

PRIESTIANITY: //

OR, A K

V I E W

Of the Disparity between the

A P O S T L E S

A N D T H E

Modern Inferior Clergy.

*Opposita juxta se posita magis
Elucescunt.*

*They come as near each other in the whole,
As does the Artic to th' Antartick Pole.*

By the AUTHOR of *the Creed of an
Independent Whig.*

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T H E
P R E F A C E.



O promote Peace and Quietness, to endeavour a Reconciliation among Neighbours, is undoubtedly a Duty incumbent on all Mankind ; but surely They, who call themselves the Servants of the Lord, the Successors and Followers of the Apostles, are under a double Obligation to perform this Christian Office. If we make a Scrutiny into the Actions and Ingratitude of the Inferior Clergy, we shall find that, Viper like, they attempt

to sting the Bosom, which took Compassion on them, nourish'd 'em, and gave 'em (as it were) Second Life. If we search for the Original of our domestick Feuds and petty Quarrels, we shall discover that they are caused by the Chaplain, or one of his Tribe; at least it will appear, that he was the Encourager, if not the Author of them. When a Shepherd will intrust a Wolf with the Care of his Flock, then I shall consent that a Priest may be a Superintendant of my Family.

Whether it be by Nature or Compact, I shall not at present enquire; but it is demonstrable beyond Contradiction, that a Priest is no sooner admitted into a Family, than he begins to worm himself into every Secret; and when he has discovered their Failings, [for who is there that does not fall Seven times every Day?] he lords it over them with a supercilious Countenance, and haughtily usurps an arbitrary Sway. He glories that he has it in his Power to create Quarrels, and foment Animosities; he expects great Advantage

P R E F A C E. v

vantage from troubled Waters, and, if Threats will not prevail, creates Division in the Family, disunites the Affections, (those mutual Bands of harmonious Wedlock) and scruples not to put asunder whom God has joined. But these Spiritual Busy-bodies do often meet with Punishment, tho' not in proportion to their Demerit: The good Man of the Family (to use the Country Phrase) perceiving the Tricks and Artifices of the well-fed Levite, [not to mention his Amours and Intrigues] gives him a Dimittis, and reduces him to his primitive Necessity of Preaching and Praying for Bread.

*If as due Care was taken in the Execution of our Laws, as in the Enacting them, it would conduce much to the Preservation and Continuance of that Oeconomy and good Order, that Amity and even Temper, which is requisite in every Family. There is a Penalty on every Master and Mistress, who shall take any Servants without a Certificate of their
good*

good Behaviour from the Person by whom they were last employ'd ; and this Law was thought to be so reasonable and just in its Nature, (and who can make any Objection to it ?) that it affects all Men alike : The highest Quality are as liable to this Penalty, as the inferior Subjects. If therefore they, who are resolv'd to keep Chaplains, (whether from a Motive of Pride, and to gain the Esteem of the World, or for Fashion-sake only) would demand a Certificate from such as cringe for the Office ; we should find few Levites, who could produce Credentials sufficient to entitle them to a Second Reception. Besides, much Confusion and Heart-burnings might be avoided by complying with this Law ; and much more be prevented, if no Priest were admitted to direct or dictate to a Family, but when he appears in his consecrated Asylum.

A Levite, take him in the Capacity of a Chaplain or Parish-Priest, is but a Menial Servant ; and I have met with one only, (and never heard of another)
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who was so just to his own Conscience, and ingenuous to the World, to confess that undeniable Position. Will they Preach or Pray without Hire? No. Will they guide and direct you without a Reward? No. Are they not maintain'd by the Parish, or by such Persons who unhappily take 'em into their Houses? No Man can deny it. Why therefore should they disown the Appellation, which their Wages entitles them to? We can assign no other Reason than an innate Disposition to Pride and Arrogance. If they were kept at that Distance, which is absolutely necessary for the Humiliation of a Servant, they would be more mannerly and less aspiring. A Pamper'd Chaplain flatters himself with having as much Right to my Lady's Favours as her Lap-dog, and no doubt but he would willingly supply his Place; while the Parish-Priest, thro' our Indulgence and Familiarity, first assumes to be our Equal, and then commands Admittance to our Wives and Daughters. There is one thing worthy of our Notice;
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Clean Straw and slender Diet (to speak in the Language of Sportsmen) preserves a Spaniel's Nose, and causes him to remember his Duty.

I know not any Subject, which is so liable to Laughter and Ridicule, no Topick, which lays so justifiable a Foundation for Banter, as to hear the Inferior Clergy affirm, that they are endued with the Holy Ghost. If they studied to do Religion a Disservice, they could not more effectually accomplish it, than by such an Assertion. I own indeed, that they pretend as much to Religion, as the Warming-pan Gentleman does to the Crown of Great Britain; but their Actions manifest a Distrust of their Doctrine, and run counter to their own Rules. From what Period of Time do they date the Gift of Inspiration? From the Moment, no doubt, of their Ordination: It will follow therefore, that all who receive Holy Orders, are endued with that Divine Blessing. If this be granted, then it is impossible for a Priest to Preach

or

or write amiss, or indeed to be guilty of any Crime. But we are convinced by Experience, that they preach and write what is not Orthodox, and lead enormous and irregular Lives : From whence it is evident, that they pretend to have that heavenly Gift, which they have not.

Can the Holy Ghost speak with a double Tongue? No Man sure will be so presumptuous to own such glaring Blasphemy : And yet we must give credit to this, if we believe or acknowledge the Tribe of Levi to be inspired. For let us enquire into the Tenets of the Priests of Rome, and those of England, (omitting all others) and we shall find 'em as opposite to each other as North to South : Yet no Man will deny the Validity of their Ordination. Nay, let us compare the Doctrinc of our English Priests with one another, and we shall find them to clash violently ; so that we are brought under this Dilemma, that the Holy Ghost contradicts himself, or the Priests are not inspired : It is execrable Blasphemy

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my to assert the former, and a bold but necessary Truth to affirm the latter.

It is impossible to foretel what may be the Fate of the ensuing Treatise ; but if I were certain that it would meet with an ill Reception from the World, yet it should not give me the least Uneasiness. I am sensible, that many a Book has been made a Sacrifice for telling what is [improperly call'd] unseasonable Truth; because (like a Mirror) it discovers those Deformities, which Flattery might have varnish'd over.

When I behold a Priest with so much Sanctity in his Countenance, that it portends the D--l and all of - - - in his Heart, it calls to my Remembrance, what History informs us of a certain Apple in the Eastern Parts of the World: This Fruit has a beautiful Outside, whose Temptation is so very strong, that it allures many an unwary Traveller to partake of its hidden Poison. As therefore our Nature is so easy to be imposed upon, we ought to be very circumspect, and
guard

guard our selves from the Wiles and Sophistry of Priestcraft. And indeed it behoves us to be doubly watchful, and keep a strict Eye on our Children, when we suffer them to be tutor'd by a Priest, or imbibe their Sentiments. For we know by woful Experience, that they will infuse such Principles into them, as are most consistent with Priestly Interest, and will advance their Power and Authority.

There is not one Observation in this Book, but might furnish Matter enough for a large Volume; but I have used all the Brevity imaginable, because I would not tire my Reader with dwelling too long upon the same Subject, nor be thought to aggravate the Crime, which I endeavour to expose.

As I have no personal Pique against any Clergyman, or against the Body of the Clergy in general, so I cannot justly be charged with writing out of Envy or Revenge; my sole Intent being only to expose their Vices, in hopes they will one day convince us of a thorough Reforma-

tion : And as it is my constant Custom to put forth some pious Ejaculation, so I beseech Almighty God, that as Charity covers a multitude of Sins, he would pour down a double Portion of this Blessing on all Priests, who are in so great Need of it.

