thought a good Argument. But you say *this is quite besides the business;* and the reason you give, is; *For the authority of the Magistrate is not an authority to compel any one to his Religion, but only an authority to procure all his Subjects the means of discovering the way of Salvation, and to procure withal, as much as in him lies. that none remain ignorant of it, &c.* I fear Sir, you forget your self. The Author was not writing against your new Hypothesis, before it was known in the World. He may be excused if he had not the gift of Prophecy, to argue against a Notion which was not yet started. He had in view only the Laws hitherto made, and the Punishments (in matters of Religion) in use in the world. The Penalties, as I take it, are lain on men for being of different ways of Religion. Which, what is it other, but to *compel* them to relinquish their own, and to conform themselves to that from which they differ? If this be not to *compel them to the Magistrates Religion,* pray tell us what is? This must be necessarily so understood; unless it can be supposed that the Law intends not to have that done, which with Penalties it commands to be done; or that Punishments are not compulsion, not that compulsion the Author complains of. The Law says, *Do this and live;* embrace this Doctrine, conform to this way of Worship, and be at ease, and free; [57] or else be fined, imprisoned, banished, burnt. If you can shew among the Laws that have been made in *England,* concerning Religion, (and I think I may say any-where else) any one that punishes men for not having *impartially examin'd the Religion they have imbraced, or refus'd,* I think I may yield you the Cause. Lawmakers have been generally wiser than to make Laws that could not be executed: and therefore their Laws were against Nonconformists, which could be known; and not for *impartial examination,* which could not. 'Twas not then *besides* the Author's *business,* to bring an argument against the Persecutions here in fashion. He did not know that any one, who was so free as to acknowledg that the *Magistrate has not an authority to compel any one to his Religion,* and thereby at once (as you have done) give up all the Laws now in force against Dissenters, had yet Rods in store for them, and by a new Trick would bring them under the lash of the Law, when the old Pretences were too much exploded to serve any longer. Have you never heard of such a thing as the *Religion establish'd by Law?* Which is, it seems, the Lawful Religion of a Countrey, and to be comply'd with as such. There being such things, such notions, yet in the World; it was not *quite besides the Author's*

*business* to alledge, that *God never gave such authority to one man over another as to compel any one to his Religion*. I will grant, if you please, *Religion establish'd by Law* is a pretty odd way of speaking, in the mouth of a Christian; (and yet it is much in fashion) as if the Magistrate's Authority could add any force or sanction to any Religion, whether true or false. I am glad to find you have so far considered *the Magistrate's Authority*, that you agree with the Author, that he *hath none to compel men to his Religion*. Much less can he, by any establishment of Law, add any thing to the Truth or Validity of his own, or any Religion whatsoever.

It remains now to examine, whether the Author's Argument will not hold good, even against Punishments in your way. For if *the Magistrate's Authority be*, as you here say, *only to procure all his Subjects*, (mark what you say, *ALL HIS SUBJECTS*) *the* P. 21. *means of discovering the way of Salvation, and to procure withal, as much as in him lies, that NONE remain ignorant of it, or refuse to embrace it, either for want of using those means, or by reason of any such prejudices as may render them ineffectual*. If this be the Magistrate's business, in reference to *ALL HIS [58] SUBJECTS*; I desire you, or any man else, to tell me how this can be done, by the application of Force only to a part of them; Unless you will still vainly suppose *ignorance, negligence, or prejudice*, only amongst that part which any where differs from the Magistrate. If those of the Magistrates Church may be *ignorant of the way of salvation*; If it be possible there may be amongst them those who *refuse to imbrace it, either for want of using those means, or by reason of any such prejudices as may render them ineffectual*; What, in this case, becomes of the *Magistrate's Authority to procure all his Subjects the means of discovering the way of salvation*? Must these of his Subjects be neglected, and lest without the *means he has Authority to procure them*? Or must he ase Force upon them too? And then, pray, shew me how this can be done. Shall the Magistrate punish those of his own Religion, *to procure them the means of discovering the way of salvation, and to procure as much as in him lies, that they remain not ignorant of it; or refuse not to imbrace it*? These are such contradictions in practice, this is such condemnation of a man's own Religion, as no one can expect from the Magistrate; and I dare say you desire not of him. And yet this is that he must do, *If his Authority be to precure all his subjects the means of discovering the way to salvation*. And if it be so *needful*, as you say it is, that he should use it. I am sure *Force* cannot do that till it be apply'd wider, and Punishment be laid upon more than you would have it. For if the *Magistrate be by Force to procure; as much as in him lies, that none remain ignorant of the way of salvation*; must he not punish all those who are *ignorant of the way of salvation*? And pray tell me how is this any way practicable, but by supposing none in the National Church ignorant, and all out of it ignorant of the way of Salvation. Which, what is it, but to punish men barely for not being of the Magistrate's Religion; The very thing you deny he has authority to do? So that *the Magistraie having*, by your own confession, *no authority* thus to use *Force*; and it being otherways impracticable for the *procuring all his Subjects the means of discovering the way of salvation*; there is an end of *Force*. And so *Force* being laid aside, either as unlawful, or unpracticable, the Author's Argument holds good against *Force*, even in your way of applying it.

But if you say, as you do in the foregoing page, That the Magistrate has authority to *lay such Penalties upon those who refuse to [59] imbrace the Doctrine of the* P. 20. *proper Ministers of Religion, and to submit to their Spiritual Government, as to make them bethinnk themselves so as not to be alienated from the Truth.*( for, as for *foolish humour, and uncharitable prejudice, &c.* which are but words of course that opposite Parties give one another, as marks of dislike and presumption; I omit them, as signifying nothing to the Question; being such as will with the same Reason be retorted by the other Side.) Against that also the Author's Argument holds, That the Magistrate has no such Authority. 1st, Because God never gave the Magistrate an authority to be Judg of truth for another man in matters of Religion: and so he cannot be judg whether any man be *altenated from the truth* or

no. 2dly), Because the Magistrate had never authority given him to lay any *Penalties on those who refuse to imbrace the Doctrine of the proper Ministers of his Religion*, (or of any other) or to submit to their *Spiritual Government*, more than on any other men.

*To the Author's Argument, that the Magistrate cannot receive such authority from the People; because no man has power to leave it to the choice of any other man to chuse a Religion for him; you give this pleasant Answer.* As the Power of the Magistrate, in reference to Religion, is ordained for the bringing men to take such care as they ought P. 22.

of their Salvation, that they may not blindly leave it to the choice, neither of any other person, nor yet of their own lusts and passions, to prescribe to them what faith or worship they shall embrace: So if we suppose this power to be vested in the Magistrate by the consent of the People; this will not import their abandoning the care of their Salvation, but rather the contrary. For if men, in chusing their Religion, are so generally subject, as has been showed, when left wholly to themselves, to be so much swayed by prejudice and passion, as either not at all, or not sufficiently to regard the reasons and motives which ought alone to determine their choice; then it is every man's true interest, not to be left wholly to himself in this matter; but that care should be taken, that in an Affair of so vast concernment to him, he may be brought even against his own inclination, if it cannot be done otherwise, (which is ordinarily the case) to act according to reason and sound judgment. And then what better course can man take to provide for this, than by vesting the Power I have described, in him who bears the Sword? *Wherein I beseech you consider; 1st, Whether it be not pleasant, that you say the Power of the Magistrate is ordain'd to bring men to take [60] such care; and thence infer, Then it is every one's interest to vest such Power in the Magistrate?* For if it be the *Power of the Magistrate*, it is his. And what need the People vest it in him; unless there be need, and *it be the best course they can take, to vest a Power in the Magistrate*, which he has already? 2dly, Another pleasant thing, you here say, is; That *the Power of the Magistrates is to bring men to such a care of their Salvation, that they may not blindly leave it to the choice of any person, or their own lusts, or passions, to prescribe to them what faith or worship they shall imbrace; And yet that 'tis their best course to vest a Power in the Magistrate*, liable to the same *lusts and passions* as themselves, to chuse for them. For if they vest a Power in the Magistrate to punish them, when they dissent from his Religion; *to bring them to act, even against their own inclination, according to reason and sound judgment; which is, (as you explain your self in another place) to bring them to consider Reasons and Arguments proper and sufficient to convince them:* How far is this from *leaving it to the choice of another man to prescribe to them what Faith or Worship they shall imbrace?* Especially if we consider, that you think it a strange thing, *That the Author would have the care of every man's Soul left to himself alone.* So that this care being vested in the Magistrate, with a Power *to punish men to make them consider Reasons and Arguments proper and sufficient to convince them* of the Truth of his Religion; the choice is evidently in the Magistrate; As much as it can be in the power of one man to chuse for another what Religion he shall be of, which consists only in a Power of compelling him by Punishments to embrace it.