Mr. Collier tells us, that Chaplains are like so many Household-gods, and ought to be esteemed as such : To which Orthodox Report I readily consent. But tho' this was intended as a Compliment to his Reverend Brethren, yet, in my Opinion, there cannot be a more severe Satyr against them. For we are sensible, that the Household Deities of the Ancients were errant Blockheads, kept more for Show than Use ; they had nothing in them, and were justly deem'd to be Lumber, and superstitious Trumpery. And indeed if every Chaplain had his Sportula, as his Office naturally requires, each Family might fare the better, and the Sanctified Interloper would learn Humility.

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It was customary with Archbishop Laud to say, that he hoped to see the Time, when ne'er a Jack Gentleman in England should dare to stand before a Clergyman with his Hat on. Such an haughty and imperious Expression manifested the genuine Spirit of the Sons of High Church: And no doubt but this Upstart, Semi-Protestant Prelate would have endeavoured to fulfil his Hopes, had not God Almighty, thro' his infinite Goodness, thought fit to cut him short, and deliver our World from such a Plague. But in Return to his graceless Grace's meek and humble Wish, the Author of the following Pages heartily and fervently desires, that a day may speedily come, when ne'er a Scoundrel who pretends to Divinity, [whether a Strippling, or an overgrown Pensioner] shall be admitted into the Company of his Betters, be they Gentlemen or Peasants, except he supplicates with his Hat in Hand; even tho' he be equipp'd with his Spiritual Harness.

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I am the more sanguine in my Expectation, because I perceive that the British Spirit begins to reassume its Reason; that it shakes off the Bigottry of Priestcraft, and daily disesteems the Delusion of juggling Impostors. Can there be a greater Slur upon an Englishman, than to say that he dares to act bravely, yet dares not to think freely? Is not the Liberty of the Mind preferable to the Liberty of the Body? If therefore we have preserved the One from Foreign Enemies at the Expence of our Blood and Treasure, we ought to secure the Other from Domestick Invaders. And let us always lay before us this salutary and glorious Maxim,

Non minor est virtus, quàm quærere, parta tueri.

It would puzzle the wisest Heads in the Universe to account for the Defection among his Majesty's Subjects, and the Alienation of their Allegiance, did they not consider the Power of Priestly Men.
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The bad Clergy are like so many malevolent Planets, which shed their baleful Influence, and affect the Inhabitants of this World : And how many are there, who eagerly swallow whatever proceeds from the Mouth of a Priest? They take for good Food and wholesome Nourishment, what they too often find by Experience to be rank Poison to their Minds. Such are the direful Effects of Bigottry and the Want of Thought! Such the pernicious Consequence of sacrificing our Reason to the arbitrary haughty Will of an aspiring Chorahite!

How like Patriots and Britons did the People in the West behave themselves at the Time of the Revolution! They were truly sensible that they must inevitably have sacrificed their Religion, Liberties and Properties to the Humour of Tyranny, had they not joined King WILLIAM of ever Glorious and Immortal Memory. And indeed Twelve Years are not elapsed, since those very People [of my own Knowledge I speak it,]

it,] retain'd a just Sense of those ineffimable Blessings, which their Monarch had secured and confirmed to them : Nor did they fail to manifest their Gratitude, and acknowledge the Goodness of their Benefactor with unfeigned Hearts, upon every Occasion.

But alas ! Tempora mutantur - - - And how many of these once Glorious Men have (to their eternal Shame) converted their Loyalty into Rebellion ! The Unanimity, Love and Affection, which was formerly so conspicuous among them, is now changed into Discord, Hatred, and burning Envy. They will not hearken to Reason, nor suffer themselves to be convinced of their Errors ; no Arguments can prevail with them, or the plainest Demonstrations work upon 'em. They are stupid and obstinate, and will not be undeceived : They have Eyes, but see not ; Ears, and hear not : Which confirms the following Observation, that they who are debauch'd in their Principles,

ciples, will quickly be so in their Intellectuals.

Now if we enquire into the Time and Cause of this unhappy and deplorable Metamorphosis, we shall quickly be able to give entire Satisfaction in those Particulars. Whig and Tory, High-Church and Low-Church, [Words of Ignominy, invented to nourish Faction] were perfect Strangers to our Ears, or at least grown obsolete, and buried in Oblivion ; but when the Spiritual Hydra began to belch forth his Poison, when the Convicted Priest went his Progress, the Air was corrupted with his Breath, and the fell Contagion spread it self far and near. The Snakes, which had lain so long in the Grass, began to shew their Heads, and hiss ; they stung many, and did much Mischief for the Space of Four Years, or thereabouts : But Providence deprived them of their Sting in due Season, and now the Party-colour'd Animals are insignificant.

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Had this sturdy Boutefeu been endued with a just Sense of the Priesthood, he must needs have known, that Humility was one of the Fundamental Pillars that supported it ; and consequently that he was sapping her Foundation, when he rode in Triumph round the Country (rejoicing in the Pride of his Heart) attended with factious Crowds, and received by disaffected Magistrates. But had he been treated according to his Demerit, a Cat-of-Nine-Tails and a Cart would have graced him better, and his Progress ought to have been from Newgate to Tyburn.

From hence we may date the Æra of all those Animosities and Heart-burnings, those Divisions, Seditious and Rebellions, which have plagued our Sion : And as they had their first Rise from the Pulpit, so they are as wickedly and industriously fomented from the Pulpits or private Conversation to this Day.

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I do not so much wonder, that the vulgar and more illiterate Part of the Kingdom were seduced and deluded with the specious and false Notion of the Church being in Danger, when I reflect, that too many Men of Parts and Education fell under the same Infatuation: But that they should still continue under that Delusion is unaccountable.

If the Church had no better Friends to protect and support her than her Black Guard, we might justly say that she were in Danger; but as it is manifest, that she flourishes under the Guardianship of the best and most pious of Princes, to Him surely we ought to return our sincere and hearty Thanks, and pay the Allegiance and Love to Him, which our Duty requires from us, and our Religion calls upon us to perform.

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As the Inferior Clergy call themselves the Physicians of the Soul, so they ought to confine themselves to that particular Practice ; but when they deviate from this, and pretend to a Knowledge of what is beyond their Sphere, they may truly be call'd Spiritual Quacks, and no Regard ought to be had of them. He runs a great Risk, who ventures himself under their Management ; and ten to one but he comes off a Sufferer in the End.

Notwithstanding the Case is so plain and undeniable, yet they have rivetted themselves into the good Opinion of the common Herd, who not allowing themselves time to think, place an implicit Faith in these Empericks ; and not admitting the Advice of able Judges and sound Practitioners, their Wounds must turn to a Gangrene. So Mountebanks, by their Assurance and Volubility of

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Tongue,

Tongue, vend their poisonous Packets at a cheap rate, and ingratiate themselves with the Vulgar; while regular Physicians and Surgeons, who make the Health of Man their Study, are laugh'd at and despised, their Practice postpon'd, and their salutary Prescriptions and Medicines set at nought, undervalued, and neglected.

*An ill Story in the Mouth of a Clergyman runs like Hedge-firing from one to another, till it has pass'd the whole Line: And no Consideration is had, whether there are any justifiable Grounds for such a calumnious Rumour. And indeed if they will not spare their own Fraternity, [as we have a recent Instance of their not doing so, in a late Controversy among the Doctors of the Church;] how should the Laity expect to find better Quarter from such Hands. Fama vulgi is a weak and bad Foundation, yet we know that too many Reputations have
been*

been sacrificed upon no other Proof: So that such Clergymen, who give a loose to their Tongues, and mangle a Man's Character, may not improperly be call'd Spiritual Butchers.

He that relates a Tale to any of the Inferior Clergy, with a Design that it should pass no further, will find himself miserably baulk'd in his Expectation: It could not possibly spread further, had he put it into the Gazette. Examples of this Kind are numerous; but I shall only mention one, which is of the freshest Date.