I do neither you nor the Magistrate Injury, when I say that the Power you give the Magistrate of *punishing men, to make them consider reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince them*, is to convince them of the truth of his Religion, and to bring them to it. For Men will never, in his opinion, *Act according to Reason and sound Judgment*, (which is the thing you here say *Men should be brought to by the Magistrate, even against their own Inclination*) till they imbrace his Religion. And if you have the brow of an Honest Man, you will not say the Magistrate will ever punish you, *to bring you to consider any other Reasons and Arguments*, but such as are *proper to convince* you of the truth of his Religion, and to bring you to that. Thus you shift forwards and [61] backwards. You say *The Magistrate has no Power to punish Men, to compel them to his Religion; but only to compel them to consider Reasons and Arguments proper to convince them* of the truth of his

Religion; which is all one as to say, no Body has Power to chuse your way for you to *Jerusalem*; But yet the Lord of the Mannor has Power to punish you, *to bring you to consider Reasons and Arguments proper and sufficient to convince you*; (of what?) That the way he goes in, is the right, and so to make you joyn in Company, and go along with him. So that, in effect, what is all your going about, but to come at last to the same place again; and put a Power into the Magistrate's hands, (under another pretence) to compel Men to his Religion; which use of *Force*, the Author has sufficiently overthrown, and you your self have quitted. But I am tired to follow you so often round the same Circle.

You speak of it here as the most deplorable Condition imaginable, that P. 22. *Men should be left to themselves, and not be forced to consider and examine the Grounds of their Religion, and search impartially and diligently after the truth*. This you make the great miscarriage of Mankind. And for this you seem solicitous, all through your Treatise, to find out a Remedy; and there is scarce a Leaf wherein you do not offer yours. But what if, after all, now you should be found to prevaricate? *Men have contrived to themselves*, say you, *a great variety of Religions*: 'Tis granted. *They seek not the Truth in this matter with that Application of Mind, and that freedom of Judgment which is requisite*: 'Tis confessed. *All the false Religions now on foot in the World, have taken their rise from the slight and partial Consideration, which Men have contented themselves with, in searching after the true; and Men take them up, and persist in them for want of due Examination*: Be it so. *There is need of a Remedy for this; and I have found one whose Success cannot be questioned*: Very well. What is it? Let us hear it. Why, *Dissenters must be punished*. Can any Body, that hears you say so, believe you in earnest; and that want of Examination is the thing you would have amended, when want of Examination is not the thing you would have punished? If want of Examination be the fault, want of Examination must be punished: if you are, as you pretend, fully satisfied, that Punishment is the proper and *only means* to remedy it. But if, in all your Treatise, you can shew me one place, where you say That [62] the Ignorant, the Careless, the Inconsiderate, the Negligent *in examining thoroughly the truth of their own and others Religion*, &c. are to be punished; I will allow your remedy for a good one. But you have not said any thing like this; and which is more, I tell you before hand, you dare not say it. And whilst you do not, the World has reason to judg, that however want of Examination be a general Fault, which you with great Vehemency have exaggerated; yet you use it only for a pretence to punish Dissenters; and either distrust your remedy, that it will not cure this Evil, or else care not to have it generally cur'd. This evidently appears from your whole management of the Argument. And he that reads your Treatise with attention, will be more confirm'd in this Opinion, when he shall find, that you (who are so earnest to have Men punished, to bring them to *consider and examine*, that so they may *discover the way to Salvation*) have not said one word of considering, searching, and hearkening to the Scripture; which had been as good a rule for a Christian to have sent them to, as to *Reasons and Arguments proper to convince them*, of you know not what; *As to the Instruction and Government of the proper Ministers of Religion*, which who they are, Men are yet far from being agreed; *Or as to the information of those, who tell them they have mistaken their way, and offer to shew them the right*; and to the like uncertain and dangerous Guides; which were not those that our Saviour and the Apostles sent Men to, but to the Scriptures. *Search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal Life*, says our Saviour to the unbelieving persecuting Jews. (*John 5.39*) And 'tis the Scriptures which St. Pauls says, *are able to make wise unto Salvation*. (*2 Tim. 3.15.*)

Talk no more therefore, if you have any care of your Reputation, how much *it is every Man's Interest not to be left to himself, without Molestation, without Punishment in matters of Religion*. Talk not of *bringing Men to embrace the Truth that must save them*, by putting them upon Examination. Talk no more of *Force and Punishment*, as the *only way left to bring Men to examine*. 'Tis evident you mean nothing less. For, tho want of Examination be the

only fault you complain of, and *Punishment* be in your Opinion the *only way to bring Men to it*; and this the whole design of your Book; yet you have not once proposed in it, that those, who do not impartially *examine*, should be forced to it. [63] And, that you may not think I talk at random, when I say you dare not; I will, if you please, give you some Reasons for my saying so.

*First*, Because, if you propose that all should be punished, who are ignorant, who have not used *such Consideration as is apt and proper to manifest the Truth*; but *have been determined in the choice of their Religion by Impressions of Education, Admiration of Persons, worldly Respects, Prejudices, and the like incompetent Motives; and have taken up their Religion, without examining it as they ought*; you will propose to have several of your own Church (be it what it will) punished which would be a Proposition too apt to offend too many of it, for you to venture on. For whatever need there be of Reformation, every one will not thank you for proposing such an one as must begin at (or at least reach to) the House of God.

*Secondly*, Because, if you should propose that all those who are Ignorant, Careless, and Negligent in examining should be punished, you would have little to say in this Question of Toleration. For if the Laws of the State were made as they ought to be, equal to all the Subjects, without distinction of Men of different Professions in Religion; and the Faults to be amended by Punishments, were impartially punished, in all who are guilty of them; this would immediately produce a perfect Toleration, or shew the uselessness of Force in Matters of Religion. If therefore you think it so necessary, as you say, for the *promoting of true Religion, and the Salvation of Souls, that Men should be punished to make them examine*; do but find a way to apply Force to all that have not *thoroughly and impartially examined*, and you have my Consent. For tho Force be not the proper means of promoting Religion; yet there is no better way to shew the uselessness of it, than the applying it equally to miscarriages, in whomsoever found; and not to distinct Parties or Perswasions of Men, for the Reformation of them alone, when others are equally Faulty.

*Thirdly*, Because, without being for as large a Toleration as the Author proposes, you cannot be truly and sincerely for a *free and impartial Examination*. For whoever examines, must have the Liberty to judg, and follow his Judgment; or else you put him upon Examination to no purpose. And whether that [64] will not as well lead Men from, as to your Church, is so much a venture, that by your way of Writing, 'tis evident enough you are loath to hazard it; and if you are of the National Church, 'tis plain your Brethren will not bear with you in the allowance of such a Liberty. You must therefore either change your *Method*; and if the want of Examination be that great and dangerous Fault you would have corrected, you must equally punish all that are equally guilty of any neglect in this Matter, and then take your *only means*, your beloved *Force*, and make the best of it; or else you must put off your Mask, and confess that you design not your Punishments to bring Men to *Examination*, but to *Conformity*. For the Fallacy you have used, is too gross to pass upon this Age.