A Gentleman, without Premeditation, or any malicious Intent, told a young Priest in private Conversation, a Story which he had heard relating to one of his Acquaintance. It is not proper to mention the Particulars, because the Words are of a glaring Nature; and the Gentleman, I find (having traced the Story)

Story) is entirely innocent of what he is charged with, the Accusation being as false as scandalous. However, the Suckling in Divinity growing big with his Burden, and impatient to be delivered; hastes to the usual Place of Rendezvous, and there disembogues himself to his Fraternity, who, you may rest assured, resolved that the Story should not lie dormant. How consistent the rash Behaviour of this pious Strippling was with good Fellowship and Charity, I leave the World to judge; nay, I'll submit it even to his own Friends Determination. . . . He that has a mind to be further informed, need go no farther than the Cha - - - r-house Coffee-house, and associate himself with the Black Locusts.

I little thought, when I began this Preface, that I should have dwelt so long upon such a dirty and unsavory Subject. I shall therefore conclude with the following

ing Epistle, which was sent to Cardinal Alberoni during his Administration of Foreign Affairs.

May it please your EMINENCE,

“ **W**E have an *High-Church Priest*
 “ among us, who condemns
 “ your Politicks in endeavouring to
 “ excite the People of FRANCE to
 “ Commotion and Rebellion, while
 “ *others* applaud your Design : For
 “ this Son of LEVI alledges, that
 “ you have only copied after him ;
 “ with this Difference : You acted by
 “ *Agents* no way qualified for so grand
 “ an Enterprize ; but he rode about
 “ the Country, poisoning, *vivâ vo-*
 “ *ce*, the Minds of the deluded Peo-
 “ ple, who most eagerly imbibed the
 “ Venom. Thus he had [as he most
 “ impiously terms it] *his Desire over*
 “ *his Enemies*, by appearing in *pro-*
 “ *priâ*

“ *priâ personâ* ; whose brawny Shoul-
 “ ders and smooth Face recommend-
 “ ed him to the kind Graces of the
 “ *Fair Sex*, who at that Time were
 “ Ladies of the *Ascendant* over their
 “ Husbands, and their Purfes.

“ To dissipate that chagrin Air,
 “ which is no way agreeable to a
 “ Person of your *sanguine* Temper
 “ and Vivacity, permit me to relate
 “ a Tavern Jest. I was lately invited
 “ to drink a Glas at the *Pope's Head* ;
 “ our Room was commodious, our
 “ Wine had a true Flavour, but
 “ every Man complain'd of the cold
 “ Weather. One of the Company
 “ called for the **CARDINAL**, another
 “ for the **DOCTOR**, the Fire being
 “ much upon a Level with the Cre-
 “ dit of us *Tories*, *viz.* almost ex-
 “ tinct. I could not for my Life
 “ imagine what they would be at,
 “ till I saw the Drawer come up
 (c) “ with

“ with an Instrument in his Hand,
 “ yclep'd a *Fire-pan* ; I quickly
 “ perceived, that its Property was
 “ to *raise a Flame* in an Instant.
 “ I smiled to my self, judging the
 “ Appellation to be very *à pro-*
 “ *pòs.*

“ The Question was put, Whe-
 “ ther your EMINENCE could
 “ not lay a juster Claim to this
 “ *Tool* of Combustion, than the
 “ D O C T O R ? After a long Debate,
 “ it was carried in the *Negative* ; be-
 “ ing urged strenuously, and proved
 “ to a Demonstration, that the Do-
 “ ctor had been a more successful
 “ Engineer (and your *Senior*) in
 “ *setting fire* to the *Mines* he had
 “ laid, and *inflaming* a whole Na-
 “ tion. However, it was agreed,
 “ *nemine contradicente*, that if you
 “ can make Interest at *Rome* for
 “ the *Doctor* to fill one of the Va-
 “ *cancies*

P R E F A C E. xxvij

“cancies in the Sacred College, he
“shall give you the Right Hand in
“this Affair, and promise to re-
“nounce all Claim and Title to it
“for himself, and his Heirs for
“ever. I have the Honour to be

Your EMINENCY's, &c.



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PRIESTIANITY:

OR,

VIEW of the Disparity between the Apostles and the Modern Inferior Clergy.

THAT the Contempt of the Modern Inferior Clergy increases daily, is obvious to every Man; nor will it be otherwise, while Men are allowed to see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears; except the Sons of *Levi* begin a Reformation among themselves. Vain and groundless is the Cause, which they assign for the Disrespect that is shewn to them, *viz.* a Combination of a Set of People, who call themselves *Free-Thinkers*, to asperse the Gentlemen of the *Long-Petticoat* Tribe, and cast an *Odium* upon them:

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And this, they say, is done without any justifiable Foundation, without any Regard to their Function, which ought to be held Sacred.

I know no Man who disesteems the Priesthood: But since there is almost a total Defection among the Priests, and no Sign of Amendment; since they are become supine and indolent, and will not put a Stop to the growing Evil, which may easily be effected; since their Principles are bad, and their Morals worse; it is a Duty incumbent on every Christian to reprove them openly. For he that respects and countenances such Persons, may be justly said to approve their wicked Ways, or at least to encourage them to persevere therein.

There is a *Nescio quid* in the Face of a Good Clergyman, which naturally commands Reverence and Respect; and he merits not the Name of *MAN*, who pays them not with Chearfulness. But there is somewhat so lowre and distasteful in the Looks of a Bad Clergyman, that he draws an *Odium* from us instead of Esteem: To the former therefore of these Gentlemen we are willing, and rejoice to grant such Honours as may justly be attributed to them; but no honest Man can allow that the latter have the least Pretence to a Share of them. God Almighty seems to have set a Mark upon these *reprobate Animals*, as he did upon *Cain*; and which is hourly

hourly visible in the scattered *Jews*, and the perjur'd *Bailiffs*: And as Providence never did any thing *in vain*, we certainly deserve to be censured, if we neglect and despise so salutary a Caution, or endeavour not to shun such common Enemies to our Peace and good Society.

I cannot chime in with the *black* and numerous Herd, who would persuade us, that an *equal* Respect ought to be given to all Persons in *Holy* Orders, without enquiring into their Worth and Merit. I must confess, that their Argument to enforce this Acknowledgment *seems* to carry a good Colour with it, namely, their being the immediate and peculiar Servants of *Christ*: And therefore, they say, we ought to honour them for their Master's Sake. But with Submission to these *Aspiring, Pious* Men, we may argue by the same Parity of Reason, that a *Traytor*, a *Murderer*, or a *Profligate* might claim a due Deference from us, because they have been employ'd in some Honourable Family, or descended from Ancient and Praise-worthy Ancestors. So that the Argument which they bring to countenance, or rather to support their Assertion, is so far from being of any Service to them, that it quite overthrows it: And this is demonstrable from the following Maxim, which will not admit a Contradiction or Exception,

— — — — — *Tantum conspectius in se
Crimen habet, quanto major, qui peccat habetur.*

Now since these *Abiramites*, these *false Apostles*, would deceive us with an Opinion of their being Successors to *Christ*, and his Disciples; since they claim a Privilege extraordinary, and an uncommon Respect *from thence*; I shall make a Scrutiny into their Morals and Behaviour, and shew how alien their Characters are from the *Holy Twelve*, and their *Brethren*. This I purpose to do with all the Sincerity imaginable; and so ingenuous a Declaration will surely take away all Umbrage of Malice or Partiality.

Many substantial and very good Reasons may be given for our *Saviour's* chusing such laborious and pains-taking Men for his *Apostles*; to mention which would be digressive from my present Purpose: I shall therefore avoid all *Ambages*, and begin with observing that the *Apostles* were Men of such a mean Extraction, that there was no room to boast of their Pedigree, if their Inclinations had prompted them to it. It would be no difficult Matter to prove, that *Most* of the Clergy are upon a Level with them in this Particular; but as they are willing that the censorious World may remain in Ignorance of their *Affinity* to each other as to *this Point*, I shall keep my Mouth as it were with a Bridle,

Bridle, being always cautious not to lay a *Stumbling-Block* of Offence in the way of our *weak Brethren*. Wherefore I now proceed to my Second Observation, namely,

That the *Apostles* had an immediate Commission from *Christ* to Preach the Gospel, and Baptize all Nations, with a Power to *remit* or *retain* Men's Sins.

The *Clergy* pretend to have the same equal Power and Authority, tho' not immediately from *Christ*; for they assert, that *their* Commission is derived from the Apostles by a long Succession, who granted to their Successors for ever such Power as *Christ* had invested them with. I am apt to think, if any Man should question the Validity of their Power, they would chuse to plead Prescription for *remitting* or retaining Sins, rather than be put to prove it. *Christ* very well knew, that he could confide in the Sincerity and Uprightness of his *Apostles*, when he delegated such a Power; but I do not find that he *entail'd* it upon their Heirs and Successors; nor is there Reason to think he did, because he foresaw their Degeneracy and Corruption: Therefore the Apostles had no Title to, and consequently could not give and bequeath a Power to their Successors, which was settled upon them only during Life. But to put the Matter beyond Dispute, since the *Clergy* do claim an equal Power with the Apostles, let
'em

'em convince us by an ocular Demonstration, as our Forefathers were convinced : Let 'em work Miracles, and we will give Credit to their Testimony. If they fail in the *One*, as they themselves are sensible they do, then we have all the Reason and Justice in the World to conclude them to be Usurpers and Impositors in the *other*.

A Third Observation is, That the *Apostles* were *meek* and *humble* ; they called themselves the *Servants* of Christ ; they meddled not with *State Affairs*, or deny'd the Authority of the Civil Magistrate.

Nothing can be more engaging in Society than *Courteousness* and *Affability* ; they are Two Qualifications essentially necessary to constitute a Gentleman, and without which, the Name is an empty Word. Is it not therefore strange, that the *Modern Clergy*, who are as covetous of the Appellation as any Men living, should manifest a Behaviour full of *Pride*, *Haughtiness*, and *Insolence*. They ridicule and despise a *Lowness of Spirit*, [which *Christ* recommends to his Apostles from his own Example,] calling it an Indication of a vulgar and *Plebeian* Soul. *Pride* is a Distemper so catching, that it has infected the *Clarks*, and in time may reach the *Sextons* : Look on that Lump of Mortality, that Emblem of a *Chaos*, Man *Hugh*. He thinks that he *stoops* very low, if he vouchsafes a
Nod

Nod to a Shopkeeper, tho' the honest Tradesman unvails his Head, and makes his Obedience with all the Humility imaginable. Now what shall we say to this? Why, truly, Man *Hugh* observes the Fashion, and treads in his Master's Footsteps. He knows the old Proverb, *Trim Tram*———. What Pity it is that these *Two*, who are upon Rising Ground, are not *rais'd higher!* Heaven grant they may be, *advanced* according to *Merit*, since they are in the *Great Road* to Preferment.

We may reasonably imagine, that the Garb of the *Apostles* was plain and innocent, and their Deportment agreeable to their Garb; but the Inferior Clergy are wiser than their Predecessors. They look upon a *Fantee Air* and Mien to be excellent Virtues; and he that is not a Man of *Mode* will gain few Profelytes. There is a *je ne scay quoy* (they say) in the decent Adjustment of a *Cambrick Band*; and when a *Spruce Bob* is placed in a due Decorum, or when the Ringlets of the Hair fall in nice Order, they manifest a Captivating Power. Is not a *Brilliant* more attractive than a *Cram-Ring*? A *Clot-Gown* and *Cassock* preferable to a *Frize-Jacket* and Trowzers? A smooth-fac'd Priest, with his Lilly-Hand, fixes the Eyes, and consequently the Ears of his Audience; but one of the *Barkin-Tribe*, with weather-beaten Countenance and freckl'd Fift, would throw the
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tender-hearted Ladies of this delicate Age into Convulsions. — Oh! that I may live to see [what is yet in the Womb of Time,] the Day when some enterprizing Son of the *Laudean* Race shall exchange his *Iskahn* for a *Bilboa* Blade, and convert his canonical *Rose* into a *White Feather*! Who shall frequent *Opera's* to improve his Voice, and the *Theatre* to regulate his Post and his Mien! Who shall become a *pious Sir Feplin*, or *Holy Sir Courtly*!

A farther Manifestation of the wide Difference between the *Apastles* and the *Clergy*, is, That the latter do ambitiously arrogate to themselves the Titles of *Shepherds of our Souls*, and *Heaven's Ambassadors*. But with Submission to these *Religiously*, *Aspiring* Priests, they would do well to take care of their own Souls, before they pretend to be Guardians of other Men's. If I see a Banker profuse of his Money, will not the World condemn me as a Fool or a Madman, if I entrust him with mine? They will acknowledge that *Christ* is *Head* of the Church, *provided* that you own them to be the *Body*, and the *Laity* the *Members*: To which they add an indefeazable Maxim, that all *rotten Members* ought to suffer *Amputation*. Indulge me, ye Men of Humility, to carry the Metaphor farther, and say, that *Corrosives* ought to be applied to *proud Flesh*; and if so, what will

will become of the Church's Body ? Will it not quickly appear a mere Skeleton ?

——— *Risum teneatis ?*

Can there be a more Romantick Notion, than for a Priest to call himself *Heaven's Ambassador* ? This is Presumption in the Superlative. *Ambassadors* ! Can a greater Indignity be offer'd to the *King of Kings* ? Are not all the People in the Universe, Princes and Potentates, as well as the inferior Sort, his Subjects ? To whom then should he send Ambassadors ? Not to his own Vassals. However, to gratify their aspiring Humour, we will admit their Title of Honour, *if* they produce their Credentials ; that is, let 'em heal the Sick, give Sight to the Blind, make the Deaf to hear, and the Lame to walk.

Politicks are now become an universal Theme, and we hear more of them from the Pulpit than Soul-saving Doctrine : No Man is reckon'd *Orthodox*, who does not dabble in State-Affairs. As soon as a beardless Youth is accoutred with his Spiritual Habiliments, he begins to arraign the Constitution which nourishes him, and condemn the Proceedings of the Prince's faithful Ministers under whom he lives. He usurps an Authority to which he has not the least Shadow of Pretence ; nor will he desist till his Wings are clipp'd, and his Ambition pinion'd. But to do Justice to

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the *Innocent*, I must own that this Crime is to be found only among *Popish* and *Half-Protestant* Priests, viz. *Higb-Church*.

The *Apostle Paul*, who was a *Roman* and a *Loyal* Man, submitted to be try'd by the Civil Magistrate; but *Priest Paul*, who was an *Englishman* and a *Traytor*, denied that the Civil Power had any Jurisdiction over him, or that he ought to be try'd by any other Power than the *Spiritual*: And there are few *Clergymen*, who do not adhere to the same Principle. The Reason is so very obvious, that to mention it would call the Judgment of my Reader in Question.——It is said, that when *Kid*, the Pyrate, was going to *Low-Water-Mark*, he cry'd out, *Had Avery been my Judge, and Twelve of the Madagascar-Buccaneers my Jury, I should not have feared a safe Deliverance.*

A Fourth Observation is, That the *Apostles* met frequently to eat *Bread* and drink *Wine*; whose Lives and Conversation were conformable to their Doctrine.