What follows to *Page 26*. I think I have considered sufficiently already. But there you have found out something worth notice. In this Page, out of abundant Kindness, when the Dissenters have their Heads (without any cause) broken, you provide them a Plaister. For, say you, *if upon such Examination of the Matter, (i. e. brought to it by the Magistrates Punishment) they chance to find, that the Truth does not lie on the Magistrate's side; they have gain'd thus much however, even by the Magistrate's misapplying his* P. 26. *Power, that they know better than they did before, where the truth does lye*. Which is as true, as if you should say; Upon Examination I find such a one is out of the way to *York*; therefore I know better than I did before, that I am in the right. For neither of you may be in the right. This were true indeed, if there were but two ways in all; a Right and a Wrong. But where there be an hundred ways, and but one right; your knowing upon *Examination*, that that

which I take is wrong, makes you not know any thing better than before, that yours is the right. But if that be the best reason you have for it, 'tis Ninety eight to one still against you, that you are in the wrong. Besides, he that has been punished, may have examin'd before, and then you are sure he gains nothing. However, you think you do well to encourage the Magistrate in punishing, and comfort the Man who has suffer'd unjustly, by shewing what he shall *gain by it*. Whereas, on the contrary, in a Discourse of this Nature, where the bounds of Right and Wrong are enquired into, and should be established, the Magistrate was to be shew'd the [65] bounds of his Authority, and warn'd of the injury he did when he *misapplies his Power*, and punish'd any man who deserv'd it not; and not be sooth'd into injustice, by consideration of *gain* that might thence accrue to the sufferer. *Shall we do evil that good may come of it?* There are a sort of People who are very wary of touching upon the Magistrate's duty, and tender of shewing the bounds of his Power, and the injustice and ill consequences of his *misapplying it*; at least, so long as it is *misapply'd* in favour of them, and their Party. I know not whether you are of their number. But this I am sure; you have the misfortune here to fall into their mistake. The Magistrate, you confess, may in this case *misapply his Power*; and instead of representing to him the injustice of it, and the account he must give to his Sovereign one day of this great Trust put into his hands for the equal protection of all his Subjects: you pretend advantages which the Sufferer may receive from it: And so instead of disheartning from, you give encouragement to, the mischief. Which, upon your Principle, join'd to the natural thirst in man after Arbitrary Power, may be carried to all manner of exorbitancy, with some pretence of Right.

For thus stands your System. If *Force*, i e. *Punishment*, may be any way P. 15. *useful for the promoting the Salvation of Souls, there is a right somewhere to use it*. And this Right (say you) is in the Magistrate. Who then, upon your grounds, may P. 16. quickly find reason, where it suits his inclination, or serves his turn, to punish men directly to bring them to his Religion. For if he may use *Force*, because it may be, *indirectly and at a distance, any way, useful towards the Salvation of Souls*, towards the procuring any degree of glory; Why may he not, by the same Rule, use it where it may be useful, at least *indirectly, and at a distance*, towards the procuring a greater degree of glory? For St. Paul assures us, that *the Afflictions of this life work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory*. So that why should they not be punished, if in the wrong, to bring them into the right way; If in the right, to make them by their Sufferings *gainers* of a far more exceeding weight of glory? But whatever you say of *Punishment being lawful, because indirectly, and at a distance it may be useful*; I suppose, upon cooler thoughts, you will be apt to suspect that, however Sufferings may promote *the Salvation* of those who make a good use of them, and [66] so set men surer in the right way, or higher in a state of glory; yet those who make men unduly suffer, will have the heavier Account, and greater weight of guilt upon them, to sink them deeper in the Pit of perdition; and that therefore they should be warn'd to take care of so using their Power. Because whoever be *gainers* by it, they themselves will (without repentance and amendment) be sure to be losers. But by granting that the *Magistrate misapplies his Power*, when he punishes those who have the Right on their side, whether it be to bring them to his own Religion, or whether it be *to bring them to consider reasons and arguments proper to convince them*, you grant all that the Author contends for. All that he endeavours, is to shew the bounds of Civil Power; and that in punishing others for Religion, the Magistrate *misapplies* the Force he has in his hands, and so goes beyond Right, beyond the limits of his Power. For I do not think the Author of the Letter so vain (I am sure for my part I am not) as to hope by Arguments, though never so clear, to reform presently all the Abuses in this matter; Especially whilst men of Art, and Religion, endeavour so industriously to palliate and disguise, what truth, yet, sometimes, unawares forces from them.