It must be own'd by the most inveterate Enemies of the Clergy, (if any such there are) that the Sons of *Levi* have more frequent *Meetings* than the Apostles had, especially when they hear of good Wine and liberal Parishioners. But then perhaps it may be objected, that the Apostles met in a *Religious* and *Spiritual* manner; and the Clergy
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in a more *sociable* and natural one. I must concede to this Objection, knowing what is most agreeable to *Priests*. Nevertheless, to alleviate the Imputation of their frequenting *Taverns* and *Coffee-Houses*, [in which they spend a tripple Proportion of Time, to what is laid in their *Churches* and *Closets*;] we must do them the *Justice* to say, that as they are not endued with as large a Portion of Grace as was given to the Apostles, so consequently they cannot undergo the great Burthen and Fatigue of Preaching *once*, and reading Prayers *thrice* a Week, without recruiting their exhausted Spirits. Now if this cannot be done in a private House at the Expence of some of their Flock, why should they be censured or esteemed blame-worthy, if they go to a Tavern, *eat their Bread with Joy, and drink their Wine with a merry Heart*? Why should not the diligent Labourer be indulged in refreshing Nature? Has he not as keen an Appetite, as distinguishing a Palate as another Man? *Besides*, Wine enlivens the Understanding, and gives fresh Vigor to a jaded Invention: And let me tell you, a *well-worded* Expression in Conversation may furnish a Man with Topicks for an Orthodox Sermon.

Precept without Example avails little in making Profelytes; it were therefore to be wish'd, that *Priests* would adhere to the Rules which they lay down for converting Infidels

to Christianity; and confirming those who are converted. I frankly confess, that they will *sometimes* give us the best Advice how to save our Souls, tho' they neglect their own; and it is undoubtedly a *Mark* of Tenderness to put us in the *Way* to eternal Happiness, and a particular Token of their Civility and polite Breeding not to jostle us in the Road, They exclaim against Usury and Extortion, yet try all the Ways and Wiles imaginable to gather Riches. Oh! that I were so well skill'd in Divinity, to know what Length a Man may take to *improve his Talent!* They recommend Fasting and Abstinence as necessary to subdue the Lusts of the Flesh; how near they conform to these *Recipe's*, let their fat *Joles* and *ruddy Cheeks* bear Witness. They inveigh against Profuseness in Dress and Apparel, yet think it no Crime to give an extravagant Price for Wigs, Hats, and *Holland* Shirts. Decency indeed is commendable; and to the Praise of the *Inferior Clergy* be it said, that they take care to *make clean the Outside of the Platter*.

A Fifth Observation; The Apostles were *Charitable*.

Charity is so often in the *Mouths* of the Clergy, that there is too much Cause to suspect it seldom enters into their *Hearts*; or if they have any, it *begins at home* (according to the Proverb) and *there* I fear it will end.

St. Paul

St. Paul has spent a whole Chapter in Praise of this most *excellent Virtue*; *Prophecy* and *Learning* cannot come in Competition with it, and *Faith* profiteth nothing without it. No Christian surely will dare to question the Authority of St. Paul; and since *Charity* is so absolutely necessary, and that we cannot go to Heaven without this *Pass-port*, this *Badge* of Admission; what Opinion must we entertain of those *Priests*, in whom the least Glimpse of *Charity* does not appear? Can we reasonably think that they *believe* a Future State, who will not embrace and manifest the Means which must bring them thither? It is not my Business to shew the Latitude of the Word *Charity*; I shall leave it for those, whose Duty it is to do it, and heartily wish that they would convince us of the Necessity of this *Divine Virtue* by practising it. I never heard or met with a *Clergyman*, who declared his Want of *Charity*, [and that too in the most barefac'd manner] except the Pious and Reverend Doctor—— who lives between *Newgate* and *Tyburn*.

An intimate Friend and Acquaintance of the *Doctor's* wrote a Letter to him, in which he recommended the Bearer as the Son of a very *Worthy* and *Orthodox* Clergyman, who had been bred up in the Principles of the *Church*, and never *swerv'd* from them; who had University Education, and was an *Honest*, *Loyal* Gentleman, tho' in narrow Circumstances.

stances. For these Reasons he requested, that as the *Doctor* was to preach before the *Sons of the Clergy*, and the rest of that *Honourable Society*, he would recommend the Gentleman to the *Stewards* as a proper *Object* of, and as one justly entitl'd to their *Charity*. The *Doctor*, having read the Letter, (and out of a Pique, I suppose, to the Name, which he could not digest since a remarkable Tryal in *Westminster-Hall*) answer'd, *I have no Charity for those who are not of My Church*. The *Doctor* being called upon to explain what he meant by *His Church*, would have evaded the Charge ; but being close press'd, replied, *The Gentleman was educated in the Principles of the Church of Ireland, and I in the Church of England*.—— O rare ! Name, if you can, any Differences in their *Doctrine*, *Rites*, and *Ceremonies*.—— *Cede majoribus*, ye Men of *Lovain* and *St. Omers* ; or match, if you can, the *Uncharitable Doctor*.

A Sixth Observation is, That the *Apostles* preach'd constantly, and in all probability without *Hire* ; they baptized those who were worthy of Baptism ; they visited the Sick, and pray'd with them *Gratis*.

Preaching is accounted the most Apostolical of all the Acts of the Ministry ; and *Gregory* says, *Censemus eos, qui Apostolorum figuram-tendent, predicare*. *Thomas Aquinas* asserts, that *Prædicatio est actus principalissimus*

mus & proprius ; and St. Chrysostom calls it, *Omnium bonorum summum*. St. Paul gives a strict Charge of *Preaching to Timothy*, who was a sickly Man : His Words are, *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the Quick and the Dead, at his appearing, and in his Kingdom, Preach the Word, be instant, &c.*

How happy would it be for the *Inferior Clergy*, how pleasing to God, and acceptable to Man, if they were half as diligent and assiduous in the *Salvation of Souls*, as they are in obtaining a *rich Benefice* ! But, alas ! when they have once obtained the *desired Port*, they grow supine and negligent, and imagine that they discharge their Duty, if they procure a *Journey-Man* to officiate for them. A rich Priest will visit his Flock, and preach to them *perhaps* as often as he comes in Person to *fleece* them ; *viz.* twice a Year to receive an Equivalent for his Tythes. The labouring Oar is given to some indigent *Hireling*, while the lazy *Man of God* (I cannot say the *Man after God's own Heart*) eats the Bread of Idleness. He that will work cheap, shall be first employ'd, tho' a Novice in his Business : But what will the *Lord* say to his *negligent Steward*, when he comes into his *Vineyard*, and finds rotten Fruit ?

The Validity of *Lay-Baptism* has been often controverted, but never refuted ; and if *Original Sin* cannot be wash'd away by any

any other Hands than the *Priest's*, how hard and deplorable is the poor Man's Case ! Must a Soul perish for want of a Piece of Silver ? Must Christ lose a Subject through the Avarice and Extortion of one, who calls himself *his* Servant ? Will not his Death be required at the *Levite's* Hand ? I do not find that there was a *Book of Rates* in our *Saviour's* Time, when he commanded the Apostles to Baptize all Nations ; their Commission was not limited to the Rich and Wealthy ; the Poor and Needy had an equal Claim to the Benefit of their Administration. They gloried in having an Opportunity to visit the Sick, the Distress'd, and those who were in Prison : They comforted the Fatherless and the Widow, they fed the Hungry, and cloath'd the Naked ; they rejoiced in things Spiritual, but the Inferior Clergy glory in things Temporal : They did all things for the *Sake of Christ*, and the Clergy will do nothing but for the *Sake of Mammon*.—— *No Penny, no Pater-Noster* ; this is a Saying too often verified.

A Person past Hopes of Recovery sent for the *Priests* of the Parish, who promised to come, but did not : Whether they were hinder'd by *Love*, or a *Bottle*, I shall not determine. At the Expiration of Three Days, Application was made to Dr. K——, who said he would go, *provided* the Person would pay the Expence of his Coach-Hire. The
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Messenger consented to this, but the Conditions could not be performed, till the sick Person's Apparel (which lay on the Bed, and kept off the Cold) was sent to the *Pawn-brokers* to raise Money. The Doctor was an Eye-witness to this, and *graciously* took but *Two Shillings*.

What says the Prophet? * *Your Priests teach for Hire*: I think he might also have said they *pray* for it. — I will not be so uncharitable to affirm, that the *Inferior Clergy* will do an *ill* thing for Money; but this I may say, I ne'er knew 'em do a *good* one without it.

A Seventh Observation: The Apostles were Men of *Moderation*; they used not *Compulsion* to oblige People to *conform* to their Doctrine; they *reasoned* with their Hearers.

Moderation is one of the shining Characteristics of a Christian; but *Moderation* among the Modern Clergy, is like King *Arthur* and the *Knights of the Round Table*; much talk'd of, but never seen. We exclaim against the Tyranny of *Rome*, and the *Spanish Inquisition*; but we may find *Unchristian Treatment* in Courts nearer home. I do not find by the Laws of God, that an *Ecclesiastick* has a Power to punish the Body or Pocket of

* Micah iii. 11.

a Lay-man: There were no *Libels, Citations, Articles, Penance, Imprisonment*, (and a long Train of *& cetera's* to be read in the *Spiritual Catalogue*) when Christ and his Apostles were on Earth: There were no *pecuniary Mulcts*, or *Commuting*, in those Days, for a *Lapsus Linguae*, or things of *small* moment. Will not the Acceptance of a *pecuniary Mulct* bear this Interpretation? The Rich Man may fornicate, while he that is Poor shall be debarr'd the most intense Pleasure. The Apostles were averse to such inhuman and diabolical Inventions as *wholesome Severities*; and yet who are more ready to put 'em in Practice than the *Half-Protestants*? What are *wholesome Severities*, but the Fire and Fagot, Whips and Dungeons? Are they not the killing Arguments of *Dragooning Jesuits*? How close they stick to the *Letter* of the Text! *Compel 'em to come in.* 'Tis true indeed, our Saviour gave such Command; but I challenge the Clergy to give me one Instance of Severity used by Christ or the Apostles. They were certainly the best Interpreters of their Master's Words; they used no other *Compulsion* than solid Arguments. But there is a Generation of _____ who value themselves upon the Wisdom of this World, and would display their Christianity by savage Cruelties. As if Religion, like the Laws of *Draco*, were to be founded in Blood. How pleasing is Persecution to a
 Tyran-

Tyrannizing Priest! How opposite to a Christian Spirit!

Implicit Faith is the Doctrine of Worldly Men; and tho' we are enjoined to *search the Scriptures*, because *in them we have eternal Life*; yet I could name a Person within Ten Miles of *Hammersmith*, who said, *That we have had no good Times since the Laity were permitted to read the Bible; nor should we have any till they were prohibited the Use of that Book.* Is this conformable to the Protestant Religion, or incompatible with it? Methinks it has an *ill Smell*, and squints wishfully at *Rome*.

God Almighty does not require us to make Brick without Straw; he does not expect to *reap* where he has not *sown*; but since he has given us *Reason*, whereby we may distinguish between *Good* and *Evil*, it behoves us to set a true Value upon this glorious Talent, and not sacrifice it to the *ipse dixit* of any Spiritual *Jacob—ite* whatever. Let every Man steer by his *Reason*, and he that offers to deprive you of it, is a designing crafty Knave. Every Man living has a Right to *think freely*, and *Reason* ought to direct him: This I will maintain, tho' every *Levite* should become an Opponent. For he, who takes up his Religion upon Trust, may with Ease be deluded into the most erroneous and damnable Opinions. *Try all things, says St. Paul, and hold fast that which is best.* Now how can we

try or judge what is *good*, what bad, if we do not make use of our *Reason*? The Apostles did not upbraid those whom they could not convert, with opprobrious and infamous Names: But the *Inferior Clergy* stigmatize them who are not on their Side, and call 'em *Deists, Socinians, Libertines, Atheists, &c.* Nay, that Excellent Pattern of *true Protestant* and Christian Piety, Archbishop *Tillotson*, is called a *grave Atheist*; but there is no other Cause for this unjust Imputation, than his having a larger Share of Religion and sound Learning than other People.

Conscience in the *Apostles*, is an Eighth Observation.

He that can fathom the *Conscience* of a *Priest*, may quickly discover the Depth of the Ocean, and find out the *Longitude*. He is seldom *for giving*, but always *for getting*: And when his Heart is opened, which happens as frequent as a *Jubilee* at *Rome*, he manifests his Liberality with a *Finger* and *Thumb*; as if the other Parts of his Hand were seized with the Gout. But when you make an *Offering*, he receives it with as keen an Appetite as a hungry *Jack*; and had *Solomon* lived in our Days, he might with Reason have said, *There things which never are satisfied.*

What shall we say in Favour of our *High-Church* Clergy, who swear Allegiance to
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King *George*, yet secretly own, and privately pray for a *Popish Pretender*? And what shall we think of others, who take the Oaths, yet countenance Men dismiss'd from their Lectureships for scandalous Words, and black Insinuations against the most *Merciful* Prince on Earth? They may hoodwink the Vulgar, but Men of the least Penetration will see that *Birds of a Feather will flock*——. This touches *somebody's* Copyhold; but I sha'n't say a word of the *Uncharitable* Doctor.

I could mention a certain *Levite*, of no ordinary Rank, who called the late Rebellion a *Rising* of the People; for a *Rebellion*, says he, *is taking up Arms against a Lawful Sovereign*: Wherefore he would not acknowledge the *Preston* Prisoners to be Rebels. This scrupulous Gentleman abjured the *Pretender*, and no doubt he's a Man of Conscience——*very capacious*. Search all the Records of Time, and find out a Plot the blackest that Hell ever hatch'd, and a *Priest* will appear at the Bottom.

A Ninth Observation is, That the Apostles were zealous for the Church of Christ at all Times; without that Jesuitical, and consequently modish, Distinction of *High* or *Low*.

I am very well aware, that some clever stanch Bigot will take me up short, and *smartly* ask me, if I dare deny that the *Orthodox Inferior Clergy* (as they term 'em) are

are for the Church? To which I ingenuously answer in the Negative, *provided* they mean High-Church. And therefore should any one question me, *why did the People so furiously rage*, and why did a * *Convict* become an *Itinerant*? Oh, for the Church. Why are their Sermons stuff'd full of double *Entendre's*, and why do they rail at the Friends of King *George*? Still for the Church. Why are † the *Priests and the Prophets prophane*? And why || *do they err thro' strong Drink*? Why do they preach in an *Orthodox Billingsgate* Stile? And why do they slander, defame, backbite, and snarl at Dissenters? All, all for the *Church*.

If the Inferior Clergy had heartily espoused the Welfare of the true Protestant Church, or had any Regard for the Purity of our most Holy Religion immediately after the scandalous Peace of *Utrecht*, they might justly have said we were falling a Sacrifice to the *Roman Baal*. We then stood on the Margin of the Deep and terrible Abyss, when Providence of its tender Mercy brought forth the *First* of *August*, and made the potent *George* our *Second Deliverer*. There was room in those Days for Dr. *Sacheverel* to have said truly, we were in *Perils among False Brethren*. He should then have told *bold Truth*, and preach'd

* Dr. Sa—ll.

† Jer. xxiii. 11.

|| Isa. xxvii. 7.

in Season, as he did out of Season at *St. Paul's*; his Harangue on the Fifth of *November* having little in it that was pertinent to the Business of the Day, being calculated to reflect on the *Presbyterians*, and cast an Odium on the *Happy and Glorious Revolution*.