Do not think, I make a wrong use of your saying, the Magistrate *misapplies* his Power, when I say you therein grant all that the Author contends for. For if the Magistrate *misapplies*, or makes a wrong use of *his Power*, when he punishes in matters of Religion any one who is in the Right, though it be but to make him consider, (as you grant he does) he also *misapplies*, or makes wrong use of his Power, when he punishes any one, whomsoever in Matters of Religion, to make him consider. For every one is here Judge for himself, what is Right; And in matters of Faith, and Religious Worship, another cannot judge for him. So that to punish any one in Matters of Religion, tho it be but to make him consider, is by your own Confession beyond the Magistrate's Power. And that punishing in matters of Religion is beyond the Magistrate's Power, is *what the Author contends for*.

You tell us in the following words; *All the hurt that comes to them by it, P. 26. is only the suffering some tolerable Inconveniences, for their following the Light of their own Reason, and the Dictates of their [67] own Consciences; which certainly is no such mischief to Mankind, as to make it more eligible, that there should be no such Power vested in the Magistrate, but the care of every Man's Soul should be left to himself alone, (as this Author demands it should be:) that is, that every Man should be suffer'd, quietly, and without the least Molestation, either to take no care at all of his Soul, if he be so pleased; or in doing it, to follow his own groundless Prejudices, or unaccountable Humour, or any crafty Seducer, whom he may think fit to take for his Guide. Why should not the care of every Man's Soul be left to himself, rather than the Magistrate? Is the Magistrate like to be more concern'd for it? Is the Magistrate like to take more care of it? Is the Magistrate commonly more careful of his own, than other Men are of theirs? Will you say the Magistrate is less expos'd in matters of Religion, to Prejudices, Humours, and Crafty Seducers, than other Men? If you cannot lay your Hand upon your Heart, and say all this; What then will be got by the change? And why may not the care of every Man's Soul be left to himself? Especially, if a Man be in so much danger to miss the truth, who is suffer'd quietly, and without the least Molestation, either to take no care of his Soul, if he be so pleased, or to follow his own Prejudices, &c. For if want of Molestation be the dangerous state, wherein Men are likeliest to miss the right way; it must be confessed, that of all Men, the Magistrate is most in danger to be in the wrong, and so the unfittest (if you take the care of Mens Souls from themselves) of all Men, to be intrusted with it. For he never meets with that great and only Antidote of yours against Error, which you here call Molestation. He never has the benefit of your Sovereign Remedy, Punishment, to make him consider; which you think so necessary, that you look on it as a most dangerous State for Men to be without it; and therefore tell us, 'tis every Man's true Interest, not to be left wholly to himself in matters of Religion.*

Thus, Sir, I have gone through your whole Treatise, and as I think, have omitted nothing in it material. If I have, I doubt not but I shall hear of it. And now I refer it to your self, as well as to the Judgment of the World, Whether the Author of the Letter, in saying no Body hath a Right; or you, in saying, the Magistrate hath a Right to use force in Matters of Religion; has [68] most Reason. In the mean time, I leave this request with you. That if ever you write again, about the *means of bringing Souls to Salvation*, (which certainly is the best design any one can employ his Pen in) you would take care not to prejudice so good a Cause, by ordering it so, as to make it look as if you writ for a Party. I am,

SIR,

May 27.  
1690.

Your most Humble Servant,  
PHILANTHROPUS.



**FINIS.**