That the Apostles did not condemn or stigmatize other People for preaching and adhering to that Doctrine, which they themselves were under an Obligation to preach and adhere to, is my Tenth Observation.

Here is a spacious Field to traverse; a Subject fit for a Polemick Writer. I might with Ease demonstrate, that there is not one Sect of Religion now upon Earth, who does not differ widely from the Apostles in this Particular: But as I design to write with all the Brevity imaginable, I shall only give one flagrant Instance of our own Inferior Clergy's Deviation from the Apostles in this Matter.

I have been told by a Gentleman in Black, [and may the other *Gentleman in Black* reward him, if he has deceived me,] that every smart dapper Fellow, who stands Candidate for Spiritual Authority, must subscribe his Assent to, and inculcate the Orthodox Doctrine of the Thirty Nine Articles of the Church of *England*, before he be admitted a Dictator to a Congregation.

That *Predestination* is the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, appears from the Seventeenth

teenth Article among the Thirty Nine which were agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops of both Provinces, and the whole Clergy in the Convocation holden at *London* in the Year 1562; and was approved and allowed to be holden and executed within the Realm by the Assent and Consent of Queen ELIZABETH, and subscribed to by the Archbishops and Bishops of the Upper House, and by the Subscription of the whole Clergy of the Nether House in their Convocation, in the Year of our Lord 1571. *Vid.* 39 Articles.

I shall transcribe as many of the Words as are most necessary to my Purpose. — “ *Pre-*
 “ *destination* to Life is the everlasting Pur-
 “ pose of God, whereby (before the Foun-
 “ dations of the World were laid) he hath
 “ constantly decreed by his Counsel, secret
 “ to us, to deliver from *Curse* and *Damna-*
 “ *tion*, those whom he hath chosen in Christ
 “ out of Mankind, and to bring them by
 “ Christ to everlasting Salvation, as Vessels
 “ made to Honour. — As the godly Con-
 “ sideration of Predestination and our Election
 “ in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant and
 “ unspeakable Comfort to godly Persons, and
 “ such as feel in themselves the Working of
 “ Christ, &c. So for curious and carnal
 “ Persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ, to
 “ have before their Eyes the Sentence of
 “ God’s Predestination, is a most dangerous
 “ Down-

“ Downfal, whereby the Devil doth thrust
 “ them either into *Desperation*, or into
 “ Wretchlefsnefs of moft unclean Living, no
 “ lefs perilous than *Desperation*.

Now if any Regard is to be had to Oaths and Subscriptions, [which no *Corinthian* Priest will, I hope, deny ;] surely thofe facred Ties and Obligations will prompt them to cherish and propagate the *Doctrin*e, which they have fo openly and fo folemnly efpoſed. But, alas ! how many are there who warmly embrace, and cordially believe and ſupport this Tenet ! Or, rather how many are there who rail at, and vilify *thoſe* who preach this *Doctrin*e, branding them with the Name of *Predeſtinarians*, (*viz.* all the *Diffenters* of what Denomination ſoever) as a Mark of Infamy, Contempt and Pſeudodoxy !—— Are theſe the legitimate or ſpurious Sons of the Church ? Are theſe Men the *true Servants* of the Omnipotent, Juſt and Merciful God ? —— *Tell it not in Gath, publiſh it not in Aſcalon.*

The Eleventh Obſervation is, That the *Apoſtles* went from Place to Place to make *Converts*, and ſtrengthen thoſe whom they had converted, without taking any Money to defray their Expences, or furniſhing themſelves with Neceſſaries requiſite for the Time of their Abode among the Brethren.

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There is no Religion whatever, which has not its Itinerants, who keep close to this Example of the Apostles, except our own Inferior Clergy ; among whom I cannot find one Example. I must own indeed, that there is sometimes a Transmigration from one Parish to another, where one Minister (with Pockets well lined) will swop a Sermon with his Brother : A sure and certain Symptom of a Debauch, or idle Week.

“ What Pity it is, that among the
 “ the many Projects now on foot, some pious
 “ and zealous Christians will not open a Book
 “ for Subscriptions to erect *Houses of Call*,
 “ where lazy, well-fed, pamper’d Priests
 “ may find a *Labourer* for the Day of Sab-
 “ bath ! No doubt but this would be of
 “ more Emolument to the Undertakers, than
 “ the Project for the Grand Fishery ; and
 “ many indigent Souls would be capacitated
 “ to pay for a Dinner, who had no other
 “ Dependance, than the Assistance of the
 “ *Spirit*, to appease his Mutineering In-
 “ testines, and prevent them from flying in-
 “ to Rebellion.

Upon Second Thoughts, it is no difficult Matter to prove, that several Ministers have travelled Fourscore or an Hundred Miles to preach the Gospel : But then we must take notice, that it is for the Sake of a more profitable Benefice ; that they do not travel without Money, without Company ; but carry

carry with them their Bags and *Baggage*, Wives and Children, Maid-servants and Man-servants, their Cattle, and all that were within their Houses and Gates. So charitable are they even to the brute Beasts! And yet I believe there is not one of 'em, who, if he speaks from his Heart, can say with the *Philosopher*, *Omnia mea mecum porto.*—

A Twelfth Observation is, That the Apostles disagreed not among themselves concerning Fundamentals necessary to Salvation; neither did they contradict one another in their Definitions and Notions of Mysteries and Fundamentals.

The Opinions of Men, relating to the Means conducive to Eternal Salvation, are as different as their numerous Sects and Divisions: However, all the Nations in the Universe agree in this one grand Point, an Object of Worship and Adoration. This was allow'd throughout the World, before the Coming of our Saviour; but with this Difference, that some worshipp'd the *True God*, others (like the *Papists*) most religiously bent their Knees to Gods made with their own Hands. Now that they, who profess and call themselves *Christians*, and have but one inerrible Compass to steer by, should pursue such Courses as are diametrically opposite to each other, in hopes of reaching the desired Port at last, is a Subject which affords much Speculation.

I have here a spacious Field before me, and should I enter into a Detail of the Principles of every Christian Sectary, I should deviate from my first Resolution, and swell this little Tract into numberless Volumes.

As there are many Divines and Enthusiasts, who have undertaken to explain and unfold the Mystery of the *Blessed Trinity*, [a Task too difficult for the Performance and Comprehension of human Frailty, and which indeed is a presumptuous Undertaking ;] I shall here recite their own Words, and shew how they contradict and clash against each other.

* Some of the Inferior Clergy make the Three Persons to be external Relations of the one Substance of the Deity to Mankind, *viz.* *Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier*: And the same Reverend Person makes each Person a Third of God, as † Length, Breadth, and Thickness make a Cube ; or as || Three Groats make a Shilling, or Three Nobles a Pound.

∴ Some make the Persons to be Eternal Modes of Subsistence, or Internal Relations of the Substance of the Deity it self.

‡ Some maintain Three Distinct, Unequal, Eternal Beings ; the First whereof is alone

* Wallis's *Letters of the Trinity*, Let. III. p. 40, 41.

† *First Letter*, p. 11.

|| *Third Letter*, p. 42.

∴ *Dr. South's Animad. and Tritheism charged.*

‡ *Fowler's 28 Prop. Bulli Defens. Fid. Nic. Cudworth's Intellect. System. Payne's Sermons.*

Self-existent, and the Second and Third subordinate.

* Some maintain Three Distinct, Eternal, Equal Beings, whose Unity is partly numerical, and partly specific.

Again, † Some make the Doctrine of the Trinity to consist in Three Distinct, Eternal, perfectly Equal Beings agreeing in a Specifick Unity.

|| Mr. *Puzzle-Text*, the *Anthropomorphite*, is of a different Opinion from all the Divines who ever wrote upon the *Trinity*. He says, “ There are Three Lives ; and that such a “ Notion will very much contribute to the “ Honour of God, the Ease of good Chri- “ stians, and the Discouragement of Here- “ ticks. How can it comport (continues he) “ with God’s infinite Goodness, or consist “ with his infinite Wisdom, and so conduce “ to his Honour and Glory, to make the “ main Article of the Christian Faith so “ puzzling and intricate, as that none of ’em “ yet could understand it themselves, or ex- “ plain it competently to others ? Nay, which “ is far worse, and so dishonourable to God, “ as not to be endured ; were Christians “ obliged to believe the Trinity according to

* *Sherlock’s Vind. of the Trinity, and its Defence.*

† *Braddock’s Doctrine of the Fathers, &c. Part I.*

An Antidote against Arianism: By Erasmus Warren, Rector of Worlington in Suffolk, Anno 1712.

“ the

“ the common Notion, or standing Model of
 “ it, in order to their future Bliss, they must
 “ then assent to a thing impossible, to a rank
 “ Contradiction, and to a notorious Lie, to
 “ obtain Salvation ; even that Three Modes
 “ are Three distinct Persons, and so every
 “ one of them God most truly. —

“ For the Body of Christians to recom-
 “ mend unintelligible Things, and to impose
 “ it on its Members ; and induce People to
 “ swallow them, to tell them that they are
 “ profound Mysteries, when they are perfect
 “ Nonsense, what can be more infamous and
 “ disparaging ?

He asserts, That all Men had a wrong No-
 tion of the *Trinity* to this very Day.

“ For Christians (says he) to enjoy the
 “ Benefit of the Gospel for 1700 Years ; to
 “ be baptized into a Trinity, and profess that
 “ they believed it as a prime and fundamen-
 “ tal Article ; and yet during all those Cen-
 “ turies, to have no Notion of it among the
 “ Learned and Wise, but what was light and
 “ empty, silly, impertinent and nonsensical ;
 “ to say no worse, (if searched to the Bot-
 “ tom) is not this sad and dismal ?

But his Notion of a Trinity runs thus.

“ Allow the Divine Essence to be an Infi-
 “ nite Eternal Spirit, quicken'd and actuated
 “ by Three distinct *Lives*, and the First na-
 “ turally and from Eternity springing up in
 “ it, and as naturally and eternally begetting
 “ the

“ the Second *Life*, they *Two* by a like Pre-
 “ rogative Power breathing or sending forth
 “ a *Third*; in which the prolific Force and
 “ Virtue of Divine *Life* was fully spent,
 “ and did fully terminate; and the Adora-
 “ ble *Trinity* is most perfectly and gloriously
 “ constituted, and, I think, intelligibly
 “ enough.

Let the Reader judge, whether this Notion
 is more intelligible than any of the rest.—
 He further observes, that

“ The Three Divine Persons have each of
 “ them an Image in human Figure, symboli-
 “ cally representing their Adorable Selves.

This he proves from several Texts of Scri-
 pture; but sure he had little Regard to, or
 had forgot the Second Injunction in the Deca-
 logue.— I remember the Time, when a
 Book not half so glaring and barefac'd as this,
 was deem'd worthy of a *flaming* Sacrifice;
 and I admire that no pious Informer, out of
 the Abundance of his Zeal for the *Athanasian*
 Fundamental of Christianity, has been moved
 by an internal Impulse of Religion or Malice,
 to present and prosecute this Pamphlet. No
Scourge, no *wholesome Severities* for this au-
 dacious *Levite*! He is one of the Inferior
 Clergy, a weak Brother; and these are Mo-
 tives sufficient to protect him from the Resent-
 ment of other *priestly* Delinquents.

The

The Thirteenth Observation is, That the *Apostles* were strict Followers of their own Constitutions, or By-Laws.

I must confess, that this Observation might very naturally have fallen under the *Tenth*; but since I omitted to recite it in that Place, what follows, I hope, may be allowed as an Appendix to it.

If I should assert, That there is not any Religion whatever, whose Laws and Canons have not been violated by the *Inferior Clergy*, I should incur the Censure of *Zealots* and *Enthusiasts*: But I see no Reason for loading such Assertion with the Calumny of *Rash Judgment*, since it is a Truth daily Observation confirms. I shall not descend to give particular Instances of each Kind, but hope it will suffice for the present to mention one of our own Canons, and shew how our *High-Church* Spiritual Worthies, or *Half-Protestants*, do become Delinquents: Which small Sketch may give us an Idea of the whole. — *Ex pede Herculem.*

The 55th Canon enjoins every *Priest* to pray for the King upon the Throne *nomination*, in the Prayer preceding the Sermon. But tho' these Conscience-Dispensers have taken the Oaths to King *George*, (and would dispense with an Hundred more as big as *St. Paul's*, for a Living half as large) yet what Evasions and Quibbles do they use! One

One says, *Pray ye*; another, we are *commanded to pray*, but does it not: Such a Servant should be beaten with many Stripes. A Third, *Let us pray*, but banter his Audience like an *Orthodox Juggler*; for he does not pray for the King, tho' he mentions his Name. A Fourth, with an hereditary *Corinthian Face*, legitimately *High-Church*, regards not the Injunction of the *Canon*. Now may we not say to these *Hypocrites*, what our *Blessed Saviour* said to their Brethren the *Scribes* and *Pbarisees*, *Woe unto ye ?*



P. S.

TO avoid the Censure of each snarling *Priestridden Cynic*, who talks much of the Church and Religion, yet frequent not the one, or practise the other; I am obliged, in Justification of my self, and to satisfy my Friends and Acquaintance, to declare, That I have not any Design to strike at the Priesthood. For I am thoroughly convinced, that there ought to be a Regimen in the Church, and its Government by Bishops is necessary and Scriptural; but yet I will not presume to determine, whether they are such by a *Divine* or *Human* Institution.

F

Good

Good Clergymen are (to me) like beautiful and strong Pillars in an Antique and stately Edifice; but vicious Priests are the Emblems of corrupted Rafters. As among the *Apostles* there was one *false Brother*, whom the *Papists* acknowledge as the Foundation of the *Church*, viz. PETER; one Traitor, as *Judas*; ambitious Persons, as *James* and *John*, who prevailed with their Mother to solicit the most honourable Places from *Christ*; This to sit on his Right Hand, That on his Left: So likewise there were some, who were wholly spiritual, and had no Ambitious, no Worldly Views before 'em. And tho' among the Tribe of LEVI, there are *Proud, Persecuting, Covetous, Rebellious, Perjured Priests*; yet there are some [and Oh! that they were a thousand times more in Number, than what *Abraham* proposed to God for the Preservation of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*,] who are of an *bumble and meek Spirit, Religious, Loyal, Charitable Men*: Men of *Conscience* and *Moderation*.

But after all, I greatly fear that the crying Evils of the *Inferior Clergy* will never cease, till a Stop be put to the Ordination of *Beardless-Boys* and *indigent Souls*. These are the Persons *who come before they are called*, and creep in at the Window, when they should enter at the Door of the Temple. These are they whom Necessity obliges, or Prejudice persuades to act contrary to the Laws of God
and

and Man, to humour their Patrons, and support a *Party*. These are they of whom the *Psalmist* speaks, they are *corrupt* and *become abominable*. Happy would it be for this Nation, if the *Tares* which are now growing, and those which are already *run to Seed*, were rooted out!

As I am resolved not to be deluded by *Priestcraft*; so I could wish that every Man would resume his REASON, and not regard any Clergyman, of what Title or Denomination so ever, merely because he is a Clergyman; but be guided in this Particular by the Words of St. *Ambrose*, and give a more than ordinary Attention to them. *Nihil est in hoc sæculo excellentius Sacerdotibus, sublimius Episcopis, Si Nomen congruat Actioni, & Actio respondeat Nomini; Si non, Nomen inane, Crimen immane.* Ambros. de Dignitat. Sacerdot.

F I N I S.

